
VIDALIA CITY

School District



Established 1906

2023/24
Personnel Handbook

FOREWORD

The policies and procedures contained in this handbook are current as of the publication date and are provided for employees as a quick reference guide to the Vidalia City School District policies. This handbook can be superseded by official administrative rules and other policies as established by the superintendent and Vidalia City Board of Education. The information contained in this handbook is not to be perceived as a contract of employment or a promise of continued employment. Updates made to this handbook will be made available online at the official Vidalia City School District website at <https://www.vidaliacityschools.org/hr>. Employees will be responsible for reviewing the contents of this handbook and any updates made to its contents.

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VIDALIA BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERS

Through the years the organization and development of the Vidalia City School System has been dependent upon interested people with leadership ability beginning with the original eleven members of the Board of Education. Today, the board of education consists of five board members who are elected to four-year terms of office and represent constituents in the four city wards with one member at-large.

Julee Torrance, Chair	<i>At-Large</i>
Bruce Asberry, Vice-Chair	<i>Ward 3</i>
Andy Blount	<i>Ward 1</i>
Hal Chesser	<i>Ward 4</i>
Sadia Ajohda	<i>Ward 2</i>

Meetings of the Vidalia City Board of Education (VBOE) are held the second Tuesday of each month at 5:00 PM in the board room at the Vidalia City Board of Education Office Building at 1001 North Street, West, Vidalia, Georgia. The VBOE also conducts luncheon meetings at 12:00 p.m. on the fourth Friday of each month (except November – 4th Friday) when school is in session and are they held at the schools on a rotating basis.

To view meeting agendas and minutes, click on the link or copy/paste the address in your browser: <https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/Index.aspx?S=4167>

VIDALIA BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY MANUAL

The Vidalia City School District operates according to policies established by the Vidalia City Board of Education. The Board, which represents both the State and local community, develops the policies after careful deliberation, and the school administration implements them through specific rules and regulations. The Board then appraises the effects of its policies and makes revisions as necessary. A copy of the Vidalia City Board of Education Policy Manual can be viewed on the following web site: <https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/Index.aspx?S=4167>

ACCREDITATION



The Vidalia City School District, including all four schools is accredited by [Cognia](#). Accreditation is the launchpad for school improvement. Based on rigorous [research-based standards](#) and evidence-based criteria, the process probes the whole institution—from policies to learning conditions and cultural context—to determine how well the parts work together to meet the needs of every learner. The Cognia system accreditation model encourages one shared vision of continuous improvement and a common language of improvement to increase efficiency and effectiveness.

VIDALIA CITY SCHOOLS STRATEGIC PLAN

VISION: All students will become future, productive, contributing members in society.

MISSION: Ignite, Invest, Inspire

BELIEFS:

- High expectations are essential to develop college and/or career ready students.
- Family and community engagement encourages accountability which is vital to academic success and community economic development.
- Effective teaching practices optimize students' opportunities to learn.
- All extra-curricular activities are an enhancing/integral component of the overall educational program to produce well-rounded citizens.
- Strong relationships are fostered through inclusive and diverse connections that create positive school climate in order to ensure safety of ALL.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:

I. Student Achievement AND Development for ALL

- a. Increase students' readiness for post-secondary options
- b. Increase mastery of content
- c. Improve developmental areas for all students

II. Organizational and Operational Effectiveness

- a. Improve facility safety and security
- b. Maximize financial efficiency and effectiveness
- c. Develop and improve cohesive operational processes and practices

III. Positive Culture and Climate

- a. Develop and sustain positive staff-student relationships
- b. Improve safe, healthy and secure learning environments
- c. Increase community, family and school engagement

IV. Quality Staff Learning and Growth

- a. Recruit highly qualified staff
- b. Improve and sustain staff knowledge
- c. Retain highly qualified staff

VIDALIA CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION OFFICE

1001 North Street West
Vidalia, GA 30474
(912) 537-3088 office / (912) 538-0938 fax
Office Hours: 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Superintendent of Schools	J. Garrett Wilcox, Ed. D.
Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction	Sandy D. Reid, Ph. D.
Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent	April T. Clark
Federal Programs Director / System Testing Coordinator	Tammy McFadden
System Social Worker / Migrant Ed Coordinator	Gwen Warren
Family Engagement Coordinator	Brenda McLain
Administrative Assistant for Federal Programs Director	Stephanie Shiver
Technology Director / Student Information Coordinator	Sabrina W. Wiggs
Communications Director	John Koon
Director of Student Services	Katrina Blount-Woodard
Special Education Academic Coach	Sarah Craft
Behavior Interventionist	Ranecci Hampton
RTI Coordinator	Jennifer Blount
Administrative Assistant for Student Services	Erin Rush
School Nutrition Director	E. Denise Parson
School Nutrition Bookkeeper	Tina Wheeler
Finance Director / CFO	Norma D. Croft
HR / Payroll Manager	Shikima Johnson
Accounting Specialist	Niki Goodwin
Plant Operations Director	Russell Burkett
Transportation Director	Robert Taylor
Administrative Assistant for Business Services	Stephanie Shiver

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

J. D. Dickerson Primary School	Charleen Norfleet, Principal Beth Wiggins, Assistant Principal
Sally D. Meadows Elementary School	Brandon Boston, Principal Ben Helms, Assistant Principal Michael Johnson, Assistant Principal
J. R. Trippe Middle School	Eric McDonald, Principal Lee McCloud, Assistant Principal
Vidalia High School	Bruce Mulkey, Principal Steve Freenor, Assistant Principal

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION

The Vidalia City School District expects employees with professional concerns regarding matters requiring administrative action to follow the appropriate lines of authority. Employees express their initial concerns to their school administrator. When necessary, the administrator will refer such matters to the next highest administrative authority. The Board expects employees to keep their immediate supervisors informed of their professional activities by whatever means their supervisor deems appropriate.

All employees have the ultimate right to appeal a decision made by an administrator through grievance procedures established through the Vidalia City Board of Education Policy GAE Complaints and Grievances. This policy outlines the key elements involved in due process. Lines of authority and structured channels of communication do not restrict, in any way, the cooperation of all employees at all levels in order to develop the best possible school programs and services.

PERSONNEL COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES

It is the policy of the Vidalia Board of Education that certified personnel shall have the right to present and resolve complaints relating to certain matters affecting the employment relationship at the lowest organizational level possible. The Board of Education encourages all employees to resolve their complaints informally in a spirit of collegiality where possible. This policy and procedure is available where such efforts do not succeed or, where for any other reason, the certificated employee desires to pursue this procedure.

Reference: [VBOE Policy GAE](#)

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT / EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYMENT ([VBOE Policy GAAA](#))

The Vidalia City Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, marital status, age, native language, religion, creed, or handicap/disability in educational programs and activities, admissions to facilities, or in employment practices. You may contact the Central Office, 1001 North Street West, Vidalia GA 30474. The phone number is (912) 537-3088. Any employee, student, or parent can submit a complaint regarding equal opportunity to the Superintendent. If the employee is dissatisfied with the disposition of the matter by the Superintendent, she/he can then have the complaint referred to the Board of Education. For details regarding the grievance procedure related to equal opportunity, refer to the Board Policy Manual, Policy GAAA.

COMPLIANCE WITH FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) sets minimum wage, overtime pay, equal pay, record keeping, and child labor standards for employees who are covered by the act and are not exempt from specific provisions. Vidalia City School System employees who are nonexempt from overtime and minimum wage requirements include most non-certified staff members. All certificated positions and some non-certificated positions are exempt from overtime requirements.

Non-exempt employees are not required to work beyond the 40-hour workweek, and will not be compensated for remaining at work beyond the 40-hour workweek. All comp time must be approved in writing by the superintendent in advance.

DRUG FREE WORKPLACE ([VBOE Policy GAMA](#))

The Vidalia City Board of Education recognizes that a drug-free workplace promotes employee productivity and facilitates the accomplishment of the school system's mission and goals. In accordance with federal and state law, the Board prohibits the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, sale or use of illegal drugs and alcohol. Specific disciplinary sanctions may include referral for prosecution, completion of an appropriate rehabilitation program at the employee's expense, suspension from employment, termination of employment and other disciplinary measures as appropriate. As a condition of employment, each employee must abide by the terms of the policy and must notify the Board within five days after any criminal charge or conviction for a drug or alcohol related violation.

HARRASSMENT ([VBOE Policy GAEB](#))

It is the policy of this School District to prohibit any act of harassment of employees by other employees based upon race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age or disability at all times and during all occasions while at school, in the workplace or at any school event or activity. Any such act shall result in prompt and appropriate discipline, including the possible termination of employment.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT ([VBOE Policy JR](#))

It is the policy of the Board of Education that all employees shall comply with the requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Student Data Privacy, Accessibility, and Transparency Act of Georgia (the Act).

FRAUD PREVENTION ([VBOE Policy DIE](#))

Vidalia City School System employees shall report verbally or in writing to their supervisor, department head, or other appropriate authority, evidence of activity by a district department, agency, or employ constituting: A violation of local, state, or federal law, rule or regulation; Fraud; Misappropriation of resources; Substantial and specific danger to the public health and safety; or Gross mismanagement, a gross waste of monies, or gross abuse authority

THE CODE OF ETHICS FOR EDUCATORS



The Code of Ethics for Educators defines the professional behavior of educators in Georgia and serves as a guide to ethical conduct. The Georgia Professional Standards Commission has adopted standards that represent the conduct generally accepted by the education profession. The code defines unethical conduct justifying disciplinary sanction and provides guidance for protecting the health, safety and general welfare of students and educators, and assuring the citizens of Georgia a degree of accountability within the education profession.

Click this link to view the [Code of Ethics for Educators](#).

Georgia Professional Standards Commission
Two Peachtree Street, Suite 6000
Atlanta, GA 30303-3141
<https://www.gapsc.com/Ethics/Home.aspx>

Educator Ethics Division
404-232-2700
Fax: 404-232-2720
ethics@gapsc.com

EMPLOYMENT

Vacancy announcements

It is the practice of the Vidalia City Schools to post an announcement of the availability of all certificated positions within the local school system and qualified candidates may apply for the same. These announcements will be posted on the state-wide online job data base maintained by the Professional Standards Commission and on the district web site. Vacancies for classified positions are posted on the system website.

Applications

Employment applications are kept on file for one year from the date of application and are maintained in the district administrative office. These applications are available to the building principals and/or department level director as positions become available.

Interview / Selection / Assignment

State law provides that all employees must be approved by the board of education upon the recommendation of the superintendent. However, school/district level leadership personnel play a key role in interviewing, evaluating and assessing which applicants should be recommended to the board by the superintendent.

The assignment of certified personnel is guided by state and federal regulations as it applies to the specific vacancy. Classified employee assignments are determined by qualifications required for the position.

Board Approval

The board of education must approve to hire all school district employees, but it may not act to hire any employee who has not been recommended by the superintendent. However, the board is not bound to accept the superintendent's recommendation of any particular individual.

Upon board approval, the employment process is initiated by the personnel department. Professional employees who fill positions requiring certificates will be issued a written contract of employment. All other employees holding non-certified or classified positions are not required to have written contracts and are considered "at will" employees.

Job Descriptions

The Vidalia City Schools is required to have a job description for "each certificated professional personnel classification." The system also maintains job descriptions for classified personnel.

Background Checks

As required by state law 20-2-211.1, a criminal record check will be conducted at or prior to employment on every person who is employed by the Board of Education for the first time to fill either a full-time or part-time certified or classified position with this School District.

For initial hiring purposes, the employee either shall be fingerprinted or shall provide a signed consent on a form designated by the School District, including the employee's full name, address, social security number and date of birth, based upon the requirement of state law or applicable rule or regulation.

All employees of Vidalia City School System must have a GCIC Criminal Background Check performed at least once every five years. The NCIC Fingerprinting is only required upon initial employment and is not required again unless the employee has a break in employment service or unless requested by the

Superintendent. There is no charge to the employee for the GCIC Criminal Background Check. All background checks are generated electronically and are initiated by the school system. The individual is required to pay all costs associated with the background check.

Criminal record check information shall be used by the school district and its officials and employees only for the purpose of determining whether to grant regular employment, and in any administrative or judicial proceeding calling such employment into question. Such information shall be stored, restricted, and disposed of in such manner as may be required by federal and state authorities. A breach of confidentiality or the inappropriate use of criminal background check information may constitute a workplace violation and may be grounds for disciplinary action including, but not limited to, termination and/or reporting to the Professional Standards Commission.

Screening of Criminal Record Checks

In the event the criminal record check reflects that the employee, whether certified or classified, has been charged with, pleaded to or been convicted of an offense other than a minor traffic violation, the Superintendent shall bring the matter to the board of education at its next meeting or sooner, **if warranted**, for an employment decision. The acceptability of the criminal record check will be at the discretion of the Superintendent or designee. Employment may be terminated at the discretion of the Superintendent or designee for those whose criminal record check is not satisfactory. At the superintendent's discretion, the employee may continue employment in the school district pending final board decision.

In the event an employment decision is made adverse to a person whose record was obtained from the criminal record check pursuant to this policy, the person will be informed by the Superintendent or designee the information pertinent to that decision. This disclosure shall include information that a record was obtained from the Georgia Criminal Information Center, the specific contents of the record, and the effect the record had upon that decision.

Compensation

CONTRACTED PERSONNEL

The Vidalia City Board of Education directs that the Superintendent or his/her designee shall establish a process for evaluating, verifying, documenting and awarding experience for placement of certified personnel on the state salary schedule in accordance with State Board of Education Rule 160-5-2-.05.

"Certified personnel" shall be defined as those individuals working in positions for which a professional teaching, leadership, service, technical specialist or permit certification issued by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (PSC) is required by the PSC and/or the School District.

NON-CONTRACTED PERSONNEL

Salaries for classified or non-contracted employees are not prescribed by state law, other than minimum salaries for bus drivers and school food and nutrition personnel. The Vidalia City Schools has established a salary scale for all classified personnel positions. A classified employee's salary is based on the number of verifiable years of experience in a similar position and the workday schedule for the position as set annually by the system. The superintendent has the final approval of all verifiable experience. The provisions of the federal Fair Labor Standards Act generally are applicable to non-professional employees.

"Classified personnel" shall be designed as those individuals that are in positions that do not require certification as issued by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission. (i.e. paraprofessionals, clerical, bookkeeper, bus driver, maintenance, school nurse)

All employees shall be paid on or before the last working day of each calendar month.

Evaluations

CONTRACTED PERSONNEL

State law requires that all personnel employed by the school district, including the superintendent of schools, must have their performance evaluated annually by appropriately trained evaluators.

Vidalia City Schools implements the evaluation system adopted by the State Board of Education for elementary and secondary school teachers of record, assistant principals, and principals, as defined by the State Board.

NON-CONTRACTED PERSONNEL

Non-certified employees will be evaluated annually by their immediate supervisor. An evaluation should be done in narrative and checklist form pointing out what is satisfactory or unsatisfactory, what improvements are needed to become a satisfactory employee, as well as, a timetable for the improvement to be accomplished.

Professional Personnel Work Loads ([VBOE Policy GBRC](#))

The minimum work schedule for all full-time employees generally will be eight hours per day and forty hours per week on a schedule to be set by the immediate supervisor. Please see Board policy GBRC for additional information.

Employment Requirements

All employees are considered for continued employment each school year. All Vidalia City School System personnel are employed and assigned by the Vidalia City Board of Education upon the recommendation of the Superintendent. Teachers, principals and other contracted and professional personnel are eligible for regular employment provided they meet the educational and professional standards set by the State of Georgia and the Vidalia City Board of Education and otherwise satisfy the requirements for the position. Other employees are eligible for regular employment upon evidence of completion of required training, ability to do the work for which they are applying and satisfactory recommendations. Employees who do not receive an employment contract are considered "at-will." Employment-at-will means that, in general, an employer may terminate the employment relationship at any time, for any reason, or for no reason, unless an agreement or law exists to the contrary.

Self-Report of Criminal Arrest

All employees of the Vidalia City Schools are required to notify their immediate supervisor or the Superintendent and/or the Director of Human Resources within 48 hours if they are arrested or given a Notice to Appear for any criminal offense. The term ARREST shall include physical arrest by law enforcement and/or any criminal charges filed against the employee not resulting in a physical arrest. Minor traffic violations (such as speeding and parking tickets) are exempt from this reporting requirement. Driving Under the Influence (DUI) is not exempt from the requirement and must be reported. Administrators and supervisors who become aware of subordinates who have been arrested, charged or given a Notice to Appear for such offenses will immediately notify the Superintendent and/or the Director of Human Resources. This responsibility includes arrests during school holidays or summer break.

Reassignment and Transfers

The Superintendent is authorized by the Board to reassign at his/her discretion any employee to a location other than the one previously assigned. The right to reassign and transfer personnel to other positions should be for the betterment of the school system and is not limited to the following examples:

- Increases or decreases of enrollment in various grades
- Opening of new buildings or closing of old ones

- Changes in organization of the school system
- Addition or elimination of an educational service
- Vacancies created by promotions, leaves of absences, death, retirement, resignation and the like
- Personnel adjustments
- Compliance with federal court orders and new state or federal requirements

Resignation

All employees should provide a signed written notice of their intended resignation to their supervisor as early as possible. The written notice should be forwarded immediately to the Board Office.

CONTRACTED PERSONNEL

Certified employees may request to be released from their contract during the school year due to unforeseen circumstances. The employee must remain in the present assignment until the release has been officially approved by the Board. Principals do not have the authority to grant a release from contract. Employees wishing to resign from their contract must give adequate notice of such desire. The request for release from contract must be made in writing to the Superintendent. The Superintendent is authorized by the Board of Education to accept a resignation effective on the date when a qualified replacement has been secured to ensure the best possible transition. The Superintendent will present the resignation at the earliest regular Board meeting. A separation notice, as required by the Labor Department, shall be completed and submitted on any employee who is leaving the system.

NON-CONTRACTED PERSONNEL

Dismissal of non-certified personnel shall be made by the principal of each school. Resignations shall be made in writing to the principal. The Superintendent is empowered to dismiss any bus driver found guilty of violations of bus safety rules. (See [Policy EDC](#)) A separation notice, as required by the Labor Department, shall be completed and submitted on any employee who is leaving the system.

EMPLOYEE EXIT SURVEY

Employees that leave the district will be asked to complete an exit survey for the purpose of receiving information that would assist the administration in continuing to work to make the system a great teaching and learning environment.

Benefits

The Vidalia City Board of Education provides numerous employee benefits to the employee. Employees should contact the payroll department or visit www.myvidaliacitybenefits.com with any questions related to employee benefits.

Benefits available through payroll deduction include:

- Life, long-term disability, short-term disability, flexible spending accounts, legal, vision, and dental insurance
- State Health Benefit Plan
- 403 (b) Plans (Annuity)

Vidalia City Board of Education also participates in the Teacher Retirement System, Public School Employee Retirement and Social Security (for eligible positions ONLY)

The Cafeteria Plan, under Section 125 of the Internal Revenue code, allows employees to put eligible benefits on pre-tax basis.

Automatic Deductions will be made for the following purposes:

- Retirement
- Social Security
Positions NOT COVERED by Social Security: Educators, Clerical, Bookkeeper, Technology, School Nurse
Positions COVERED by Social Security: Paraprofessionals, Bus Driver/Monitor, Food Service, Maintenance, After School Program
- Federal and State Income Tax
- Insurance, when authorized
- Teacher association dues, when authorized
- Days of leave in excess of authorized leaves
- Tax sheltered annuity, when authorized

Changes in Demographic Status

In the event that an employee has a change in residence/address, name, contact information, or income tax, please submit the demographic form in your account via the [YOSS Platform](#). This information will be submitted to the payroll department.

Attendance / Absences

In order for the school system to achieve its desired goals, good attendance and punctuality are necessary. Regular and prompt attendance is expected and required of all our employees. When being absent from work or late to work is unavoidable, the employee must notify his/her supervisor at least one day in advance whenever possible. In case of an emergency or any circumstance when it is not possible to give advance notice, employees must personally call the supervisor or designee before time to report to work. All absences due to sickness, personal leave, jury duty, vacation (if applicable) or professional leave must be documented in the system's attendance manager [program](#).

Timekeeping

ALL system employees ARE REQUIRED to clock in/out at his/her work site each day. A Kiosk is located at several locations within the school buildings and employees will scan a system issued ID cards to capture arrival and departure times. The employee is responsible for this card and WILL BE CHARGED \$5.00 FOR EACH REPLACEMENT CARD.

Employee Leave

Leave shall apply to all benefits-eligible employees of the Vidalia City Schools. All employees are required to follow the work calendar established by the Board of Education and may take leave from work only in accordance with this policy or other leave policies enacted by the Board of Education. Unless otherwise provided by the Board of Education, principals and other supervisors are not authorized to rearrange the work calendar of employees. Please see [VBOE policy GARH](#) for additional information.

Paid Parental Leave

The Board of Education shall make paid parental leave equally available to all eligible employees of the Board of Education. Please see [VBOE Policy GARH](#) for additional information.

Federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

Employees of the Board who have been employed by the Board for at least 12 months and who have worked at least 1250 hours during the 12-month period immediately preceding the commencement of the leave are eligible to take unpaid leave under the FMLA. The FMLA will be coordinated with the Vidalia City Schools' [policy GBRIG](#).

WORKERS COMPENSATION

1. When an employee is injured at work, he/she must report this injury to his/her supervisor immediately. A report of injury form must be completed.
2. Workers' Compensation will not pay for treatment at the emergency room in non-emergency situations.
3. Follow-up doctor visits should be scheduled before or after work hours where possible.
4. Should an injury require medical treatment, the injured employee must select a physician from the list below:

Accordia Urgent Care & Family Practice 3193 E. First Street Vidalia, GA 30474	Meadows Regional Medical Center 1 Meadows Parkway Vidalia, Georgia 30474
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Responsibilities

Employee:

- a. Report all accidents and/or injuries, regardless of how trivial, to his/her immediate supervisor as soon as the accident/injury occurs. If the injury prevents an immediate report, the employee must report the accident/injury within 24 hours or have someone do so on his/her behalf.
- b. Those employees who are witnesses to a job related accident/injury shall provide any information regarding the circumstances surrounding the accident as required by the immediate supervisor or the designated workers' compensation personnel.

Immediate Supervisor:

- a. Ensure that the injured employee is provided with first aid treatment or, if necessary, with emergency medical care.
- b. File an Accident Report/First Report of Injury with the HR Manager within 24 hours after being made aware that a job-related accident/ injury has occurred or is being alleged. Supervisors, not employees, are to complete this report.
- c. Report by phone, to HR Manager as soon as possible, any accident involving a serious injury and/or death.
- d. Thoroughly investigate the accident or alleged accident and include the results of the investigation in the Accident Report/First Report of Injury.

Department Heads/Principals:

- a. Ensure that employees and supervisors follow correct procedures for filing job-related accident reports and injury claims.
- b. Assure that supervisors investigate all accidents and report all injuries or alleged injuries, and take the appropriate steps to provide the necessary medical care to treat the compensable injury.
- c. Conduct your own investigation and, where necessary, take appropriate steps to ensure that the cause of the accident is corrected as soon as possible to prevent recurrence.
- d. Report immediately any concerns relating to the accident or injury to the HR Manager.

Non-Emergencies:

- a. Employee reports the accident/injury to his/her immediate supervisor as soon as possible but no later than the end of the school/business day.
- b. Supervisor and/or department head assists employee in receiving treatment from a panel physician or, if appropriate, from an emergency room.

- c. ***If appropriate, the supervisor and/or the department head should accompany the injured employee to the physician's office or emergency room.***
- d. The HR Manager will provide a Medical Authorization Form to the authorized treating physician or emergency room.
- e. If an employee is referred to a panel physician and then to a specialist for follow-up treatment, the specialist becomes the authorized treating physician.

Clearance to Return to Work:

- a. After minor injuries are treated at an emergency room the employee is expected to return to work immediately upon approval of the attending physician.
- b. For injuries treated by a panel physician or a referral specialist, the authorized treating physician will make a medical determination of the employee's return-to-work status and will give the employee a written form to be given by the employee to his/her supervisor or department head.
- c. The supervisor will notify the HR Manager of employee's return-to-work status as soon as possible after receiving the completed form.

Workers' Compensation, Sick Leave and Short Term Disability:

- a. An employee cannot draw workers' compensation and sick leave or short term disability benefits at the same time.
- b. An employee has a seven (7) day qualifying period before workers' compensation benefits are paid.

Worker's Compensation Fraud

Vidalia City Board of Education strongly believes that the vast majority of employees will never submit a fraudulent workers' compensation claim. Nevertheless, workers' compensation fraud exists and can have substantial cost for affected businesses. The information below explains some aspects and consequences of workers' compensation fraud.

You will sign a signature page indicating your receipt and understanding of Waste, Fraud and Abuse. Contact your principal and/or supervisor if you have any questions.

A person commits workers' compensation fraud when, in the course of reporting a claim to obtain benefits, he or she intentionally misrepresents a material fact to obtain a benefit to which the claimant is not otherwise entitled. A misrepresentation is material when it is relevant to whether benefits will be paid or the amount of benefits to be paid.

Some Examples of Workers' Compensation Fraud:

- Filing a workers' compensation claim for an injury that is known with certainty to be completely unrelated to employment.
- Lying about earnings received from employment other than the employment in which you were injured.
- Purposely misleading or exaggerating one's current medical condition to receive workers' compensation benefits.

Making false statements for the purpose of obtaining workers' compensation benefits may result in civil and criminal penalties for the individuals that make such statements. Vidalia City Board of Education supports activities to detect and combat workers' compensation fraud!

This is not intended to discourage the legitimate use of the workers' compensation system. You should report any bodily injury that you believe is work-related to your supervisor at once.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING EXPECTATIONS

Characteristics connecting staff development and higher achieving schools include the following:

a greater focus on improving student performance, a greater focus on classroom instruction, more support and direction from leadership, more collective actions by the faculty, and more effective training strategies. (Harkreader and Weathersby, 1998, *Staff Development and Student Achievement: Making the Connection in Georgia Schools*) With these facts in mind, the Vidalia City School System Plan and the school improvement plans of each school reflect Professional Learning that is aligned to the goals and strategies of the respective plans. Through school improvement planning, all certified personnel will participate in opportunities to improve their craft.

Research has shown that effective professional learning activities are ongoing and allow for follow-up of initial training. Evidence of follow-up should be reflected in individual professional learning activities logs, which will be a part of the evaluation process. In addition, results will be reflected in the school's staff development summative evaluation.

Prior to participating in professional learning, a request must be submitted to the Assistant Superintendent. The professional leave request form must be submitted via the [YOSS Platform](#).

ATTENTION

The employee must complete these steps correctly before the employee can receive reimbursement for expenses.

Requests for reimbursement must be received within fifteen (15) days of the approved activity.

For Professional Learning scheduled off-contract (i.e. summer months), a contract will be issued to the educator via google forms. Contracts must be completed and submitted in order to be eligible for stipends. Vidalia City Schools agrees to pay stipends upon receiving documentation of the program completion from the instructor. Depending on the date such documentation is received in the central office; the stipend will be processed during the next payroll cycle.

EDUCATOR CERTIFICATION

Certified employees must hold proper certification from the Georgia Professional Standards Commission and must meet all state and federal requirements. It is the responsibility of the individual to keep his/her certification current. Teachers must be “In-Field” to teach in the assigned subject area(s).

[Certified employees](#) - who hold Teaching (T), Leadership (L), Service (S), Technical Specialist (TS), or Permit (P) certification issued by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission

Paraprofessionals must also hold a Paraprofessional Certificate issued by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission.

[Paraprofessionals](#) – Individuals who work under the supervision of teachers or other professional personnel who have ultimate responsibility for the education of students. Duties are either instructional in nature or indirect services to students.

[GAPSC Rule 505-2-.01 Georgia Educator Certification](#)

[GAPSC Rule 505-2-.02 Classification](#)

[GAPSC Rule 505-2-.36 Renewal Requirements](#)

[GAPSC Rule 505-2-.18 Paraprofessional License](#)

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

All employees must become familiar with building procedures in the event of emergency such as fire, tornado, intruders, etc. When drills are staged, every staff member and student must follow proper procedures. Copies of the procedures are maintained in the school offices.

DISTRICT PROPERTY

The District may supply an employee with equipment or supplies to assist the employee in performing his/her job duties. All employees are expected to show reasonable care for any equipment issued and to take precautions for theft. Employees cannot take District property for personal use or gain. Any equipment, unused supplies, or keys issued must be returned prior to the employee’s last day of employment.

CHILD ABUSE

PROTOCOL FOR REPORTING CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT IN THE VIDALIA CITY SCHOOL SYSTEM

As a Mandated Reporter, school staff must report suspected child abuse or neglect. Each year employees will receive training via a Compliance Director module. Your completion will be recorded and kept on file by the human resources department. If you have reasonable cause to suspect child abuse or neglect, report these concerns to the school counselor at your first opportunity during the same school day. If you work in a system-wide position, report child abuse or neglect to your direct supervisor. **It is not your duty to investigate child abuse or neglect.** It is your responsibility, however, to report child abuse or neglect so that it can be investigated by a trained professional, usually from the Department of Family and Children Services. Please follow the steps below for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect:

- 1) All school system personnel who have reasonable cause to believe that any student has been abused shall report the suspected abuse to the school counselor or school administration.
- 2) The school counselor or administrator who receives reports shall immediately report in turn to the Department of Family and Children Services and shall notify the school system social worker of all referrals.
- 3) If all school administrators are not available, contact the system social worker. Supervisors of system-wide staff should contact the social worker directly.
- 4) If the system social worker is not available, contact the Assistant Superintendent or Superintendent.
- 5) Upon receiving the report, the administrator, system social worker or school counselor will submit the report via:
 - Email CPS.Intake@DHS.GA.Gov OR
 - Fax (229) 317-9663 OR
 - Toll Free 1-855-422-4453 OR
 - Local # (912) 526-8117 between the hours of 8:00 am - 5:00 pm.

Even if a child resides in another county, the Department of Family and Children Services will contact the county in which the child resides.

- 6) If the Department of Family and Children Services are not available to take your report, contact the Vidalia City Police Department, the Lyons Police Department, or the Toombs County Sheriff's Department, depending upon where the child resides.

Any person or official required by subsection (c) of O.C.G.A. § 19-7-5 to report a suspected case of child abuse who knowingly and willfully fails to do so shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. You may also be disciplined by your school system.

STAFF DRESS CODE

Vidalia City School employees serve as a role model for the students and as a representative of the system. Consistent with these roles, all employees shall dress professionally and appropriately. Personnel shall follow this policy on all days students are in attendance. Personnel shall follow this policy on parent/conference days or parent meetings.

Tops

- Business casual style shirts are expected. No hoodies, sweatshirts, or t-shirts allowed, unless it is school spirit wear for those designated days.
- Low cut blouses, see-through clothing, off the shoulder, halter style, tank tops, or clothing which reveals the midriff are not allowed. Sleeveless clothing must cover undergarments.

Bottoms

- Allowable bottoms include dresses, skirts, casual dress pants, slacks, and capris. Athletic pants and shorts should not be worn. Capri pants must be below the knee.
- Dresses and skirts should touch the knee. Dresses and skirts should be loose enough to not hinder walking or mobility. The slit of a dress or skirt must come no higher than the knee.
- Jeans are allowed only for designated circumstances (United Way, Spirit Fridays, etc...). When jeans are allowed, a business casual look should be maintained through wearing of shirts allowable in this dress code. T-shirts and sweatshirts can only be worn on designated spirit days.
- Pants and skirts should not have any frays or holes.

Shoes/Jewelry/Accessories

- Shoes and sandals must have a back. Flip-flops are not allowed.
- Hats are not to be worn inside.
- Tattoos that are considered offensive, racist, vulgar, show scenes of violence, drug-related, contain strong imagery, gang related or obscene phrases may not be visible.
- Earrings and studded nose rings are allowed. All other piercings must be covered or removed while on campus

**Physical education teachers may wear chino style shorts that touch the knee or loose-fitting athletic pants. No yoga pants or leggings are allowed for any teacher, including physical education teachers. Physical education teachers may wear a collared sport/golf shirt.

STAFF LUNCH CHARGES

School Nutrition is a self-supporting program provided for students and staff. As a result, we do not receive any funding from our systems general funds. To insure staff can participate in the program, the following charge policy will be followed at all schools:

- No staff member may charge over \$13.95 (3 lunches) at any time. You are encouraged to put money on your account online at www.K12paymentcenter.com. You may send cash or a check to your lunchroom manager and they will be sure to put it on your account.
- ALL charges must be paid by the 5th of the following month. Failure to do so will result in the staff member not being allowed to charge until the prior months charges are paid.
- If charges are not paid monthly, the staff member will be contacted by the Director of School Nutrition first, then the building administrator and if left unresolved, it will be sent to the Superintendent of Schools.

EMPLOYEE INTERNET ACCESS

Internet access is available to students and employees in all Vidalia City Schools. We believe the Internet offers vast, diverse and unique resources to both students and employees. Our goal in providing this service to employees and students is to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation and communication. The Internet is an electronic highway connecting thousands of computers all over the world and millions of individual subscribers.

With the access to computers and people all over the world also comes the availability of material that may not be considered to be of educational value in the context of the school setting. Available precautions will be taken to restrict access to controversial materials. However, on a global network it is impossible to control all materials and an industrious user may discover controversial information, but we believe the valuable information and interaction available on this worldwide network far outweighs the possibility that users may procure material that is not consistent with the educational goals of this project.

Internet access is coordinated through a complex association of government agencies, and regional and state networks. In addition, the smooth operation of the network relies upon the proper conduct of the end users who must adhere to strict guidelines. Users of Vidalia City Schools Network and Internet Access are subject to Administrative Monitoring. Our Internet appropriate use regulations are provided here so that you are aware of the responsibilities you are about to acquire. If a user violates any of these provisions, future access could be denied. The user may also be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including employment termination.

Teachers who have access to student data must adhere to guidelines and legal requirements as specified by local Board policy and procedure, state rules and federal law. A breach of confidentiality is a violation of the Educator Code of Ethics for certified personnel.

Access to Vidalia City Schools' Student Information System (PowerSchool) is a privilege, not a right.

When a teacher enters attendance information for a student, the attendance information becomes part of the student's official student record. Falsification of attendance in PowerTeacher is the same as falsification of paper-based student records. It is a violation of the Educator Code of Ethics for certified personnel to falsify student records.

Reference: [VBOE Policy IFBG](#)

FUND RAISERS

School clubs, organizations, and groups desiring to raise money through solicitations or sales campaigns must present their request to the principal who will submit request for approval by the superintendent. The teacher in charge and school bookkeeper will be notified of all approved fund raiser requests. At the completion of each fundraiser, a fundraiser analysis form should be completed and provided to the school bookkeeper as documentation that all funds/items were handled properly and that the fundraiser was effective. Although donations may be solicited for school activities, all donations MUST flow through the School Activity Accounts in accordance with procedures established in the School Activity Account Handbook. Social Media Accounts such as "GO FUND ME" SHOULD NOT be utilized by anyone in the name of Vidalia City Schools or affiliated with any school activity or function. School Cash Online is the ONLY acceptable method of receiving electronic payments. Applications such as CashApp and Venmo are NOT to be utilized by anyone in the name of Vidalia City Schools or affiliated with any school activity or function. Raffles are prohibited by law for nonprofit, tax exempt organizations (please reference O.C.G.A. 16-12-22.1)

Requests to raise funds through solicitations will be considered upon application and must be approved prior to beginning the fund raiser.

Fundraisers involving the sale of food will not occur 30 minutes prior until 30 minutes after the end of breakfast or lunch meal service and may not be sold in the cafeteria and as specified in state board rule 160-5-6-.01.

Fund raiser request forms can be obtained from your school's bookkeeper.

FIELD TRIPS

Field Trips designed to stimulate student interest and inquiry and provide opportunities for social growth and development are considered appropriate extensions of the classroom. To the extent that they provide the most effective means for accomplishing general curriculum objectives of the Vidalia City Schools, they must be recommended by the building principal to the superintendent of the Vidalia City Schools.

To be educationally beneficial, a field trip requires thoughtful selection, careful advance preparation of the class, and opportunities for pupils to assimilate the experience during and at the conclusion of the trip. To this end, teachers and principals will be expected to consider the following factors in selection of field trips: (a) value of the activity to the particular class group or class groups; (b) relationship of the field trip activity to a particular aspect of classroom instruction; (c) suitability of the activity and distance traveled in terms of the age level; (d) mode and availability of transportation; and (e) cost.

The Superintendent or his/her designee is authorized to approve all field trips except those which extend overnight or leave the State of Georgia.

Field trips which extend overnight and/or leave the State of Georgia must be approved by the Board of Education.

Reference: [VBOE Policy IFCB](#)

Field Trip Transportation request forms can be obtained from your school's bookkeeper or downloaded from the transportation department website at <https://www.vidaliacityschools.org/transportation>

TRANSPORTATION FIELD TRIP PROTOCOL

This protocol may be updated during the school year. Please check the following web page to ensure you are reviewing the latest protocol: <https://www.vidaliacityschools.org/transportation>

Before a school bus or other Vidalia City Schools vehicle can be used for any purpose other than that vehicle's designed purpose, a written transportation request must be submitted through the appropriate principal to the transportation department. The Transportation Director will then compile such requests and verify the availability of such vehicles, availability of qualified drivers (if applicable), and any conflict in scheduling with the vehicles designed purpose. Upon the completion of all these, they will present these requests to the Superintendent or his designated representative for action or presentation to the Board of Education for approval and/or disposition of the request. (See policy below: VBOE Policy IFCB – Field Trips and Excursions).

- This protocol applies to student field trips/conferences, employee meetings/conferences, etc.
- ATHLETIC TRIPS: Team head coach is responsible for providing the Transportation Director with a season schedule and coordinating the transportation for each game. The field trip transportation form does not need to be completed for these trips.

Requester / School will:

- Complete the Field Trip Transportation Request form well in advance of the date of the trip.
- The form must include all requested information and must be signed by the requester and building principal.
- Submit request to building principal

Principal will:

- Review Field Trip Transportation request
- Process approval or denial of Field Trip Transportation request
- If denied, principal must communicate denial to requester
- Submit approved request to superintendent or designee

Superintendent will:

- Review principal-approved Field Trip Transportation request
- Process approval or denial of Field Trip Transportation request
- If denied, the form will be returned to the building principal and requester.
- If approved, the form will be forwarded to the transportation department.
The Superintendent or his/her designee is authorized to approve all field trips except those which extend overnight or leave the State of Georgia. Field trips which extend overnight and/or leave the State of Georgia must be approved by the Board of Education as per VBOE Policy IFCB – Field Trips and Excursions. Trips requiring board approval will be submitted at the next regular scheduled board meeting upon receipt in the board office.
- Submit approved request to Transportation Director or designee

Transportation Director will:

- Approve or deny request based on bus, vehicle, and /or driver availability.
- If denied, transportation director will email form to the requester acknowledging denial of the request.
- If approved, transportation director will assign an authorized system driver and email form to the requester acknowledging approval of the request.

Requester / School responsibilities:

- Contact the Transportation Director to finalize plans for the trip
- Obtain (or verify on file) the required student permission trip forms.
- If regular route bus drivers transport the students, they must be back in sufficient time to run afternoon routes.
- If the return time for the trip is after school dismissal, arrangements must be made for students to get home.
- If a trip occurs thru lunch, notify your cafeteria manager if these students will or will not be participating in school lunch for those days.

Bus Driver / SUV Driver / 14-Passenger Bus Driver / Athletic Team Coach will:

- If driving a system SUV or 14 passenger bus, a copy of the authorized employee's valid driver's license MUST be on file in the central office.
- If you have to fuel up during the trip, provide the fuel receipt to the Transportation Director for reimbursement.
- Employees in charge of the trip are responsible for removing all trash from the vehicle upon returning the vehicle to the system vehicle lot.
- For overnight trips, lodging and meals must be provided for the bus driver.
- If using system transportation during non-school days, plan to pick up the vehicle keys from the transportation director prior to the trip.
- If returning a system vehicle outside business hours, park / lock the vehicle in the bus lot or gated area behind the BOE office, lock the gate upon exiting and drop the keys in the drop box which is on the transportation office door.
- State law requires all drivers and passengers to wear a seat belt at all times.
- Established traffic signals and speed limits are to be strictly observed. The Vidalia City Schools shall not be responsible for fines levied as a result of violating speed limits or traffic regulations.

Field Trip Transportation requests must be submitted in a timely manner so as to allow time to schedule the use of a system vehicle and secure an authorized driver.

Please make final travel arrangements with Transportation Director Robert Taylor well in advance of the trip. You may contact him by email at rtaylor@vidalia-city.k12.ga.us or mobile at (912) 293-4550.

MAINTENANCE PROTOCOL

The Vidalia City Schools Maintenance Department is committed to providing the highest level of support to ensure our students and staff have safe and clean learning and working environments.

The Maintenance Department repairs and maintains five campuses totaling 241 acres including 1 primary school, 1 elementary school, 1 middle school including athletic complex/fields, 1 high school including athletic complex/fields, and 1 board office. The combined interior square footage of the district's permanent and portable buildings is approximately 500,000 square feet.

On average, the department completes approximately 15,000 work orders each year, which include renovations and modifications to facilities as well as preventive maintenance, emergency repairs, and assistance with construction projects.

The Maintenance Department is available to all Vidalia City School facilities for the purpose of maintaining the buildings and grounds. Through the capital projects program, our maintenance staff perform or oversee general renovations, additions, new construction, and other non-routine maintenance projects as needed. School Initiated Project requests are reviewed and are either approved/denied in the maintenance Department and/or the School Board.

Routine Maintenance

The routine maintenance of our buildings and grounds include, but are not limited to the following categories:

- Carpentry
- Electrical
- Grounds Maintenance
- Playground Safety
- HVAC
- Plumbing
- Pest Control
- Kitchen Equipment
- Intrusion and Fire Alarms
- Waste Removal
- Equipment Repair

To request maintenance in any of the above areas, please notify your school's office staff and cafeteria manager. These individuals are authorized in your school to submit work orders. Other school personnel may also be granted user rights as needed. If you have questions, please call the Maintenance Department at 912-537-3362.

ACCOUNTING PROCEDURES

All employees are expected to follow the procedures established regarding financial activity within the Vidalia City School System Accounting Procedures Manual. A copy is available with each school bookkeeper and the district finance department.

TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENTS

Travel reimbursements must be requested on the Employee Expense Form in the [YOSS Platform](#). These forms must be completed in its entirety including the required receipts as well as a copy of the Professional Leave form and agenda from the conference/meeting. Forms without all required information will be returned to the employee. Reimbursement will be delayed pending the completion of the form.

PURCHASING PROCEDURES via [YOSS Platform](#)

PURCHASE REQUISITION

1. Teacher/Originator generates Purchase Requisition and routes to....
2. Bookkeeper who codes & verifies availability of budgeted funds
3. Principal/Administrator approves or denies request and routes to....
4. Superintendent (Final Authority for all purchases – Approves or Denies)
5. Accounts Payable then enters into PCGENESIS and creates a PURCHASE ORDER

PURCHASE ORDER

1. PURCHASE ORDER is sent to Teacher/Originator so order can be placed (Bookkeeper also receives a copy for reference).
2. Teacher/Originator places order by mail/fax/email or any preferred method using the P.O. #
3. Upon receipt of goods/services the Bookkeeper/Receiving Agent will check in, verify receipt and obtain Packing Slip.

RECEIVING PROCEDURES

1. The school administrator will designate a receiving agent(s) at each school. A list of all designated agents shall be sent to the Finance Director. List of agents should be kept at a minimum number. One agent must be designated to receive packages during summer months and complete steps 2, 3 and 4 in the absence of the teachers / P.O. originator.
2. The receiving agent will log all packages received on a Package/Parcel Receiving Verification Form.
3. The teacher/individual who placed the order will then be notified to:
 - a. Pick up the package.
 - b. Verify contents and completion of order
 - c. List discrepancies on packing slip
 - d. Sign and date packing slip and return both to receiving agent
 - e. The receiving agent will give the signed packing slip to the bookkeeper

Note: This entire process should be completed within 3 days of date received.

AP APPROVAL FORM

1. Invoice is received at the Central Office by Accounts Payable.
2. Invoice is scanned and attached to an AP APPROVAL FORM by the Accounting Specialist.
3. Form is routed to the School Bookkeeper/Receiving Agent

4. Bookkeeper/Receiving Agent scans Packing Slip and attaches to AP APPROVAL FORM
5. AP APPROVAL FORM is then completed and payment is authorized.
6. Form is received by Accounting Specialist and a Claim for Payment is entered into PCGENESIS by referencing original P.O. in PCGENESIS, making any necessary revisions based upon Invoice/AP APPROVAL FORM.
7. AP APPROVAL FORM is then archived in the YOSS Platform and a check is generated from PCGENESIS.

CHECK DISTRIBUTION

- CHECKS are distributed only on the **15th** and **the last business day** of the month.
- CLAIMS submitted by the 5th of each month will be processed for payment on the **15th**. (If the 15th occurs on the weekend, claims will be paid on the Friday preceding the 15th day of the month.)
- CLAIMS submitted by the **20th** of each month will be processed for payment on the **last workday of the month**.