



Employee HANDBOOK 2024-2025

Engage. Inspire. Prepare

June 2024

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Foreword

Welcome to the Paulding County School District!

The employee Handbook has been prepared to assist with your induction into the Paulding County School District. Several policies have been included which are pertinent to your employment including leave, student records management, and discipline; however, the complete policy manual is on-line. The policy on-line manual clearly outlines the policies which govern the Paulding County School District. Please use this handbook as a reference during your employment with us. We also encourage you to call on your local school administration and/or the Human Resources Department if you have questions.

Paulding County Board Members and Superintendent

Mr. Adam Clayton
District 3

Mr. Dan Nolan
District 6/Vice-Chair

Mr. Jeff Fuller
At Large

Ms. Theresa Lyons,
District 1

Mr. John Dean
District 5

Mrs. Debbie Collet
District 4/ Chair

Mr. Steve
Barnette
Superintendent

Mr. Nick Chester
District 2

With the exception of special called meetings, all board meeting dates are approved in January each year. Look for current year's dates on our website www.paulding.k12.ga.us.

The 2024-2025 Work Calendars and Salary Schedules are located on the District's Intranet page under [Human Resources](#).

Paulding County School District

OVERVIEW OF THE BENEFITS PROVIDED TO THE FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES OF THE PAULDING COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Health Insurance: Major Medical single coverage is offered at a nominal fee through PPO, HMOs, and a Consumer Driven Health Plan.

Dental Insurance: A comprehensive dental plan is offered to each employee.

Life Insurance: Each employee is provided a \$15,000 Life Insurance Plan with accidental and dismemberment coverage. This is an employer benefit.

Dependent Coverage: Each employee may insure their spouse and dependent children under the above three plans for an additional cost.

Teacher Retirement: The Paulding County School District pays a percentage toward this benefit.

Public Retirement: Employees contribute toward this benefit to the Public Retirement System.

Social Security: The Paulding County School District pays a percentage of your gross salary toward this benefit.

Sick Leave: You earn 1 ¼ days of sick leave per month. You may use 5 of these days for personal leave each year, with no more than 3 of these days being consecutive. If you choose not to use them, they will accumulate as sick leave. You may accumulate up to 90 sick leave days with the Paulding County School District.

Flexible Benefit Program: The Paulding County School District provides a program which allows the employee to pay for the cost of health, dental, vision, and cancer insurance premiums with pre-tax dollars. In addition, employees may elect to participate in flexible spending accounts for eligible un-reimbursable medical and dependent care expenses.

Tax Shelter: Employees can contribute to voluntary retirement plans. You can choose from a pre-tax 403b, 457b or Roth 457b. Please contact the Benefits Department for more information as needed.

Disability Insurance: Short and/or Long-Term disability is available if you wish to have the premium deducted from your paycheck.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Engage. Inspire. Prepare. is the mission of the Paulding County School District. The district includes 19 elementary schools, 9 middle schools, and 5 high schools, a College and Career Academy as well Paulding Virtual Academy, which serves students K-12.

Location: Paulding County, located west of Atlanta, is one of the fastest growing counties in the nation. The county's location provides quick access to the downtown Atlanta area, major shopping malls, and Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport. This combined with breathtaking landscape, outstanding schools, warm and friendly atmosphere, make Paulding County an attractive community in which to live and work.

Facilities: All of our school facilities are new, have been extensively renovated, or are scheduled for upcoming renovation. The safety and cleanliness of our facilities are a top priority. Our students and staff deserve the very best and our facilities should reflect this belief.

Enrollment: Approximately 32,000 students are enrolled in grades Pre-K-12 in Paulding County Schools.

Employees: The school district, the largest single employer in the county, has over 3,616 employees. The majority of the system's 2,251 teachers and administrators are fully certified and of those, 70% hold advanced degrees.

Accreditation: All Paulding County Schools are fully accredited by AdvancedEd. State standards have been met annually by the entire system. Special Education, Title I, Early Intervention Program, and Remedial Education monitoring have been successfully completed as well.

Parent Participation: Parental involvement is a vital part of the school district. A variety of activities and opportunities are offered to allow parents to play an active role in their child's education. Included in those programs are parent workshops, held throughout the school year, parent volunteer programs at each school, and many more programs are offered through the PTA, PTO, and PTSA.

Public Participation: Public input plays an important role in the school district's progress. A variety of groups including students, staff, and the community combine their input to make the best decisions for the operation of the Paulding County School District. Groups such as Curriculum Project Committees, Sex Education Advisory Committee, Parent Teacher Association, Advisory Council, Student Advisory Council, Teacher Advisory Council and the Strategic Planning Committee provide appropriate forums for input.

Student Awards and Achievements: Paulding County School District students excel in both curricular and extra-curricular activities, receiving awards and recognitions at the Regional, State, and National level. Many scholarships, totaling millions of dollars, are awarded annually in the areas of academics and athletics.

Programs

Elementary School Level: The elementary schools in Paulding County School District provide a variety of programs including music, physical education, art, the Early Intervention Program (EIP), Title I, Extended Year Program, Gifted (Venture), and special education services. Each school offers an After School Program (ASP) through an independent contractor, Learning Bridge. All schools are involved with site-based management, school-based budgeting, and help determine the professional learning opportunities offered at their site.

Middle School Level: Computer labs are available at each site. A variety of instructional programs are in place providing support for students in addition to a number of academic and extra-curricular clubs and teams. All schools are involved in site-based decision making as well as school-based budgeting and staff development.

High School Level: Many quality programs including the Youth Apprenticeship Program and the Agri-Science Lab are available to students at the high school level. A quality Fine Arts program is in place as well. Several programs have achieved industry certification through membership in groups such as the Georgia Vocational Consortium. The schools are involved with Professional Teacher Education Center Partnerships through Kennesaw State University. Site-based decision making, school-based budgeting and school-based staff development are practiced at both schools. All schools offer a full variety of extracurricular activities as well.

Parent Participation: Parental involvement is a vital component of the school system. A variety of activities and opportunities are offered through which parents play an active role in the educational process. Included in those programs are parent workshops held throughout the school year, parent volunteer programs at each school, and many other opportunities for involvement are offered through PTA and PTSA. Parents are encouraged by the district and individual schools to become actively involved in their child's education.

Technology: Technology is an integral component of the instructional program. It is used as a tool to enhance student learning, remediate student needs, and to explore curriculum objectives. Teachers serve as models for technology use as they utilize such to perform their duties, to instruct their classes, and to plan for instruction. Software in the schools includes comprehensive instructional and tutorial programs as well as a variety of multimedia and educational tools. There are basic software applications in all schools. All Paulding County teachers have multimedia stations with internet access for instruction and planning purposes.

Schools have updated computer labs with Math, English, Language Arts, and Writing Programs. The labs have internet access along with word processing, spreadsheet, and presentation applications. High school media centers have on-line resources, expanding the research capability of all students. Middle schools are equipped with technology labs for students with a wide variety of software applications.

Elementary schools have computer labs with a variety of curriculum software available. High schools have moved to the 1-to-1 device model and Middle Schools are currently being phased into this model as well. Elementary schools have moved to class sets of

devices for student use to be shared between two classrooms.

Other technological services available include the Student Information System, Infinite Campus, Canvas, and Outlook (E-mail).

Teacher Awards and Achievements: Paulding educators are frequently honored with state awards. Some of these have included Georgia Outstanding Social Studies Teacher of the Year, Alternative Education State Teacher of the Year, and Georgia Home Economics Teacher of the Year. Teachers also conduct state and national presentations in critical areas.

School Grant Opportunities: Various grant monies are applied for and received each year to further enhance achievement for our students. Examples include grants in the areas of technology, outdoor education, innovation, and school improvement. Numerous Technology/Career Education grants facilitate student academic and skill growth. Our Schools are supported by the Chamber of Commerce as well as the Paulding Education Foundation. We are fortunate to have many Partners in Education who support individual schools and the District's mission and vision and offers various grants to benefit classrooms and schools.

**Paulding County School District
“For Success Today and Tomorrow”**

Mission Statement

Engage. Inspire. Prepare

Vision Statement

The Vision of Paulding County School District
is to prepare ALL students for success
today and tomorrow.

Beliefs

- We believe preparing students for success is our first priority.
- We believe in fostering a culture of high expectations in student achievement and personal development.
- We believe all students are inspired to learn when provided rigorous and relevant instruction and positive relationships.
- We believe in providing an environment which is safe, challenging, inclusive and, both physically and mentally healthy.
- We believe in the use of collaborative learning communities where best practices are partnered with data driven decisions.

Employee Handbook Disclaimer

This Handbook is not a Contract.

This Employee Handbook is intended for orientation and instructional purposes only. It does not create a contract of employment, nor does it guarantee employment for any length of time or under any particular conditions. The Paulding County School District reserves the right to amend, replace or abolish this handbook at any time, with or without prior notice.

Classified Employees of PCSD are employed at will and the District may end their employment at any time, with or without cause, and with or without prior notice or warning.

Certified employees are contracted for a specific period of time. Georgia Fair Dismissal laws will be adhered to in all cases involving contracted employees.

No representative of the PCSD, other than the Board of Education, has any authority to enter into any agreement for employment for any specified period of time, or to offer any job security beyond at-will employment, and any employment agreement entered into by the Board of Education must be in writing and signed by both parties.

This Handbook does not contain all Board of Education Policies pertaining to personnel. You will find all Board of Education Policies and Regulations at the Paulding County School District web site: www.paulding.k12.ga.us

Paulding County School District Board Policies

Georgia Code of Ethics for Educators

The School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, disability, or sex in its employment practices. It is the policy of the Board of Education to comply fully with the requirements of Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA), the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) and all accompanying regulations.

Any employee, applicant for employment, or other person who believes he or she has been discriminated against or harassed in violation of the laws specified below must make a complaint in accordance with the procedure outlined below.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Complaints made to the School District regarding alleged discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color or national origin in violation of Title VI; sex (except as stated below) in violation of Title IX; religion in violation of Title VII; disability in violation of Section 504 or the ADA, or age in violation of the ADEA, will be processed in accordance with the following procedure:

1. (a) Any employee, applicant for employment, or other person with a complaint or report alleging a violation as described above, excluding sexual harassment as defined in 1b, shall promptly notify, in writing or orally, either the principal for his/her school or the appropriate coordinator designated by the school principal or the District. If the report or complaint is oral, either the coordinator or school principal to whom the complaint is made shall promptly prepare a memorandum or written statement of the complaint as made to him or her by the complainant and shall have the complainant read and sign the memorandum or statement if it accurately reflects the complaint made. If the complaint is made to a school principal, he or she shall be responsible for notifying the appropriate coordinator of the complaint. Reports or complaints other than those described in 1b shall be handled in accordance with the procedures starting in 2.

(b) Any person with a complaint or report alleging sexual harassment as defined in Policy GAEB (whether or not the person reporting is the person alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment), may report, in person, by mail, by telephone, or by electronic mail, using the contact information listed for the Title IX Coordinator on the District's website, or by any other means that results in the Title IX Coordinator receiving the person's verbal or written report. Such a report may be made at any time (including during non-business hours) by using the telephone number or electronic mail address, or by mail to the office address, listed for the Title IX Coordinator. Such reports will be handled in accordance with the procedures and grievance process specified in Policy GAEB.

2. If the alleged offending individual is the coordinator, the complaint shall either be made by the complainant to the Superintendent or, if the complaint is initially made to the school principal, reported by the principal to the Superintendent. If the alleged offending individual is the Superintendent, the complaint shall be made to the designated coordinator, who shall, without further investigation, report the complaint to the Board chairperson.
3. The coordinator or his or her designee shall have fifteen school days to gather all information relevant to the complaint made, review the information, determine the facts relating to the complaint, review the action requested by the complainant, and attempt to resolve the complaint with the complainant and any other persons involved. The coordinator or designee shall prepare a written response to the complaint detailing any action to be taken in response to the complaint and the time frame in which such action will be taken and copies of this response shall be furnished to the complainant, the appropriate coordinator and the principal or his or her designee.
4. If the complaint is not resolved at the conclusion of this fifteen-day period or if the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution of the complaint, the complainant shall have the right, within five school days of receiving a copy of the written response, to have the complaint referred to the Superintendent of Schools. If the alleged offending individual is the Superintendent, the complainant may have the complaint referred to the Board of Education, rather than the Superintendent.
5. The Superintendent shall have fifteen school days to review the complaint and the response of the coordinator or designee and attempt to resolve the complaint. The Superintendent shall furnish to the complainant a written response setting forth either his or her approval of the action recommended by the coordinator or designee or the action to be taken by the School District in response to the complaint in lieu of that recommended by the coordinator or designee and the time frame in which such action shall be taken. The decision of the Superintendent shall be final.
6. This policy is not intended to deprive any employee of any right they may have to file a grievance pursuant to any other policy of the local Board of Education, specifically the policy designed to implement Official Code of Georgia Annotated 20-2-989.5, where appropriate. This policy is not intended to provide an alternative process for resolving evaluation and employment disputes where there already exists a due process procedure mandated by state law or State Department of Education regulations, specifically including, but not limited to, hearings to be conducted pursuant to the Fair Dismissal Act of Georgia. The complainant retains at all times the right to contact the Office of Civil Rights, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission or any other appropriate state or federal agency with regard to any allegations that the

School District has violated the statutes described above.

7. The School District shall be responsible for distributing and disseminating information relevant to this policy and procedure to employees through appropriate procedures.
8. No reprisal shall occur as a result of reporting unlawful discrimination or harassment under this policy, and any attempt to retaliate against a complainant shall be disciplined as is appropriate.
9. The confidentiality of any individual making a complaint or report in accordance with this policy, to the extent it is reasonably possible and complies with the law, shall be protected, although the discovery of the truth and the elimination of unlawful harassment shall be the overriding consideration.

Contact information for the following coordinators is available on the District's website.

Title VI Coordinator	Chief Talent Officer
Title IX Coordinator	Director of Certification and Employee Relations
Section 504 Coordinator	Executive Director of Student Services
ADA/ADEA Coordinator	Executive Director of Student Services
Title II (Carl Perkins Act) Coordinator	Director of Career Technical Agriculture Education

Original Adopted Date:8/24/2001 Last Revised Date: 3/28/2023 Last Reviewed Date 3/28/2023

Board Policy: Complaints and Grievances

Descriptor Code: GAE

In accordance with O.C.G.A. § 20-2-989.5, the Paulding County Board of Education (Board) recognizes that 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 encourages all employees to resolve their complaints informally in a spirit of collegiality where possible. This policy and accompanying rules are available where such efforts do not succeed, or where, for any other reason, the employee desires to pursue this procedure. The Superintendent shall

establish and maintain procedures as needed to meet these requirements and implement this policy.

Board Policy
Complaints and Grievances-Certified Employees

Descriptor Code: GAE-R(1)

RATIONALE/OBJECTIVE:

The Paulding County School District (District) believes that clearly stated procedures for employees will make it easier to resolve concerns, complaints and grievances (Complaints) that may arise between employees and/or supervisors.

RULE:

A. Purpose/Informal Resolution Preferred

The goal of this Rule is to resolve problems and disputes in employment relationships at the lowest possible organizational level with a minimum of conflict and formal proceedings so that good morale may be maintained, effective job performance may be enhanced, and the community may be better served. The District encourages all employees to resolve their Complaints informally in a spirit of collegiality where possible. This Rule is available where such efforts do not succeed, or, where for other reasons, the employee desires to pursue this procedure.

B. Definitions

1. Administrator:

The individual at each level designated by the District to preside over and make decisions with respect to employee Complaints.

2. Complainant:

The employee who files a Complaint pursuant to this Rule.

3. Complaint:

Any claim by a District employee which is filed pursuant to and within the scope of this Rule.

4. Level I Hearing Administrator:

The Principal of the school or supervisor of the department/division in which the Complainant is assigned.

5. Level II Hearing Administrator:

The Superintendent or designee.

6. Level III Hearing Officer:

The District may appoint an attorney to serve as the law officer who shall rule on issues of law and other objections, but such attorney shall not participate in the presentation of the case for either party.

C. Scope of Complaint/Exclusions

1. Scope:

Unless excluded by Section C of this Rule, this Complaint procedure is applicable to any

claim by an employee who is affected in his/her employment relationship by an alleged violation, misinterpretation, or misapplication of statutes, policies, Rules, regulations, or written agreements of the District with which the District is required to comply.

2. Exclusions: This procedure shall not apply to
 - a. Performance rating contained in personnel evaluation and professional development plans pursuant to O.C.G.A. 20-2-210;
 - b. Job performance;
 - c. Termination, non-renewal, demotion, suspension, or reprimand of any employee, as set forth in O.C.G.A. 20-2-940;
 - d. The revocation, suspension, or denial of certificates of any employee, as set forth in O.C.G.A. 20-2-790;
3. A certified employee who chooses to appeal under O.C.G.A. 20-2-1160 shall be barred from pursuing the same complaint under this policy.

D. PROCEDURES:

1. A Complaint by the employee at the initial and each subsequent level of review shall be in writing (See Section E below) and shall clearly state the intent of the employee to access the Complaint Rule.

2. Time Schedules:

- a. The Complainant shall be entitled to file a Complaint within ten (10) calendar days from the most recent incident upon which the Complaint is based;
- b. The Complainant shall have ten (10) calendar days to file an appeal at any level;
- c. The total time frame shall not exceed sixty (60) calendar days from the initiation of the Complaint until notification to the Complainant of the decision rendered by the Paulding County Board of Education (Board).

3. Hearing:

a. Evidence:

(1) The Complainant shall be entitled to an opportunity to be heard, to present relevant evidence, and to examine witnesses at each level; but

(2) The Complainant may not present additional evidence at Level II or Level III of the Complaint process unless the additional evidence is submitted in writing to the Superintendent at least five (5) calendar days prior to the hearing;

(3) When hearing a Level III appeal from Level II, the Board shall hear the Complaint as a totally new hearing where all evidence is presented as if for the first time (de novo).

b. Time Limits:

a. The Hearing Administrators and the Board shall have the authority to maintain order at any hearings provided under this Rule;

b. Time limits may be imposed at the outset of the hearing or at any time during the hearing regarding the presentation of evidence or examination of witnesses.

4. Representation:

a. Level I:

The presence of any individual other than the Complainant and the Level I Administrator is specifically prohibited, except witnesses who present testimony or documents.

b. Levels II and III:

The Complainant and the administrator against whom the Complaint is filed or whose

decision is appealed shall be entitled to the presence of an individual, including an attorney, to assist in the presentation of the Complaint and the response thereof at Level II and Level III of this procedure. If the Complainant is represented by an attorney, the Board attorney shall be present and present the District's case if requested by the administrator.

5. Records:

- a. An accurate record of the proceedings shall be kept at each level;
- b. The proceeding shall be recorded by mechanical/electronic means;
- c. All evidence shall be preserved and made available at all times to the parties involved;
- d. All costs and fees shall be borne by the party incurring them unless otherwise agreed upon by the parties, except:
 - (1) The cost of preparing and preserving the records of proceedings shall be borne by the District; however,
 - (2) The cost of transcribing the proceedings before the Board shall be borne by the party requesting the same, and all costs of the record on any further appeal shall be paid by the party required to do so by the laws relating thereto.

6. Decisions:

- a. The decision reached at each Complaint level shall be sent to the Complainant by both first class and certified mail, overnight delivery or hand delivered by a person designated by the Superintendent within ten (10) calendar days of the decision.
- b. If the decision is sent by first class and certified mail or overnight delivery, it shall be sent to the address stated in the Complaint or, if not contained in the Complaint, to the last known address of the Complainant on file with the District.
- c. Notification to the Complainant of the decision shall be deemed to have been made:
 - (1) On the date of hand delivery; or
 - (2) On the date of deposit in the United States Mail by first class and certified mail, return receipt requested; or
 - (3) On the date deposited for overnight delivery.

7. Automatic Referral to Next Level:

Any Complaint not processed by the administrator or the Board within the time frames required by this Rule shall be forwarded to the next level of the Complaint procedure.

E. FORM OF COMPLAINT:

The Complaint must be in writing and shall include the following:

- 1. The mailing address of the Complainant to which notices and all other documents may be delivered;
- 2. A statement of the intent of the Complainant to utilize this Complaint procedure;
- 3. A reference to the statute, policy, Rule, regulation, or written agreement that is alleged to have been violated, misapplied, or misinterpreted;
- 4. A brief statement of the facts on which the Complaint is based that explains how such statute, policy, Rule, regulation or written agreement was violated, misapplied, or misinterpreted, and how it substantially affects the employment relationship of the Complainant; and
- 5. A statement of the relief desired.

F. LEVEL I HEARING:

1. The Complaint shall be filed with the Level I Administrator within ten (10) calendar days from the occurrence of the most recent alleged incident or other matter on which the Complaint is filed and shall clearly state the intent of the employee to access the Complaint;
2. The Level I Administrator shall indicate the date of filing on the Complaint;
3. If the Complaint is filed within the required time limit, the Level I Administrator shall give written notice to the Complainant of the time and place of the hearing, either by mail, electronically or hand delivery:
 - a. When notice is given by mail, it shall be sent by first class mail to the address set forth in the Complaint;
 - b. If no address was included in the Complaint, then notice shall be sent to the last known address of the Complainant on file with the District.
4. The Level I Administrator shall conduct a hearing on the Complaint and render a decision thereon within ten (10) calendar days of the filing of the Complaint;
5. The decision shall be dated and shall:
 - a. Set forth findings of fact;
 - b. The decision made; and
 - c. Reasons for that decision.
6. A copy of the decision shall be sent to the Complainant as provided in Section D above.

G. LEVEL II HEARING - APPEAL FROM LEVEL I:

A Complainant who wishes to contest the decision of the Level I Administrator may appeal that decision to the Level II Administrator as follows:

1. The appeal must be filed in the Superintendent's office in writing within ten (10) calendar days after the date the Level I Administrator's decision is mailed or hand delivered;
2. The appeal shall clearly set forth the questions and issues involved and the reasons why the Complainant wishes to contest the Level I Administrator's decision;
3. The Superintendent's office shall indicate the date of the filing on the appeal;
4. If the appeal is filed within the time limit, a Level II hearing shall be scheduled before an appropriate Level II Administrator who shall give written notice to the Complainant of the time and place of the hearing by mail, electronically or hand delivery;
5. The Level II Administrator shall, within ten (10) calendar days of the filing of the appeal:
 - a. Obtain the record of the proceedings and evidence introduced at the Level I hearing, as well as a copy of the Complaint;
 - b. Conduct a hearing; and
 - c. Render a written decision;
6. If the Level II Administrator is a designated representative of the Superintendent, the Administrator shall promptly submit his/her recommendations and findings to the Superintendent for final decision, which shall be rendered within ten (10) calendar days of the filing of the appeal;
7. The decision shall be dated and shall:
 - a. Set forth findings of fact;
 - b. The decision made; and
 - c. Reasons for that decision;
8. A copy of the decision shall be sent to the Complainant as provided in Section D above.

H. LEVEL III HEARING - APPEAL FROM LEVEL II:

A Complainant who wishes to contest the decision of the Level II Administrator may appeal that decision to the Board as follows:

1. The appeal must be filed in the Superintendent's office in writing within ten (10) calendar days after the date the Level II Administrator's decision is mailed or hand delivered;
2. The appeal shall clearly set forth the questions and issues involved and the reasons why the Complainant wishes to contest the Level II Administrator's decision;
3. The Superintendent's office shall indicate the date of filing on the appeal;
4. If the appeal is filed within the time limit, the Superintendent or designee shall give written notice to the Complainant of the time and place of the hearing by mail, electronically or hand delivery;
5. The Complainant and the Administrators against whom the Complaint is filed or whose decision is being appealed shall be entitled to appear before the Board and be heard;
6. Three members of the Board may conduct the hearing and submit findings and recommendations to the full Board for final decision;
7. The Level III hearing shall be conducted as a de novo proceeding by the Board or its designated committee and a decision rendered by the Board so that the decision is mailed or hand delivered to the Complainant within sixty (60) calendar days after the filing of the initial Level I complaint, but no later than fifteen (15) days after the conclusion of the Level III hearing;
8. The Board's written decision shall be dated and shall;
 - (1) Set forth findings of fact;
 - (2) The decision made; and
 - (3) Reasons for the decision;
9. A copy of the decision shall be delivered to the Complainant in accordance with Section D above within sixty (60) calendar days after the filing of the initial Level I Complaint.

I. APPEALS TO STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION:

A Complainant dissatisfied with the decision of the Paulding County Board of Education may appeal that decision to the Georgia Board of Education. Such appeals shall be governed by the applicable State Board Rule and O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1160.

J. REPRISALS:

A Complainant shall not be the subject of any reprisal as a result of filing a Complaint under this Rule. Should any such reprisal occur, the Complainant may refer the matter to the Professional Practices Commission .

K. COLLECTIVE BARGAINING DISCLAIMER:

Nothing in this Rule shall be interpreted as authorizing or permitting collective bargaining by or on behalf of any employee or group of employees.

All policies and parts of policies in conflict herewith are repealed.

Regulation GAE-R (2): Complaints and Grievances-Classified Personnel

RATIONALE/OBJECTIVE:

The Paulding County School District (District) believes that clearly stated procedures for employees will make it easier to resolve concerns, complaints and grievances (Complaints) that may arise between employees and/or supervisors.

RULE:

A. PURPOSE/INFORMAL RESOLUTION PREFERRED:

The goal of this Rule is to resolve problems and disputes in employment relationships at the lowest possible organizational level with a minimum of conflict and formal proceedings so that good morale may be maintained, effective job performance may be enhanced, and the community may be better served. The District encourages all employees to resolve their Complaints informally in a spirit of collegiality where possible. This Rule is available where such efforts do not succeed, or, where for other reasons, the employee desires to pursue this procedure.

B. DEFINITIONS:

1. Administrator:

The individual at each level designated by the District to preside over and make decisions with respect to employee Complaints.

2. Complainant:

The employee who files a Complaint pursuant to this Rule.

3. Complaint:

Any claim by a District employee which is filed pursuant to and within the scope of this Rule.

4. Level I Hearing Administrator:

The Principal of the school or supervisor of the department/division in which the Complainant is assigned.

5. Level II Hearing Administrator:

The Superintendent or designee.

C. SCOPE OF COMPLAINT/EXCLUSIONS:

1. Scope:

Unless excluded by Section C of this Rule, this Complaint procedure is applicable to any claim by an employee who is affected in his/her employment relationship by an alleged violation, misinterpretation, or misapplication of statutes, policies, Rules, regulations, or written agreements of the District with which the District is required to comply.

2. Exclusions:

This Rule shall not apply to:

- a. Performance ratings contained in personnel evaluations conducted pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-210 remediation plans, and job performance; performance ratings and annual evaluations for all employees not covered by O.C.G.A. § 20-2-210 (Administrative Rule GARI-R [Employee Evaluation]);
 - b. Job performance;
 - c. Termination, non-renewal, demotion, suspension, or reprimand of any employee as set forth in O. C.G.A § 20-2-940;
 - d. Revocation, suspension, or denial of certificates of any certified employee, as set forth in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-984.5.
3. An employee who chooses to appeal under O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1160 (School Law Tribunals; Appeals) shall be barred from pursuing the same Complaint under this Rule.

D. PROCEDURES:

1. A Complaint by the employee at the initial and each subsequent level of review shall be in writing (See Section E below) and shall clearly state the intent of the employee to access the Complaint Rule.

2. Time Schedules:

- a. The Complainant shall be entitled to file a Complaint within ten (10) calendar days from the most recent incident upon which the Complaint is based;
- b. The Complainant shall have ten (10) calendar days to file an appeal at any level;
- c. The total time frame shall not exceed sixty (60) calendar days from the initiation of the Complaint until notification to the Complainant of the decision rendered by the Cobb County Board of Education (Board).

3. Hearing:

a. Evidence:

- (1) The Complainant shall be entitled to an opportunity to be heard, to present relevant evidence, and to examine witnesses at each level; but
- (2) The Complainant may not present additional evidence at Level II or Level III of the Complaint process unless the additional evidence is submitted in writing to the Superintendent at least five (5) calendar days prior to the hearing;

b. Time Limits:

- a. The Hearing Administrators and the Board shall have the authority to maintain order at any hearings provided under this Rule;
- b. Time limits may be imposed at the outset of the hearing or at any time during the hearing regarding the presentation of evidence or examination of witnesses.

4. Representation:

a. Level I:

The presence of any individual other than the Complainant and the Level I Administrator is specifically prohibited, except witnesses who present testimony or documents.

b. Level II:

The Complainant and the administrator against whom the Complaint is filed or whose decision is appealed shall be entitled to the presence of an individual, including an attorney, to assist in the presentation of the Complaint and the response thereof at

Level II of this procedure. If the Complainant is represented by an attorney, the Board attorney shall be present and present the District's case if requested by the administrator.

5. Records:

- a. An accurate record of the proceedings shall be kept at each level;
- b. The proceeding shall be recorded by mechanical/electronic means;
- c. All evidence shall be preserved and made available at all times to the parties involved;
- d. All costs and fees shall be borne by the party incurring them unless otherwise agreed upon by the parties, except:
 - (1) The cost of preparing and preserving the records of proceedings shall be borne by the District; however,
 - (2) Costs of the record on any further appeal shall be paid by the party required to do so by the laws relating thereto.

6. Decisions:

- a. The decision reached at each Complaint level shall be sent to the Complainant by both first class and certified mail, overnight delivery or hand delivered by a person designated by the Superintendent within ten (10) calendar days of the decision.
- b. If the decision is sent by first class and certified mail or overnight delivery, it shall be sent to the address stated in the Complaint or, if not contained in the Complaint, to the last known address of the Complainant on file with the District.
- c. Notification to the Complainant of the decision shall be deemed to have been made:
 - (1) On the date of hand delivery; or
 - (2) On the date of deposit in the United States Mail by first class and certified mail, return receipt requested; or
 - (3) On the date deposited for overnight delivery.

7. Automatic Referral to Next Level:

Any Complaint not processed by the administrator within the time frames required by this

Rule shall be forwarded to the next level of the Complaint procedure.

E. FORM OF COMPLAINT:

The Complaint must be in writing and shall include the following:

- 1. The mailing address of the Complainant to which notices and all other documents may be delivered;
- 2. A statement of the intent of the Complainant to utilize this Complaint procedure;
- 3. A reference to the statute, policy, Rule, regulation, or written agreement that is alleged to have been violated, misapplied, or misinterpreted;
- 4. A brief statement of the facts on which the Complaint is based that explains how such statute, policy, Rule, regulation or written agreement was violated, misapplied, or misinterpreted, and how it substantially affects the employment relationship of the Complainant; and
- 5. A statement of the relief desired.

F. LEVEL I HEARING:

- 1. The Complaint shall be filed with the Level I Administrator within ten (10) calendar days from the occurrence of the most recent alleged incident or other matter on which the

Complaint is filed and shall clearly state the intent of the employee to access the Complaint;

2. The Level I Administrator shall indicate the date of filing on the Complaint;
3. If the Complaint is filed within the required time limit, the Level I Administrator shall give written notice to the Complainant of the time and place of the hearing, either by mail, electronically or hand delivery:
 - a. When notice is given by mail, it shall be sent by first class mail to the address set forth in the Complaint;
 - b. If no address was included in the Complaint, then notice shall be sent to the last known address of the Complainant on file with the District.
4. The Level I Administrator shall conduct a hearing on the Complaint and render a decision thereon within ten (10) calendar days of the filing of the Complaint;
5. The decision shall be dated and shall:
 - a. Set forth findings of fact;
 - b. The decision made; and
 - c. Reasons for that decision.
6. A copy of the decision shall be sent to the Complainant as provided in Section D above.

G. LEVEL II HEARING - APPEAL FROM LEVEL I:

A Complainant who wishes to contest the decision of the Level I Administrator may appeal that decision to the Level II Administrator as follows:

1. The appeal must be filed in the Superintendent's office in writing within ten (10) calendar days after the date the Level I Administrator's decision is mailed;
2. The appeal shall clearly set forth the questions and issues involved and the reasons why the Complainant wishes to contest the Level I Administrator's decision;
3. The Superintendent's office shall indicate the date of the filing on the appeal;
4. If the appeal is filed within the time limit, a Level II hearing shall be scheduled before an appropriate Level II Administrator who shall give written notice to the Complainant of the time and place of the hearing by mail, electronically or hand delivery;
5. The Level II Administrator shall, within ten (10) calendar days of the filing of the appeal:
 - a. Obtain the record of the proceedings and evidence introduced at the Level I hearing, as well as a copy of the Complaint;
 - b. Conduct a hearing; and
 - c. Render a written decision;
6. If the Level II Administrator is a designated representative of the Superintendent, then Administrator shall promptly submit his/her recommendations and findings to the Superintendent for final decision, which shall be rendered within ten (10) calendar days of the filing of the appeal;
7. The decision shall be dated and shall:
 - a. Set forth findings of fact;
 - b. The decision made; and
 - c. Reasons for that decision.
8. A copy of the decision shall be sent to the Complainant as provided in Section D above.
9. The Level II decision is the final decision.

H. REPRISALS:

A Complainant shall not be the subject of any reprisal as a result of filing a Complaint under this Rule. Should any such reprisal occur, the Complainant may refer the matter to the Professional Practices Commission.

I. COLLECTIVE BARGAINING DISCLAIMER:

Nothing in this Rule shall be interpreted as authorizing or permitting collective bargaining by or on behalf of any employee or group of employees.

Original Adopted Date: 3/28/2023

Last Reviewed Date: 3/28/2023

Board Policy Harassment

Descriptor Code: GAEB

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The intent of this policy is to comply with the Title IX federal regulations concerning sexual harassment. To the extent that additional requirements are specified in federal law or regulations, the District shall comply with such requirements.

DEFINITIONS

Actual knowledge means notice of sexual harassment or allegations of sexual harassment to the District's Title IX Coordinator or to any official or employee of the District. This notice requirement is not met when the only District official or employee with actual knowledge is the respondent.

Complainant means an individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

Days for the purpose of this policy means "school days."

Deliberately indifferent means a response to sexual harassment that is clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances.

Formal complaint means a document filed by a complainant or signed by the Title IX Coordinator alleging sexual harassment against a respondent and requesting that the District investigate the allegation of sexual harassment. At the time of filing a formal complaint, a complainant must be participating in or attempting to participate in a District education program or activity. A formal complaint may be filed with the Title IX Coordinator in person, by mail, or by electronic mail, by using the contact information listed for the Title IX Coordinator in the District's nondiscrimination notice posted on its website. As used in this policy, the phrase "document filed by a complainant" means a document or electronic submission (such as by electronic mail or through an online portal provided by the District) that contains the complainant's physical or digital signature, or otherwise indicates that the complainant is the person filing the formal complaint. Where the Title IX Coordinator signs a formal complaint, the Title IX Coordinator is not a complainant or otherwise a party under this policy.

Respondent means an individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of

conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment means conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

1. An employee of the District conditioning the provision of a District aid, benefit, or service on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct.
2. Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the District's education program or activity; or
3. "Sexual assault"- an offense classified as a forcible or nonforcible sex offense under the uniform crime reporting system of the Federal Bureau of Investigation; or

"Dating Violence"- sex-based violence committed by a person-

(A) who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim; and

(B) where the existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on a consideration of the following factors:

(i) The length of the relationship.

(ii) The type of relationship.

(iii) The frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship; or

"Domestic Violence"- sex-based violence which includes felony or misdemeanor crimes of violence committed by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim, by a person with whom the victim shares a child in common, by a person who is cohabitating with or has cohabitated with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner, by a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction receiving grant monies, or by any other person against an adult or youth victim who is protected from that person's acts under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction; or

"Sex-based Stalking" - engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to-

(A) fear for his or her safety or the safety of others; or

(B) suffer substantial emotional distress.

Supportive measures means non-disciplinary, non-punitive individualized services offered as appropriate, as reasonably available, and without fee or charge to the complainant or the respondent before or after the filing of a formal complaint or where no formal complaint has been filed. Such measures are designed to restore or preserve equal access to the recipient's education program or activity without unreasonably burdening the other party, including measures designed to protect the safety of all parties or the District's educational environment, or deter sexual harassment. The District shall presume that the respondent is not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination regarding responsibility is made at the conclusion of the grievance process. The grievance process will be followed before the imposition of any disciplinary sanctions or other actions that are not supportive

measures against a respondent. Supportive measures may include counseling, extensions of deadlines or other course-related adjustments, modifications of work or class schedules, campus escort services, mutual restrictions on contact between the parties, changes in work locations, leaves of absence, increased security and monitoring of certain areas of the campus, and other similar measures. The District shall maintain as confidential any supportive measures provided to the complainant or respondent, to the extent that maintaining such confidentiality would not impair the ability of the District to provide the supportive measures. The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for coordinating the effective implementation of supportive measures.

NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

It is the policy of the Board of Education to comply fully with the requirements of state law, Title IX and its accompanying regulations.

The School District prohibits discrimination based on sex and sexual harassment of employees by other employees, board members, students, volunteers, or others over whom the District has authority in any District education program or activity. Education program or activity includes locations, events, or circumstances over which the District exercises substantial control over both the respondent and the context in which the sexual harassment occurs.

The District shall respond promptly in a manner that is not deliberately indifferent when it has actual knowledge of sexual harassment against a person in an education program or activity.

The District shall require that any individual designated and authorized as a Title IX Coordinator, investigator, decision-maker, or any person designated to facilitate an informal resolution process, not have a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or an individual complainant or respondent. The District shall ensure that Title IX Coordinators, investigators, decision-makers, and any person who facilitates an informal resolution process, will receive training on the definition of sexual harassment, the scope of the District's education program or activity, how to conduct an investigation and grievance process including questioning, appeals, and informal resolution processes, as applicable, and how to serve impartially, including by avoiding prejudgment of the facts at issue, conflicts of interest, and bias. The District shall ensure that decision-makers receive training on any technology to be used during questioning, and on issues of relevance of questions and evidence, including when questions and evidence about the complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not relevant. The District also shall ensure that investigators receive training on issues of relevance to create an investigative report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence. Any materials used to train Title IX Coordinators, investigators, decision-makers, and any person who facilitates an informal resolution process, shall not rely on sex stereotypes and shall promote impartial investigations and adjudications of formal complaints of sexual harassment. Reports or complaints made to the School District regarding alleged sexual harassment in violation of Title IX shall be processed in accordance with the following process:

GRIEVANCE PROCESS

1. Reports or complaints may be verbal or written and may be made at any time (including during non-business hours), in person, by mail, by telephone, or by electronic mail using the contact information posted on the school and/or district website.
2. Any employee, applicant for employment, or other person wishing to report or file a complaint alleging a violation as described above shall promptly notify either the principal at his/her school or the Title IX Coordinator designated and authorized by the District. Any employee who receives information alleging sexual harassment of an employee shall report it to the principal or Title IX Coordinator. If the alleged offending individual is the principal, the report or complaint should be made by the complainant to the Title IX Coordinator.
3. The Title IX Coordinator shall promptly contact the complainant to discuss the availability of supportive measures as defined in this policy, consider the complainant's wishes with respect to supportive measures, inform the complainant of the availability of supportive measures with or without the filing of a formal complaint, and explain to the complainant the process for filing a formal complaint. The District shall treat complainants and respondents equitably by following this grievance process before punishing the respondent or providing remedies to the complainant. Remedies will be designed to restore or preserve equal access to the District's education program or activity. Such remedies may include the same individualized services described as "supportive measures." However, remedies need not be non-disciplinary or non-punitive and need not avoid burdening the respondent.
4. **Formal Complaint.**

Upon receipt of a formal complaint, the District shall within 10 days provide the following written notice to the parties who are known:

(A) Notice of the District's grievance process;

(B) Notice of the allegations potentially constituting sexual harassment, including sufficient details known at the time and with sufficient time to prepare a response before any initial interview. Sufficient details include the identities of the parties involved in the incident, if known, the conduct allegedly constituting sexual harassment, and the date and location of the alleged incident, if known. The written notice shall include a statement that the respondent is presumed not responsible for the alleged conduct and that a determination regarding responsibility is made at the conclusion of the grievance process. The written notice shall inform the parties that they may have an advisor of their choice, who may be, but is not required to be, an

attorney, and may inspect and review evidence. The written notice shall inform the parties of any provision in the employee code of conduct that prohibits knowingly making false statements or knowingly submitting false information during the grievance process. The notice shall describe the range of or list the possible disciplinary sanctions and remedies that the District may implement following any determination of responsibility.

(C) If, in the course of an investigation, the District decides to investigate allegations about the complainant or respondent that are not included in the notice provided pursuant to paragraph (4)(B), the District shall provide notice of the additional allegations to the parties whose identities are known.

5. Dismissal of a formal complaint.

The District shall investigate the allegations in a formal complaint. If the conduct alleged in the formal complaint would not constitute sexual harassment as defined herein even if proved or did not occur in the District's education program or activity or in the United States, then the District shall dismiss the formal complaint with regard to that conduct for purposes of sexual harassment under Title IX; such a dismissal does not preclude action under another provision of the District's policies.

(A) The District may dismiss the formal complaint or any allegations therein, if at any time during the investigation: A complainant notifies the Title IX Coordinator in writing that the complainant would like to withdraw the formal complaint or any allegations therein; the respondent is no longer employed by the District; or specific circumstances prevent the District from gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination as to the formal complaint or allegations therein.

(B) Upon a dismissal required or permitted pursuant to paragraph (5), the District shall promptly send written notice of and reason(s) for the dismissal simultaneously to the parties.

6. Consolidation of formal complaints.

The District may consolidate formal complaints as to allegations of sexual harassment against more than one respondent, or by more than one complainant against one or more respondents, or by one party against the other party, where the allegations of sexual harassment arise out of the same facts or circumstances. Where a grievance process involves more than one complainant or more than one respondent, references to the singular "party," "complainant," or "respondent" include the plural, as applicable.

7. Investigation of a formal complaint.

After providing written notice to the parties of the receipt of a formal complaint, the District shall have 15 days to investigate. When investigating a formal complaint and throughout the grievance process, the District shall—

- (A) Assume the burden of proof and the burden of gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination regarding responsibility and not place such burdens on the parties provided that the District cannot access, consider, disclose, or otherwise use a party's records that are made or maintained by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, or other recognized professional or paraprofessional acting in the professional's or paraprofessional's capacity, or assisting in that capacity, and which are made and maintained in connection with the provision of treatment to the party, unless the District obtains that party's voluntary, written consent to do so;
- (B) Provide an equal opportunity for the parties to present witnesses, including fact and expert witnesses, and other inculpatory and exculpatory evidence;
- (C) Not restrict the ability of either party to discuss the allegations under investigation or to gather and present relevant evidence;
- (D) Provide the parties with the same opportunities to have others present during any grievance proceeding, including the opportunity to be accompanied to any related meeting or proceeding by the advisor of their choice, who may be, but is not required to be, an attorney, and not limit the choice or presence of advisor for either the complainant or respondent in any meeting or grievance proceeding; however, the District may establish restrictions regarding the extent to which the advisor may participate in the proceedings, as long as the restrictions apply equally to both parties;
- (E) Provide, to a party whose participation is invited or expected, written notice of the date, time, location, participants, and purpose of all investigative interviews or other meetings, with sufficient time for the party to prepare to participate;
- (F) Provide both parties an equal opportunity to inspect and review any non-privileged evidence obtained as part of the investigation that is directly related to the allegations raised in a formal complaint, including the evidence upon which the District does not intend to rely in reaching a determination regarding responsibility and inculpatory or exculpatory evidence whether obtained from a party or other source, so that each party can meaningfully respond to the evidence prior to conclusion of the investigation. Prior to completion of the investigative report, the District shall send to each party and the party's advisor, if any, the evidence subject to inspection and review in an electronic format or a hard copy, and the parties shall have at least 10 days to submit a written response, which the investigator will consider prior to completion of the investigative report. The District shall make all such evidence subject to the parties' inspection and review available at any meeting to give each party equal opportunity to refer to such evidence during the

meeting, including for purposes of cross-examination; and

(G) Create within 5 days an investigative report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence, and at least 10 days prior to the determination regarding responsibility, send to each party and the party's advisor, if any, the investigative report in an electronic format or a hard copy, for their review and written response.

(H) Reported sexual harassment determined not to be sexual harassment as defined under Title IX may be investigated in accordance with Policy GAAA.

8. Questions.

After the District has sent the investigative report to the parties and before reaching a determination regarding responsibility, the decision-maker(s) shall afford a 10 day period for each party to have the opportunity to submit written, relevant questions that a party wants asked of any party or witness, provide each party with the answers, and allow for additional, limited follow-up questions from each party. Questions and evidence about the complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not relevant, unless such questions and evidence about the complainant's prior sexual behavior are offered to prove that someone other than the respondent committed the conduct alleged by the complainant, or if the questions and evidence concern specific incidents of the complainant's prior sexual behavior with respect to the respondent and are offered to prove consent. The District shall not require, allow, rely upon, or otherwise use questions or evidence that constitute, or seek disclosure of, information protected under a legally recognized privilege, unless the person holding such privilege has waived the privilege. The decision-maker(s) shall explain to the party proposing the questions any decision to exclude a question as not relevant.

9. Determination regarding responsibility.

The decision-maker(s), who cannot be the same person(s) as the Title IX Coordinator or the investigator(s), shall, within 10 days of the conclusion of the question and answer period, issue a written determination regarding responsibility. To reach this determination, the District shall apply the preponderance of the evidence standard of evidence to formal complaints against students, to formal complaints against employees and to all complaints of sexual harassment.

The written determination shall include—

(A) Identification of the allegations potentially constituting sexual harassment as defined in this policy;

- (B) A description of the procedural steps taken from the receipt of the formal complaint through the determination, including any notifications to the parties, interviews with parties and witnesses, site visits, and methods used to gather other evidence;
- (C) Findings of fact supporting the determination;
- (D) Conclusions regarding the application of the District's policies to the facts;

(E) A statement of, and rationale for, the result as to each allegation, including a determination regarding responsibility, any disciplinary sanctions the District imposes on the respondent, and whether remedies designed to restore or preserve equal access to the District's education program or activity will be provided by the District to the complainant; and

(F) The District's procedures and permissible bases for the complainant and respondent to appeal.

(G) The District shall provide the written determination to the parties simultaneously. The determination regarding responsibility becomes final either on the date that the District provides the parties with the written determination of the result of the appeal, if an appeal is filed, or if an appeal is not filed, the date on which an appeal would no longer be considered timely.

(H) The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for effective implementation of any remedies.

10. Appeals.

The District shall offer both parties 10 days after a decision for an appeal from a determination regarding responsibility, and from a District's dismissal of a formal complaint or any allegations therein, on the following bases:

- A. Procedural irregularity that affected the outcome of the matter;
- B. New evidence that was not reasonably available at the time the determination regarding responsibility or dismissal was made, that could affect the outcome of the matter; and
- C. The Title IX Coordinator, investigator(s), or decision-maker(s) had a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or the individual complainant or respondent that affected the outcome of the matter.

D. As to all appeals, the District shall:

(i) Notify the other party in writing when an appeal is filed and implement appeal procedures equally for both parties;

(ii) Ensure that the decision-maker(s) for the appeal is not the same person as the decision-maker(s) that reached the determination regarding responsibility or dismissal, the investigator(s), or the Title IX Coordinator;

- (iii) Ensure that the decision-maker(s) for the appeal complies with the training standards set forth in this policy;
- (iv) Give both parties a reasonable, equal opportunity to submit a written statement in support of, or challenging, the outcome;
- (v) Issue a written decision describing the result of the appeal and the rationale for the result; and
- (vi) Provide the written decision simultaneously to both parties within 10 days of the receipt of the appeal.

11. Informal resolution.

The District shall not require as a condition of employment or continuing employment, or enjoyment of any other right, waiver of the right to an investigation and adjudication of formal complaints of sexual harassment consistent with this policy. Similarly, the District shall not require the parties to participate in an informal resolution process and shall not offer an informal resolution process unless a formal complaint is filed. However, at any time prior to reaching a determination regarding responsibility the District may facilitate an informal resolution process, such as mediation, that does not involve a full investigation and adjudication, provided that the District—

- (A) Provides to the parties a written notice disclosing: The allegations, the requirements of the informal resolution process including the circumstances under which it precludes the parties from resuming a formal complaint arising from the same allegations, provided, however, that at any time prior to agreeing to a resolution, any party has the right to withdraw from the informal resolution process and resume the grievance process with respect to the formal complaint, and any consequences resulting from participating in the informal resolution process, including the records that will be maintained or could be shared;
- (B) Obtains the parties' voluntary, written consent to the informal resolution process.

12. Recordkeeping.

The District shall maintain for a period of seven years records of—

- (A) Each sexual harassment investigation including any determination regarding responsibility, any disciplinary sanctions imposed on the respondent, and any remedies provided to the complainant designed to restore or preserve equal access to the District's education program or activity;
- (B) Any appeal and the result therefrom;

(C) Any informal resolution and the result therefrom; and
(D) All materials used to train Title IX Coordinators, investigators, decision-makers, and any person who facilitates an informal resolution process. The District shall make these training materials publicly available on its website, or if the District does not maintain a website, shall make these materials available upon request for inspection by members of the public.

(i) For each response required under the District's process for responding to a sexual harassment formal complaint, the District shall create, and maintain for a period of seven years, records of any actions, including any supportive measures, taken in response to a report or formal complaint of sexual harassment. In each instance, the District shall document the basis for its conclusion that its response was not deliberately indifferent, and document that it has taken measures designed to restore or preserve equal access to the District's education program or activity. If the District does not provide a complainant with supportive measures, then the District shall document the reasons why such a response was not clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances. The documentation of certain bases or measures does not limit the District in the future from providing additional explanations or detailing additional measures taken.

13. Confidentiality.

The District shall keep confidential the identity of any individual who has made a report or complaint of sex discrimination, including any individual who has made a report or filed a formal complaint of sexual harassment, any complainant, any individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of sex discrimination, any respondent, and any witness, except as may be permitted by federal or state law or regulations, or to carry out the purposes of Title IX requirements, including the conduct of any investigation or judicial proceeding arising thereunder.

14. Retaliation Prohibited.

(a) No District or person may intimidate, threaten, coerce, or discriminate against any individual for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX, or because the individual has made a report or complaint, testified, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner in an investigation or proceeding under Title IX. Intimidation, threats, coercion, or discrimination, including charges against an individual for employee code of conduct violations that do not involve sex discrimination or sexual harassment, but arise out of the same facts or circumstances as a report or complaint of sex discrimination, or a report or formal complaint of sexual harassment, for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX, constitutes retaliation.

Complaints alleging retaliation may be filed in accordance with the procedures specified in Policy GAAA.

(b) The exercise of rights protected under the First Amendment does not constitute

retaliation prohibited under subparagraph (a).

(c) Charging an individual with an employee code of conduct violation for making a materially false statement in bad faith in the course of a grievance proceeding under this policy does not constitute retaliation prohibited under subparagraph(a); provided, however, that a determination regarding responsibility, alone, is not sufficient to conclude that any party made a materially false statement in bad faith.

15. Time Frame.

The District shall allow for the temporary delay of the grievance process or the limited extension of time frames for good cause with written notice to the complainant and the respondent of the delay or extension and the reasons for the action. Good cause may include considerations such as the absence of a party, a party's advisor, or a witness; concurrent law enforcement activity; or the need for language assistance or accommodation of disabilities.

NOTICE:

The District is required by Title IX and its implementing regulations to notify employees, students, parents or legal guardians, applicants for admission and employment, and professional organizations holding professional agreements with the District that the District does not discriminate on the basis of sex in the operation of its education programs or activities, including admissions and employment.

Contact information for the District's Title IX Coordinator is located on its website and in all handbooks or catalogs that the District makes available to employees, students, parents or legal guardians, applicants for admission and employment, and professional organizations holding professional agreements with the District.

Inquiries about Title IX and its implementing regulations may be referred to the District's Title IX Coordinator, to the Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education, or both.

Paulding County Schools

Date Adopted: 8/24/2001

Last Revised: 3/9/2021

Last Reviewed: 3/28/2023

Staff Political Activities

The Board recognizes that employees have the same fundamental civic responsibilities and privileges as other citizens. Among these are campaigning for an elective public office and holding an elective or appointed public office.

The Board also recognizes that a primary purpose of the school system is to ensure continuity of instruction so that a quality education will be provided the children of the community. Therefore, employee absences due to campaigning and/or holding an elective or appointed public office shall not exceed three days, the time allowed for personal leave to each employee.

Any employee who intends to campaign for an elective public office shall notify the Superintendent in writing at the earliest possible moment of the office being sought, and whether the demands of the office will allow the employee to continue in the employ of the school system.

No employee shall use school system facilities, equipment, or supplies for campaigning; nor shall the employee discuss the campaign with school personnel during the work day; nor shall the employee use any time during the working day for campaign purposes.

Paulding County Schools

Original Adopted Date:8/24/2001 Last Revised:3/28/2023 Last Reviewed
Date:3/28/2023 3/28/2023

Board Policy
Criminal Background Check**Descriptor Code: GAK (1)**

A criminal record check will be conducted at or prior to employment on every person who is employed by the Paulding County Board of Education for the first time to fill either a full-time or part-time certified or classified position with this School District. This also includes community lay coaches who volunteer their services for athletics, fine arts and other co-curricular or extracurricular activities.

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. A clearance certificate verifying a satisfactory criminal background check may be required based on the requirements of state law and rules of the Professional Standards Commission.

Subsequent criminal record checks shall be conducted on all personnel in accordance with state laws, state board rules, and rules of the Professional Standards Commission. All certified personnel whose employment is continued with this School District shall have a criminal record check made upon any certificate renewal application to the Professional Standards Commission. All classified employees whose employment is continued with this School District shall have subsequent criminal record checks on a periodic basis, not to exceed every five years, using procedures and schedules to be determined by the Superintendent or designee.

Any cost of such record checks for all personnel shall be paid by the applicant or employee.

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 or continue 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.

The Superintendent shall establish such procedures and fees needed to administer this policy.

Paulding County Schools

Date Adopted: 8/24/2001

Last Revised: 12/3/2022

Last Reviewed: 3/28/2023

Board Policy
Drug-Free Workplace

Descriptor Code: GAMA

The Board of Education declares that the manufacture, distribution, sale or possession of controlled substances, marijuana and other dangerous drugs in an unlawful manner or being at work under the influence of alcohol, controlled substances, marijuana or other dangerous drugs is a serious threat to the public health, safety and welfare. With this in mind, the Board declares that its work force must be absolutely free of any person who would knowingly manufacture, distribute, sell or possess a controlled substance, marijuana or a dangerous drug in an unlawful manner. This prohibition specifically includes, but is not limited to, the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance or alcohol in the employee's workplace. This prohibition also includes, but is not limited to, an employee being under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances while on duty.

Any employee who is convicted for the first time, under the laws of this state, the United States, or any other state, of any criminal offense involving the manufacture, distribution, sale or possession of a controlled substance, marijuana or a dangerous drug shall be subject to disciplinary action. At a minimum, such an employee shall be

suspended for a period of not less than two months and shall be required to complete, at his or her own expense, a drug abuse treatment and education program licensed under Chapter 5 of Title 26 of the Official Code of Georgia and approved by the board. At a maximum, such an employee may be terminated from his employment with the school system. Any employee who is convicted for a second or subsequent time under the laws of this state, the United States, or any other state, of any criminal offense involving the manufacture, distribution, sale or possession of a controlled substance, marijuana or a dangerous drug shall be terminated from his or her employment and shall be ineligible for employment for a period of five years from the most recent date of conviction.

If, prior to an arrest for an offense involving a controlled substance, marijuana or a dangerous drug, an employee notifies the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee that the employee illegally uses a controlled substance, marijuana or a dangerous drug and is receiving or agrees to receive treatment under a drug abuse treatment and education program licensed under Chapter 5 of Title 26 of the Official Code of Georgia and approved by the Board, the employee shall be entitled to maintain his or her employment for up to one year as long as the employee follows the treatment plan. During this period, the employee shall not be separated from employment solely on the basis of the employee's drug dependence, but the employee's work activities may be restructured if practicable to protect persons or property. No statement made by an employee to the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee in order to comply with this code section shall be admissible in any civil, administrative or criminal proceeding as evidence against the public employee. The rights granted by this policy shall be available to an employee only once during a five year period and are intended to be and shall be interpreted as being the same as those minimum rights granted pursuant to the Georgia Drug-Free Work Force Act and any subsequent amendments thereof.

As a condition of employment, each employee must abide by the terms of this policy and must notify the Board within five days after any arrest on any drug-related criminal charge and further notify the Board within five days of any conviction of a drug-related offense.

A copy of this policy shall be disseminated to all employees either directly or through employee handbooks.

The Board of Education shall not consider for employment any applicant who has been convicted for the first time of any drug offense as described above for a three month period from the date of conviction nor shall the Board of Education consider any applicant for employment who has been convicted for the second time of any drug offense as described above for a five year period from the most recent date of conviction.

For purposes of this policy, "conviction" refers to any final conviction in a court of competent jurisdiction, specifically including acceptance of a plea of guilty, nolo contendere, or any plea entered under the First Offenders Act of Georgia or any comparable state or federal legislation.

No certified employee or employee with a contract for a definite term shall be subject

to suspension or termination pursuant to this policy except in compliance with the provisions of the Fair Dismissal Act of Georgia, Official Code of Georgia Annotated §§ 20-2-940 through 947. This policy is not intended and shall not be interpreted as prohibiting the school system from taking appropriate disciplinary action against any employee where there exists evidence that an employee uses, distributes or sells illegal drugs even though the employee has not been convicted of any criminal offense or where there exists evidence that an employee is under the influence of alcohol while on duty, except that the school system may not use the statement of any employee to the Superintendent requesting treatment as described in this policy.

The school district shall provide such staff development as required by state or federal law to inform employees of the dangers of drug abuse, the availability of employee assistance and drug counseling and treatment and the terms of this policy.

Paulding County Schools

Date Adopted: 8/24/2001
Last Revised Date:12/13/2022

**Board Policy
Employee Tobacco Use**

Descriptor Code: GAN

All employees of the Paulding County School District, non-employees, and visitors, shall not smoke or use any tobacco product on District property at any time.

Tobacco Products and Tobacco Use

Tobacco products are defined to include cigarettes, candy cigarettes, chewing tobacco, blunts, blunt wraps, pre-wrapped blunt cones & tubes, cigars, cigarillos, bidis, pipes, cigarette packages or smokeless tobacco containers, lighters, and ash trays. Key chains, t-shirts, coffee mugs, and any other items containing, or reasonably resembling tobacco or tobacco products are prohibited. Tobacco use includes smoking, chewing, dipping, vaping, or any other use of tobacco products or tobacco product substitutes (e.g. tobacco look-alikes, such as BaccOff), cigarette look-alikes (e.g. electronic cigarettes, vaporizers, and e-liquids), hookahs and hookah look-alikes (e.g. electronic hookahs).

District Property

School grounds and property means and includes land, school facilities and school vehicles used for the provision of academic, extracurricular programs and administration by the district. School grounds include playgrounds and recreational places. School grounds include that portion of land, school facilities and other facilities owned by municipalities, private entities or other individuals during those times when the school district has exclusive use of a portion of such land, school facilities, or other facilities for the provision of extracurricular programs.

Time of Day

“Any time” means during normal school and non-school hours - 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.

Signage

Signs declaring all school grounds and property as tobacco-free will be posted in all school buildings and vehicles. Signs will be posted at all vehicular entrances to school

grounds and building entrances, and in all indoor and outdoor athletic facilities.

Paulding County Schools

Date Adopted:8/24/2001

Last Revised: 10/27/2015

Last Reviewed:3/28/2023

Administrative Regulation
Employee Tobacco Use – GAN

Descriptor Code: GAN-R (1)

Tobacco use has been determined by the Surgeon General as a health hazard. Furthermore, the Paulding County School District (District) has determined that tobacco use is inconsistent with the concepts and principles taught through the curriculum of the District.

A. PROHIBITION:

1. Tobacco use shall be prohibited at all times:

a. At all District sponsored events;

b. On/in all District property including all District buildings, offices and vehicles (including trucks, automobiles and buses) whether owned or leased by the District.

B. NON-STUDENTS:

The same tobacco prohibition shall apply to employees, non-employees and visitors on District property. District employees shall be responsible for enforcing the provisions of this policy and other regulations that may be developed concerning use of tobacco on District property.

1. Employees:

Employee violations of this policy may result in:

1st Offense: A Verbal warning from immediate supervisor.

2nd Offense A letter of direction stating the date and place of violation from the immediate supervisor. The letter will be held at the school or job site.

3rd Offense: This violation is considered an act of insubordination. A letter of direction stating the date and place of violation from Human Resources. The letter will become a part of the employee's personnel file.

4th and subsequent Offenses: Further disciplinary action which may include a suspension and/or a recommendation for termination of employment.

2. Non-Employees:

Non-employees are defined as those who are assisting in or visiting a school or District activity. While doing so, they are not to use tobacco. The following procedures shall be followed when non-employees are in violation of this Policy:

- a. The District employee conducting/supervising the activity shall ask the non- employee to immediately cease the use of tobacco.
- b. If the non-employee continues his/her use of tobacco, the assistance of that individual will be terminated immediately, and he/she will be treated as a visitor as provided below.

3. Visitors:

Visitors should not use tobacco products while on District property or attending school or District sponsored events. The following procedures shall be followed when visitors are in violation of this policy:

- c. The visitor shall be requested to cease the use of tobacco immediately.
- d. If the visitor continues his/her use of tobacco, the District employee who is aware of the violation shall ask him/her to immediately leave District property.
- e. If the visitor continues his/her use of tobacco and refuses the request to leave District property, then appropriate law enforcement agencies shall be notified, and assistance requested.

Paulding County Schools

Date Issued: 6/14/2011

Regulation : Professional Personnel Merit System Descriptor Code: GBAA-R (1)

Original Adopted Date: 05/16/2023

Last Reviewed Date: 05/16/2023

Employees of the Paulding County School District (District) are prohibited from receiving dual pay for services rendered during the regular working hours. Should an employee be receiving more than one salary, the employee must forfeit his/her regular pay or the payment from the other agency, organization or individual. Employees may receive payment for services rendered while on vacation leave, jury duty, personal leave, or for services performed other than during the regular workday. Employees who have extracurricular responsibilities, whether or not they receive supplemental pay from the District for those responsibilities, may accept reasonable payments from sponsoring support organizations for their additional services to the District.

A. DUAL PAY INVOLVING LEAVE:

District employees are not eligible to receive dual compensation from earned leave and workers' compensation insurance during leave for illness or injury. A choice must be made by the employee as to which of these benefits the employee will receive.

B. SCHOOL SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS:

The following shall be observed in regards to payments received from school support organizations as defined in Board Policy KG & Regulation KG-R (Use of School Facilities) and the activities for which the payments were made:

1. Payments to employees made by School Support Organizations must be paid through the district payroll office. The School Support Organization must make the check payable to the district and submit payment request to the principal along with Form GBAA-(E)1.
2. Payments from school support organizations to employees who have extracurricular responsibilities are voluntary recognitions of the additional services provided to the District by these employees. Employees are prohibited from soliciting or requiring such payments as a condition of their accepting or continuing the extracurricular responsibility.
3. Any activity occurring during the employee's workday must have the prior approval of the Principal.
4. Proposed co-curricular or extracurricular activities that exceed the programs approved and supported by the District, must have the prior approval of the Principal and the appropriate District supervisor.
5. Activities, whether during the school day, co-curricular or extracurricular, must comply with the following:

Board Policy
Professional Personnel Assignment/Reassignment

Descriptor Code: GBE

Each Paulding County School District (hereinafter District) employee is assigned to a position which meets the needs of the District, commensurate with the employee's training, certification, years of experience and other appropriate factors.

All employees shall be employed by the Board of Education on the recommendation of the Superintendent.

The District reserves the right to assign/reassign employees to other duties, positions, or locations within the District. The basic consideration in the assignment/reassignment of personnel is the well-being of the program of instruction. The appropriateness of the assignment will have a significant impact on the morale of the staff and the effectiveness of the total educational program.

It is the policy of the Board that personnel be assigned on the basis of their qualifications, the needs of the school system, and their expressed desires. When it is not possible to meet all three conditions, personnel shall be assigned first in accordance with the needs of the school system, second where the administration feels the employee is most qualified to serve, third as to expressed preference of employees in order of service to the District, all other considerations being equal.

The Human Resources Department will provide guidelines and procedures for the reassignment of employees. The guidelines will include the following:

A. ASSIGNMENT/REASSIGNMENT OF FAMILY MEMBERS:

Under no circumstances will an employee be assigned to directly supervise the activities or evaluate the performance of someone in his/her immediate family.

1. Immediate Family:

a. The immediate family is defined as:

- (1) Spouse;
- (2) Children;
- (3) Mother;
- (4) Father;
- (5) Brother;
- (6) Sister;
- (7) Grandmother;
- (8) Grandfather;
- (9) Grandchild;
- (10) Mother-in-law;
- (11) Father-in-law;
- (12) Sister-in-law;
- (13) Son-in-law;
- (14) Daughter-in-law;
- (15) Brother-in-law;or

b. Any relative living in the household of the employee.

c. This policy includes all step relatives as identified in this above.

B. EMPLOYEES MAY BE REASSIGNED FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS:

1. Paulding County Board of Education (Board) approval of:

a. Instructional changes based upon reorganization; or

b. Attendance zone changes due to movement of the student population, or the opening or closing of schools.

2. Loss, reduction, or addition of approved programs which create different personnel needs.
3. Changes in student enrollment in a school or a specific program.
4. When in the best interests to meet the needs and requirements of the District.

C. EMPLOYEE REASSIGNMENT WILL FOLLOW THESE PROCEDURES:

1. Exempt Employees:

a. Employees who receive a District approved supplement to meet program needs in whole or in part (i.e. yearbook sponsor, coach, department head) for the school year in question are protected from reassignment.

b. Employees who are the only members of a department (i.e. music, art) or who are the only qualified employees of a specialty course (i.e. Advanced Placement) are protected from reassignment.

2. Determination of Needs and Considerations:

a. The Principal/Supervisor will evaluate the program for his/her school/department and the resulting personnel needs.

b. These personnel needs will be reviewed and approved by the Executive Director of Human Resources

c. Human Resources Department will reassign identified employees in affected areas to meet the school's new personnel requirements.

d. The District will ask for volunteers for reassignment first. Volunteers must be highly qualified and serve program needs of the school and District.

e. Other factors to be considered are prioritized as follows:

(1) The professional expertise, effectiveness and overall job performance of individual employees as reflected in annual evaluations.

(2) The Superintendent's own observations and knowledge of the employee.

(3) Only where demonstrated competence and expertise are equal among employees shall other factors such as tenure status, level of certification, and length of continuous service with the District be considered.

3. Service to the District:

The Principal/Supervisor will identify the employee from the affected area who has the least amount of service to the District. Employee service to the District is determined by the employee's hire date in the District. More specifically:

a. District hire date will be the effective start date of the employee's current, regular position excluding the orientation dates, if applicable.

b. Human Resources Division will determine and provide the hire date of all employees in the affected area and will verify which employee has the least amount of

service to the District.

c. If two or more employees have the same:

(1) Hire date, the employee with the latest recommendation date stated on the Job Recommendation Form from the Principal or supervisor for employment will be determined to have the least amount of service to the District.

(2) Recommendation date, the employee with the latest date of application for employment will be determined to have the least amount of service to the District.

(3) If a tie still exists, the employee with the least amount of service to the District will be determined by lot.

d. An approved, long-term leave of absence does not interrupt amount of service to the District, but does not add to accumulated service to the District.

e. An employee who resigns, retires, or whose long-term leave of absence is terminated loses all time of service to the District rights. If the employee is rehired, service to the District begins anew on the rehire date.

4. Effective Date:

Reassignments will be effective with the new contract year.

5. Post-Reassignment Procedures:

If an employee has been reassigned and a vacancy occurs in his/her original location up to five days before the first day that teachers/employees new to the District report, the principal/supervisor must contact the reassignee and offer him/her the opportunity to return. The reassignee has 24 hours to decide.

D. OPENING/CLOSING OF SCHOOLS:

Human Resources Department will provide a written copy of this policy to new employees and principals/supervisors outlining the reassignment process and will assist employees and principals/supervisors in the implementation process.

E. DISTRICT PREROGATIVE:

The Superintendent may direct the Human Resources Department to make exceptions to the above assignment/reassignment provisions when:

1. It is in the best interest of the District in order to meet the needs and requirements of the District.

2. It is necessary to meet federal requirement of equitable distribution of Highly Qualified teachers in all schools throughout the county.

In the case of vacancies in new or existing positions, favorable consideration will be given to qualified applicants among current employees.

No transfers shall be made without the approval of the Board of Education.

Board Policy

Teacher Evaluation Appeals

Descriptor Code: GBIA

The appeal process described in this policy shall be available to teachers who have accepted a full-time, full school year contract with the Board of Education for the fourth or subsequent consecutive school year. Such teachers may appeal summative performance ratings of "Unsatisfactory" or "Ineffective" contained in personnel evaluations conducted pursuant to Code Section 20-2-210, procedural deficiencies on the part of the school system in conducting an evaluation, and job performance.

No more than 5 school days after the summative evaluation conference, the teacher shall provide a written notice of appeal to the responsible evaluator detailing every factual basis for the appeal. If the principal is the responsible evaluator, the principal shall respond in writing within 5 school days after the principal receives the appeal; if the responsible evaluator is not the principal, the appeal shall be forwarded to the principal, who shall conduct the first level of review. In either circumstance, a written response shall be provided to the teacher within 5 school days after the principal receives the appeal. The decision may be hand-delivered to the teacher or sent by electronic mail.

If the teacher is dissatisfied with the principal's response, an appeal may be filed within 5 school days with a certified and TKES (Teacher Keys Evaluation System) trained administrator in the central office to be designated by the Superintendent (or in the discretion of the Superintendent, a qualified third party administrator from outside the District will be appointed). A written response shall be provided to the teacher within 5 school days of the appeal being received by the designated administrator. The decision may be hand-delivered to the teacher or sent by electronic mail. The level two decision shall be final.

The appeal at either level must include a review of the complete evaluation record, including all documentation on the electronic platform, the original appeal and the response of the principal. In the discretion of the reviewer, a meeting may be scheduled with the teacher and, in the discretion of the reviewer, with the principal or original evaluator.

A teacher shall not be the subject of any reprisal as a result of filing an appeal under this policy. Any reprisal may be referred to the Professional Standards Commission.

Each Paulding County School District (hereinafter District) employee is assigned to a position which meets the needs of the District, commensurate with the employee's training, certification, years of experience and other appropriate factors. The District provides opportunities for employees to transfer from one work site to another within the District according to personnel needs. All employees shall be employed and assigned by the Board of Education on the recommendation of the Superintendent.

The basic consideration in the assignment of personnel is the well-being of the program of instruction. The appropriateness of the assignment will have a significant impact on the morale of the staff and the effectiveness of the total educational program.

It is the policy of the Board that personnel be assigned on the basis of their qualifications, the needs of the school system, and their expressed desires. When it is not possible to meet all three conditions, personnel shall be assigned first in accordance with the needs of the school system, second where the administration feels the employee is most qualified to serve, third as to expressed preference of employees in order of service to the District, all other considerations being equal.

Provisions will be made by Human Resources Department for employees to request a transfer from one position to another within the District. The provisions will include the following:

A. ASSIGNMENT/REASSIGNMENT OF FAMILY MEMBERS:

Under no circumstances will an employee be assigned to directly supervise the activities or evaluate the performance of someone in his/her immediate family.

1. Immediate Family:

a. The immediate family is defined as:

- (1) Spouse;
- (2) Children;
- (3) Mother;
- (4) Father;
- (5) Brother;
- (6) Sister;
- (7) Grandmother;
- (8) Grandfather;
- (9) Grandchild;
- (10) Mother-in-law;
- (11) Father-in-law;
- (12) Sister-in-law;
- (13) Son-in-law;
- (14) Daughter-in-law;
- (15) Brother-in-law; or

b. Any relative living in the household of the employee.

c. This policy includes all step relatives as identified in this above.

B. ELIGIBILITY:

1. An employee may apply for a transfer to another school or department if he/she meets transfer requirements.

C. Effective Date:

Transfers will be effective with the new contract year.

D. DISTRICT PREROGATIVE:

The Superintendent may direct the Human Resources Department to make exceptions to the above transfer provisions when:

1. It is in the best interest of the District in order to meet the needs and requirements of the District.
2. It is necessary to meet ESSA's requirement of equitable distribution of Highly Qualified teachers in all schools throughout the county.

In the case of vacancies in new or existing positions, favorable consideration will be given to qualified applicants among current employees.

No transfers shall be made without the approval of the Board of Education.

Paulding County Schools

Date Adopted: 8/24/2001
Last Revised: 2/10/2009

Board Policy
Professional Personnel Resignation

Descriptor Code: GBO

A Contract of Employment will be entered into between the Board and each employee who holds a position where it is required that the employee hold a professional certificate issued by the Professional Standards Commission. Once the employee has signed such contract, the Board has every expectation that the employee shall honor the contract.

In the event an employee under contract with the Board wishes not to fulfill the terms of that contract, the employee must request in writing that the Board of Education release the employee from the contract.

The Board, if it deems the employee's reasons for not wishing to fulfill the terms of the contract sufficient, may release the employee from the contract. The Board's decision will be guided by what is in the best interest of the students impacted by such decision.

If the Board does not release the employee from the contract and if the employee refuses to fulfill the terms of the contract, the Board of Education will seek to have the employee's teaching certificate revoked by the Professional Standards Commission.

Paulding County Schools

Date Adopted: 8/24/2001

Board Policy
Working Conditions (Classified/Professional)

Descriptor Code: GBR/GCR

The Board shall strive to provide safe and appropriate working conditions for all staff members. Each staff member is responsible for assisting in providing students with a safe, clean, and healthy learning environment.

Teachers and other school-based employees should immediately notify a school administrator of any condition that is unsafe, or which could otherwise be

detrimental to the teaching and learning process.

System-level employees should immediately notify their supervisor or other appropriate administrator of any condition that is unsafe.

All employees should immediately notify the appropriate personnel of any actions that create a hostile working environment, such as sexual harassment.

All employees are encouraged to make suggestions that may result in improving the working, teaching, and learning environment in the system.

Paulding County Schools

Date Adopted: 8/24/2001

Board Policy
Professional Personnel Work Loads

Descriptor Code: GBRC

REQUIREMENTS

1. The minimum workday for all certified employees shall be eight hours in length.
2. Each principal or departmental head shall establish the time of day that certified employees under his or her charge are expected to report to work and the time that certified employees are dismissed each day. Each certified employee shall be expected to be at the school site for no less than seven and one-half hours each workday.
3. Duties for which the base salary for which certified employees are paid include:
 - a. Teaching;
 - b. Preparation for teaching;
 - c. Conferences with parents and students;
 - d. Planning conferences;
 - e. PTA/PTSA meetings;
 - f. School activities in the community;
 - g. Various supervision duties as assigned by the school administrator.

Paulding County Schools

Date Adopted: 8/24/2001
Last Reviewed Date: 3/28/2023

RATIONALE:

Employees of the Paulding County School District (District) are provided leaves of absence for a variety of purposes. Leave is defined as time granted to an employee to be absent from his/her work assignment according to specific terms.

The District expects all employees to demonstrate punctual and regular attendance. Excessive tardiness and absenteeism result in ineffective and inefficient employee performance which does not support the District's Vision of continuous improvement and is not conducive to increasing student achievement.

Professional Leave

The Paulding County Board of Education believes in providing certified personnel with opportunities for professional leave each year.

A professional day is defined as a day excused from teaching or administrative duties to attend approved activities that will enhance professional job competencies.

The allotment of professional days for teachers or the funds for such days shall be at the discretion of the Superintendent. The use of professional leave for school-based professional employees must be approved by the principal.

Although serving on a visiting committee for a regional accrediting agency shall be accomplished through utilizing professional leave, professional leave for this purpose shall not count toward the maximum number of professional leave days approved for teachers or administrators. No teacher or administrator shall serve on more than one visiting committee during a given school year unless given specific written permission by the Superintendent.

Personal Leave

Short-Term

1. Each full-time employee may use up to five (5) days for paid personal leave. No more than three personal leave days may be used on consecutive workdays. Any personal days used will be deducted from the number of accumulated sick days earned by the employee.
2. Personal leave must be approved in advance with the employee making a written request at least five (5) days before the leave starts to his or her supervisor as follows:

- a. School-based Employees (with the exception of Food Services and Principals) – Request made to Principal;
 - b. Food Services Employees – Request made to Food Services Director
 - c. Transportation Employees – Request made to Transportation Director
 - d. Maintenance and Grounds Employees – Request made to Director of Maintenance
 - e. System-level Staff – Requests made to specific Program Director
 - f. Directors and Principals – Request made to immediate Supervisor
 - g. Division Chiefs and Assistant/Associate Superintendents – Request made to Superintendent
3. No personal days may be taken on the following days unless there is a situation approved by the appropriate supervisor:
- a. Pre-Planning
 - b. Post-Planning
 - c. In-Service Days
 - d. Teacher Workdays
 - e. The workday before or the workday after a holiday.
 - f. The last two weeks of the school year.
 - g. Critical days that are determined by the Principal or Superintendent.

Miscellaneous

Leave without pay may be granted to an employee who is not eligible for FMLA leave when special medical circumstances exist. Miscellaneous leave will not exceed twenty (20) consecutive workdays and is only available to employees who have twenty (20) days or less sick leave available. Leave under this section will be subject to Superintendent recommendation and board approval.

Long-Term

An employee may be granted a leave of absence without pay, not to exceed one year because of catastrophic illness. To qualify the employee must meet the requirements of FMLA Leave and have exhausted the FMLA Leave. This leave is further restricted to the catastrophic illness of an employee, an employee's spouse, or the employee's child.

In the event an employee has vacation, personal or sick leave, it will run concurrently with the Long-Term Leave. If the Long-Term Leave is granted, the leave will be from the system and not from a specific job assignment.

Legal Leave

Jury Duty

1. Employees who are summoned to serve on jury duty will be granted a leave of absence with pay. Any time spent on jury duty will not be deducted from any sick, personal, professional, or vacation leave. The employee may retain any compensation related to their court appearance.
2. Employees are expected to provide their immediate supervisor with a copy of their jury duty summons as soon as possible after receiving such summons.

Subpoenas

1. Any employee who is subpoenaed to testify in a court hearing relating to his or her employment with the school district shall be granted leave for this purpose without loss of pay and shall not be discharged, disciplined, or otherwise penalized. Such time shall not be deducted from any sick, personal, or vacation leave. The employee may retain any compensation related to their court appearance.
2. Any employee who is subpoenaed to testify in a case that is not related to his or her employment with the school district shall be granted leave without pay for this purpose. However, the employee may utilize any available personal or vacation leave for this purpose.
3. Employees are expected to provide their immediate supervisor with a copy of their subpoena to testify as soon as possible after receiving such subpoena.

Sick Leave

Sick Leave is provided for Full-time employees which is defined as any employee who is approved by the Board of Education and who works at least twenty (20) hours per week.

1. Full-time employees shall earn sick leave at the rate of 1-¼ days for each completed month worked.
2. All unused sick leave shall be accumulated from one fiscal year to the next up to a maximum of 90 days.
3. Full-time employees may utilize sick leave upon the approval of his or her supervisor for absence due to illness or injury or necessitated by exposure to contagious disease or to illness or death in the immediate family.

For the purpose of this policy, the employee's immediate family is defined as the employee's spouse, children, foster children, mother, father, brother, sister, grandmother, grandfather, grandchildren, mother-in-law, father-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, or any relative living in the household of the employee and any step-relatives as identified in this definition.

4. A doctor's certificate may be required by the Superintendent or designee at any time deemed necessary but shall be required for any illness longer than five (5) consecutive days.
5. A full-time employee who changes his or her employment from another Georgia public school system to the Paulding County School District may be credited for up to 45 sick leave days accumulated in that system. A full-time employee who changes his or her employment from a private school or any out-of-state school or school system shall not be credited for any sick leave days accumulated in that school or system.
6. A full-time employee leaving the Paulding County School District to work in another Georgia public school system may take up to 45 sick leave days accumulated in the Paulding County School District as the policy of the other public school system permits and in accordance with Georgia law. The Paulding County School District shall not transfer any funds to another school system to finance the potential or actual cost incurred for sick leave used in another system.
7. Accumulated sick leave shall be forfeited by any classified employee who withdraws from service for 12 or more consecutive months unless the withdrawal is for the purpose of continuing his or her education as a full-time student to seek a higher level or different field of certification and provided that the withdrawal does not exceed 24 months. Nothing in this statement shall be interpreted to mean that the Paulding County School District grants long-term leave for the purpose of continuing education.

Paid Parental Leave

The Board of Education shall make paid parental leave equally available to all eligible employees of the Board of Education under the following terms:

1. An employee of the Board of Education shall be eligible for paid parental leave for qualifying life events upon satisfying the following criteria:
 - a. The employee is classified as full-time by the District and is eligible to participate in the TRS (Teacher Retirement System of Georgia) or the

PSERS (Public School Employees Retirement System); and

- b. The employee has six continuous months of employment with the Board, regardless of whether he or she is eligible for paid or unpaid leave under federal law. An employee paid on an hourly basis must have worked a minimum of 700 hours over the six-month period immediately preceding the requested paid parental leave date.
2. A qualifying life event means:
 - a. The birth of a child of an eligible employee;
 - b. The placement of a minor child for adoption with an eligible employee;
or
 - c. The placement of a minor child for foster care with an eligible employee.
3. The maximum amount of paid parental leave that may be taken by an eligible employee during a rolling 12-month period is 120 hours, regardless of the number of qualifying life events that occur during such period.
 - a. The rolling 12-month period shall be measured backward from the date an eligible employee first uses parental leave.
 - b. Parental leave may be taken as needed and may be taken in increments of less than eight hours. The smallest increment of parental leave that may be taken is one quarter of an hour.
 - c. Any unused paid parental leave that remains 12 months after the qualifying event shall not carry over for future use.
 - d. Unused paid parental leave shall have no cash value at any time of the eligible employee's separation from employment with the Board of Education.
4. Paid parental leave under state law shall run concurrently with any leave provided under federal law.
5. Eligible employees requesting paid parental leave must submit the district's designated form to the Superintendent or designee at least 30 days in advance of the requested leave start date if the need for leave is foreseeable. If the need for leave is not foreseeable, the employee must request the leave as soon as practicable, usually within a day or two of learning of the need for leave.
6. The Superintendent or designee shall develop paperwork needed to administer paid parental leave, including what documentation will be required to establish the existence of a qualifying life event.

Bereavement Leave

In the event of a death in the immediate family of all employees, a leave of absence will be granted to a maximum number of five days in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Board and such leave will be charged against sick leave.

Military Leave

The term ordered military duty as defined by O.C.G.A. §38-2-279, shall mean the following:

Any military duty performed in the service of the State or of the United States, including, but not limited to attendance at any service school or schools conducted by the armed forces of the United States by an employee as a voluntary member of any force of the organized militia or any reserve force or reserve component State or Federal authority, without the consent of the employee.

1. Reinstatement Right: All employees of the Paulding County Board of Education, other than those employed on a temporary basis, shall be entitled to military leave for ordered military duty. At the end of such ordered military duty, such employees shall have the right to reinstatement to the position, or substantially equivalent position held, at the beginning of such ordered military duty.
2. Compensation: An employee shall be paid a salary or other compensation for a period of absence while engaged in the performance of ordered military duty and while going to and returning from such duty, not exceeding a total of eighteen (18) days in one federal fiscal year and not exceeding eighteen (18) days in any one continuous period of such absence.
3. State Emergency: In the event the governor declares an emergency and orders an employee to State active duty as a member of the National Guard, such employee shall be paid a salary or other compensation while performing such duty for a period not exceeding thirty (30) days in any one federal fiscal year and not exceeding thirty (30) days in any one continuous period of such state active duty service.

Religious Leave

The Paulding County Board of Education is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate in hiring or employment practices because of a person's religion.

It is the policy of the Paulding County Board of Education to make reasonable accommodations to the religious observances of employees where such accommodation can be made without undue hardship on the operation of the school system.

Any employee who wishes to take leave for religious observances shall be granted leave without pay for this purpose as long as such leave can be taken without undue

hardship on the operation of the school system. However, the employee may utilize any available personal or vacation leave for this purpose. An employee who is granted leave for religious observances shall not be discharged, disciplined, or otherwise penalized.

An employee who wishes to take leave for religious observances shall make such request in writing to his or her immediate supervisor at least five days before the leave is due to begin.

Educational Leave

Employees who occupy positions which do not require teacher certification may be granted a one-time educational leave of absence, without pay, not to exceed 36 consecutive weeks, for the purpose of completing requirements for a teaching certificate.

1. Requirements
 - a. A letter of acceptance is required from an approved educational program as determined by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission.
 - b. The educational study must lead toward obtaining a teaching certificate.
 - c. The employee must be enrolled in a minimum of 12 quarter hours of classes (or the equivalent) or be participating in a practicum required to meet teaching certification standards.
 - d. An official transcript will be required at the end of the approved leave period.
2. If approved, this leave of absence will not interrupt the employee's years of service to the District but will not add to accumulated service to the District for the purposes of establishing the employee's salary in accordance with State and/or local pay scales.
3. If Leave is granted pursuant to this policy, the leave will be from the District and not from a specific job assignment.
4. The District is not required to allow any person to return to work if:
 - a. The District's circumstances have changed so as to make such returning to work unreasonable or impossible;
 - b. Returning to work would pose an undue hardship on the District; or

- c. If the employee did not fulfill the obligations outlined in item 1. Requirements.

Each employee will be provided with a copy of this policy. Nothing in this policy shall be construed to confer on an employee right to continued employment which they do not have under the Georgia Fair Dismissal Act or the Constitution of the United States.

Paulding County Schools

Date Adopted: 7/11/2023

Date Revised: 7/11/2023

**Board Policy
Federal Family and Medical Leave Act**

Descriptor Code: GBRIG

Rationale

It is the purpose of this policy to set out in summary form the provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Act (“the Act” or “FMLA”) and its implementing regulation. The Board of Education (“Board”) does not intend by this policy to create any additional rights to leave not provided by the Act; provided, however, the Board does wish to extend the rights of the Act to certain employees who have worked at least 12 months for the Board. As to the interpretation of this policy, the District’s employees should look to the Act itself and its regulations.

Definitions

“Covered Servicemember” (for qualifying exigency leave) means the employee’s spouse, child or parent under a federal call or order to covered active duty.

“Covered Servicemember” (for military caregiver leave) means the employee’s spouse, child, parent or next of kin who is (1) a current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy, is otherwise in outpatient status, or is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list, for a serious injury or illness; or (2) a veteran who was a member of the Armed Forces at any time during the five years preceding the date on which the veteran undergoes such medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy.

“Next of Kin” of a covered servicemember means the nearest blood relative other than the covered servicemember’s spouse, parent, son or daughter, in the following order of priority: blood relatives granted legal custody, brothers and sisters, grandparents, aunts and uncles, and first cousins, unless the covered servicemember has specifically designated in writing another blood relative for purposes of FMLS caregiver leave.

“Outpatient Status” with respect to a covered servicemember, means the status of a member of the Armed Forces assigned to either a military medical treatment facility as an outpatient; or a unit established for the purpose of providing command and control of members of the Armed Forces receiving medical care as outpatients.

“Parent” means a biological, adoptive, step or foster mother or father or one who acted in place of a parent when the employee was a minor child. The term “parent” does not include parent “in law”.

“Parent of covered servicemember” means a biological, adoptive, step or foster parent or any other individual who acted in place of a parent of the covered servicemember. The term does not include parents “in law”.

“Serious Health Condition” means an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves inpatient care requiring an overnight stay in a hospital, hospice or residential medical care facility or continuing treatment by a healthcare provider, all as further defined in the FMLS regulations.

“Serious Injury or Illness” means an injury or illness incurred by a covered servicemember in the line of duty on active duty (or that existed before active duty and was aggravated by line of duty active service) that may render the servicemember medically unfit to perform the duties of the member’s office, grade, rank, or rating. In the case of a veteran, “serious injury or illness” means a qualifying injury or illness, as defined by the Secretary of Labor, incurred during or aggravated by active duty during the five years before undergoing treatment, recuperation, or therapy, and that manifested itself before or after the member became a veteran.

“Son or daughter” means a biological, adopted or foster child, a stepchild, a legal ward, or a child for whom the employee acts as a parent. The son or daughter must be under age 18 or, if the son or daughter is age 18 or older, he/she must be incapable of self-care due to a mental or physical disability at the time FMLS leave is to begin.

“Son or daughter of a covered servicemember” means a covered servicemember’s biological, adopted, or foster child, stepchild, legal word, or a child for whom the covered servicemember acted in the place of a parent, and who is of any age.

“Spouse” as defined by FMLA.

Eligibility

Employees of the Paulding County Board of Education who have been employed for twelve (12) months or more and who worked at least 1250 hours during the 12-month period immediately preceding the commencement of the leave, are entitled to twelve (12) weeks of unpaid leave during a twelve (12) month period.

Amount and type of Leave taken

- (1) The birth and first year care of a child;
- (2) The adoption or foster parent placement of a child and care of a newly placed child;
- (3) The illness of an employee's spouse, child, or parent with respect to a serious health condition, defined as one that requires in-patient care in a hospital, hospice or residential medical care facility, or which requires continuing treatment by a health care provider; or
- (4) Serious health condition that prevents the employee from performing his/her job functions;
- (5) Any qualifying exigency arising from the fact that the employee’s family member (the covered servicemember) is on covered active duty. Qualifying exigencies are defined as short-notice deployment (seven or less calendar days); military events and related activities; childcare and school activities; financial and legal arrangements; counseling; rest and recuperation (up to fifteen calendar days per instance); parental care; post-deployment activities, additional activities where the employer and employee agree that the leave is an exigency and agree to both timing and duration of the leave; and
- (6) Military caregiver leave to care for a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness if the employee is the spouse, son, daughter, parent or next of kin of the servicemember.

In the instance of birth, adoption and foster placement, the entitlement for child-care ends after the child reaches the age of one (1) year, or 12 months after the adoption or placement.

Entitlement for leave associated with illness of a child occurs only where the child is under eighteen (18) years of age or incapable of self-care due to mental or physical disability.

The twelve (12) month period in which the twelve (12) workweeks of leave entitlement occurs is a "rolling" twelve (12) month period measured backward from the date an employee uses any leave granted by this policy.

In cases where both spouses are employed by the Paulding County Board of Education, the combined amount of leave for childbirth, adoption, or to care for a sick parent is limited to twelve (12) weeks.

An eligible employee is eligible to take up to 26 weeks of military caregiver leave during a "single 12-month period". The "single 12-month period" begins on the date the employee first takes military caregiver leave and ends 12 months after that date, regardless of the method used to determine the leave entitlement period for other FMLA reasons.

If both spouses work for the District and both are eligible for FMLA leave, they are authorized to take only a combined total of 26 weeks during the "single 24-month period" described above for military caregiver leave or a combination of military caregiver leave, and leave taken for other FMLA reasons.

The unpaid medical and family leave provided under this policy runs concurrent with accumulated sick or personal leave the employee is eligible for under other policies of the Paulding County Board of Education.

Intermittent or reduced leave

An employee may take leave on an intermittent or reduced leave schedule where it is medically necessary due to the serious health condition of a covered family member, the employee, or the serious injury or illness of a covered servicemember, or when necessary, because of a qualifying exigency. The District will require a certification, in the form designated by the District, to document the necessity of such intermittent leave or reduced scheduled leave.

Notification of Anticipated Leave

Except where circumstances are such that reasonable advance planning is not possible, employees must provide the Superintendent or a designee with at least thirty (30) days' notice of the date when leave is to begin. With respect to foreseeable family or employee illness, the employee shall make reasonable effort to schedule treatment - including intermittent and reduced hour leave - so as not to disrupt unduly the operations of the school district, subject to approval of the employee's or family member's health care provider. Intermittent and/or reduced hour leave is not available to employees on leave due to the birth, adoption, or placement of a child.

Benefits and return to work

Benefits accrued by the employee before leave is taken will not be altered by the employee's absence under this policy. The employee is entitled to continuation of health benefits during the leave period. Upon return, the employee is entitled to restoration to an equivalent position with equivalent pay, benefits, and conditions of employment.

The District may recover any health care benefit premiums paid on behalf of an employee if the employee does not return to work after the leave period has expired, unless the employee did not return due to a serious health condition of the employee or the employee's spouse, parent, or child, or a serious injury or illness of a covered servicemember or other circumstances beyond the employee's control. The District may require certification from the healthcare provider that a serious health condition of the employee or family member, or the covered servicemember's serious injury or illness, prevented the employee from returning to work.

Required Certification

The District requires that a request for leave due to a serious health condition of an employee or an employee's family member or a serious injury or illness of a covered servicemember be supported by certification by the appropriate healthcare provider of the eligible employee or family member on a form to be provided by the District. This certification for a serious health condition must include (1) the name, address, telephone and fax numbers of the healthcare provider and type of practice/specialization; (2) the approximate date on which the serious health condition commenced, and its probable duration; (3) a statement or description of appropriate medical facts regarding the patient's health condition for which FMLA leave is requested; (4) if the purpose of the leave is to care for a family member, a statement that the employee is needed to care for the family member and an estimate of the frequency and duration of the leave required for such care; (5) if the leave is due to the employee's own serious health condition, a statement that the employee is unable to perform his/her essential job functions, the nature of other work restrictions, and the likely duration of such inability; and (6) if intermittent or reduced schedule leave is requested, information sufficient to establish the medical necessity for the same and an estimate of the dates and duration of treatments and any periods of recovery. The employer may require that the eligible employee obtain subsequent recertification on a reasonable basis as requested by the District in accordance with the FMLA regulations. The Board of Education reserves the right, at its own expense, to designate a second health care provider (other than a school district employee) to provide a second opinion.

When applicable, upon the employee's return to work, the school district may require the employee to provide certification by his/her health care provider that the employee is able to resume work and perform the essential functions of the job.

The District may require that a first request for leave because of qualifying exigency arising from active duty or a call to active duty be supported by a copy of the covered servicemember's active-duty orders or other documentation issued by the military. A certification form requesting the required information to support a request for exigency leave will be provided by the District upon request.

Special Provisions

When an instructional employee seeks intermittent leave or leave on a reduced schedule in connection with a family or personal serious health condition or to care for a covered servicemember that would constitute at least 20% of the total number of working days during which the leave would extend, the District may require the employee to elect to take leave in a block (not intermittently) for the entire period or to transfer to an available alternative position within the school system that is equivalent in pay, for which the employee is qualified, and which better accommodates the intermittent situation.

If an employee begins leave under this policy within three weeks before the end of the academic term and the duration of the leave is greater than five working days, the Board of Education may require the employee to continue to take leave until the end of the academic year.

The Board of Education may deny coverage under this policy to an employee whose salary is in the highest ten (10) percent of the employees employed by the school district if such denial is necessary to prevent substantial and grievous economic injury to the District's operations.

Records Retention

The Superintendent or a designee shall make, keep, and preserve records showing compliance with the *Family and Medical Leave Act* made in accordance with the *Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938* and other applicable Federal regulations.

Paulding County Schools

Date Adopted: 8/24/2001
Last Date Revised: 12/13/2022

Board Policy Classified Personnel Vacations

Descriptor Code: GCRH

All non-certified employees of the Paulding County Board of Education who work for the system twelve months per year are entitled to accrue annual leave. Those employees who work less than twelve months for the system will not be granted any annual leave accrual. The accrual rate for exempt employees will be 10 hours per month. The accrual rates for non-exempt employees will be as follows:

1 - 5 years of service	8 hours earned per month worked
>5 years of service	10 hours earned per month worked

All employees will begin accruing leave during their first month of service. Employees may accrue and carry forward a maximum of twenty annual leave days each fiscal year.

Employees who terminate employment with the system will be paid for all unused annual leave accrued up to a maximum of 20 days' pay (160 hours).

Paulding County Schools

Date Adopted: 8/24/2023
Last Date Revised: 8/8/2023

Board Policy Employee Dress Code

Descriptor Code: GBRL

Teachers and staff are expected to dress in a professional manner that will be most conducive to the educational atmosphere of the school. Activities planned for the day will dictate, to a degree, the style of dress considered appropriate. As a matter of professionalism, teachers, administrators, professional support staff, and paraprofessionals are asked to refrain from wearing jeans and shorts when students are in attendance. At employee request and at the discretion of the building principal, some days may be designated "School Spirit Day," and school colors or shirts are the requested clothing.

The Superintendent is authorized to establish guidelines related to the dress code for employees. Guidelines regarding dress code shall be explained to the employee by the immediate supervisor or department head.

Paulding County Schools

Date Adopted: 8/24/2001
Last Revised: 9/9/2022
Last Reviewed Date: 3/28/2023

Each Paulding County School District (hereinafter District) employee is assigned to a position which meets the needs of the District, commensurate with the employee's training, certification, years of experience and other appropriate factors.

All employees shall be employed and assigned by the Board of Education on the recommendation of the Superintendent.

The District reserves the right to assign/reassign employees to other duties, positions, or locations within the District. The basic consideration in the assignment/reassignment of personnel is the well-being of the program of instruction. The appropriateness of the assignment will have a significant impact on the morale of the staff and the effectiveness of the total educational program.

It is the policy of the Board that personnel be assigned on the basis of their qualifications, the needs of the school system, and their expressed desires. When it is not possible to meet all three conditions, personnel shall be assigned first in accordance with the needs of the school system, second where the administration feels the employee is most qualified to serve, third as to expressed preference of employees in order of service to the District, all other considerations being equal. The Human Resources Department will provide guidelines and procedures for the reassignment of employees. The guidelines will include the following:

A. ASSIGNMENT/REASSIGNMENT OF FAMILY MEMBERS:

Under no circumstances will an employee be assigned to directly supervise the activities or evaluate the performance of someone in his/her immediate family.

1. Immediate Family:

a. The immediate family is defined as:

- (1) Spouse;
- (2) Children;
- (3) Mother;
- (4) Father;
- (5) Brother;
- (6) Sister;
- (7) Grandmother;
- (8) Grandfather;
- (9) Grandchild;

- (10) Mother-in-law;
- (11) Father-in-law;
- (12) Sister-in-law;
- (13) Son-in-law;
- (14) Daughter-in-law;
- (15) Brother-in-law; or

b. Any relative living in the household of the employee.

c. This policy includes all step relatives as identified in this above.

B. EMPLOYEES MAY BE REASSIGNED FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS:

- 1. Paulding County Board of Education (Board) approval of:
 - a. Instructional changes based upon reorganization; or
 - b. Attendance zone changes due to movement of the student population, or the opening or closing of schools.
- 2. Loss, reduction, or addition of approved programs which create different personnel needs.
- 3. Changes in student enrollment in a school or a specific program.
- 4. When in the best interests to meet the needs and requirements of the District.

C. EMPLOYEE REASSIGNMENT WILL FOLLOW THESE PROCEDURES:

- 1. Exempt Employees:
 - a. Employees who receive a District approved supplement to meet program needs in whole or in part (i.e. yearbook sponsor, coach, department head) for the school year in question are protected from reassignment.
 - b. Employees who are the only members of a department (i.e. music, art) or who are the only qualified employees of a specialty course (i.e. Advanced Placement) are protected from reassignment.
- 2. Determination of Needs and Considerations:
 - a. The Principal/Supervisor will evaluate the program for his/her school/department and the resulting personnel needs.
 - b. These personnel needs will be reviewed and approved by the Executive Director of Human Resources
 - c. Human Resources Department will reassign identified employees in affected areas to meet the school's new personnel requirements.
 - d. The District will ask for volunteers for reassignment first. Volunteers must be highly qualified and serve program needs of the school and District.

e. Other factors to be considered are prioritized as follows:

(1) The professional expertise, effectiveness and overall job performance of individual employees as reflected in annual evaluations.

(2) The Superintendent's own observations and knowledge of the employee.

(3) Only where demonstrated competence and expertise are equal among employees shall other factors such as tenure status, level of certification, and length of continuous service with the District be considered.

3. Service to the District:

The Principal/Supervisor will identify the employee from the affected area who has the least amount of service to the District. Employee service to the District is determined by the employee's hire date in the District. More specifically:

a. District hire date will be the effective start date of the employee's current, regular position excluding the orientation dates, if applicable.

b. Human Resources Division will determine and provide the hire date of all employees in the affected area and will verify which employee has the least amount of service to the District.

c. If two or more employees have the same:

(1) Hire date, the employee with the latest recommendation date stated on the Job Recommendation Form from the Principal or supervisor for employment will be determined to have the least amount of service to the District.

(2) Recommendation date, the employee with the latest date of application for employment will be determined to have the least amount of service to the District.

(3) If a tie still exists, the employee with the least amount of service to the District will be determined by lot.

d. An approved, long-term leave of absence does not interrupt amount of service to the District but does not add to accumulated service to the District.

e. An employee who resigns, retires, or whose long-term leave of absence is terminated loses all time of service to the District rights. If the employee is rehired, service to the District begins anew on the rehire date.

4. Effective Date:

Reassignments will be effective with the new contract year.

5. Post-Reassignment Procedures:

If an employee has been reassigned and a vacancy occurs in his/her original location up to five days before the first day that teachers/employees new to the District report, the Principal/Supervisor must contact the reassignee and offer him/her the opportunity to return. The reassignee has 24 hours to decide.

D. OPENING/CLOSING OF SCHOOLS:

Human Resources Department will provide a written copy of this policy to new

employees and principals/supervisors outlining the reassignment process and will assist employees and principals/supervisors in the implementation process.

E. DISTRICT PREROGATIVE:

The Superintendent may direct the Human Resources Department to make exceptions to the above assignment/reassignment provisions when:

1. It is in the best interest of the District in order to meet the needs and requirements of the District.
2. It is necessary to meet NCLB's requirement of equitable distribution of Highly Qualified teachers in all schools throughout the county.

In the case of vacancies in new or existing positions, favorable consideration will be given to qualified applicants among current employees.

No transfers shall be made without the approval of the Board of Education.

Paulding County Schools

Date Adopted: 8/24/2001
Last Revised: 2/10/2009

**Administrative Regulation
Classified Personnel Suspension**

Descriptor Code: GCK-R

The Superintendent or designee shall work rules generally applicable to classified employees. These work rules shall be posted in each school building, non-school building and department in the School System. In addition, each department head/principal, with his/her unit/school, may establish work rules and performance standards not inconsistent with those established by the Superintendent.

Classified employees shall observe all federal, state and local laws as well as applicable policies, administrative procedures and/or work rules of the board. Violations may result in disciplinary measures, including suspension with or without pay and termination.

If service is broken for any reason, the employee loses seniority for purposes of assignment, transfer, placement, etc. Exception: Involuntary separation due to reduction-in-force if returned to work within one year.

Paulding County Schools

Date Issued: 8/24/2001

**Board Policy
Classified Personnel Transfer**

Descriptor Code: GCM

Each Paulding County School District (hereinafter District) employee is assigned to a position which meets the needs of the District, commensurate with the employee's training, certification, years of experience and other appropriate factors. The District provides opportunities for employees to transfer from one work site to another within the District according to personnel needs. All employees shall be employed and assigned by the Board of Education on the recommendation of the Superintendent.

The basic consideration in the assignment of personnel is the well-being of the program of instruction. The appropriateness of the assignment will have a significant impact on the morale of the staff and the effectiveness of the total educational program.

It is the policy of the Board that personnel be assigned on the basis of their qualifications, the needs of the school system, and their expressed desires. When it is not possible to meet all three conditions, personnel shall be assigned first in accordance with the needs of the school system, second where the administration feels the employee is most qualified to serve, third as to expressed preference of employees in order of service to the District, all other considerations being equal.

Provisions will be made by Human Resources Department for employees to request a transfer from one position to another within the District. The provisions will include the following:

A. ASSIGNMENT/REASSIGNMENT OF FAMILY MEMBERS:

Under no circumstances will an employee be assigned to directly supervise the activities or evaluate the performance of someone in his/her immediate family.

1. Immediate Family:

a. The immediate family is defined as:

(1) Spouse;

(2) Children;

(3) Mother;

(4) Father;

(5) Brother;

(6) Sister;

(7) Grandmother;

(8) Grandfather;

(9) Grandchild;

(10) Mother-in-law;

(11) Father-in-law;

(12) Sister-in-law;

(13) Son-in-law;

(14) Daughter-in-law;

(15) Brother-in-law; or

b. Any relative living in the household of the employee.

c. This policy includes all step relatives as identified in this above.

B. ELIGIBILITY:

1. An employee may apply for a transfer to another school or department if he/she meets transfer requirements.

C. Effective Date:

Transfers will be effective with the new contract year.

D. DISTRICT PREROGATIVE:

The Superintendent may direct the Human Resources Department to make exceptions to the above transfer provisions when:

1. It is in the best interest of the District in order to meet the needs and requirements of the District.

2. It is necessary to meet NCLB's requirement of equitable distribution of Highly Qualified teachers in all schools throughout the county.

In the case of vacancies in new or existing positions, favorable consideration will be given to qualified applicants among current employees.

No transfers shall be made without the approval of the Board of Education.

Paulding County Schools

Date Adopted: 8/24/2001
Last Revised: 2/10/2009

**Administrative Regulation
Classified Personnel Separation**

Descriptor Code: GCN-R

The Superintendent or designee shall establish work rules generally applicable to classified employees. These work rules shall be posted in each school building, non-school building and department in the School System. In addition, each department head/principal, with his/her unit/school, may establish work rules and performance standards not inconsistent with those established by the Superintendent.

Classified employees shall observe all federal, state and local laws as well as applicable policies, administrative procedures and/or work rules of the board. Violations may result in disciplinary measures, including suspension with or without pay and termination.

If service is broken for any reason, the employee loses seniority for purposes of assignment, transfer, placement, etc. Exception: Involuntary separation due to reduction-in-force if returned to work within one year.

Paulding County Schools

8/24/2001

Members of the support staff are hired for an indefinite period of time. However, the employment relationship may be terminated by either the school system or the employee. Employees shall be expected to provide the school system with at least two weeks' notice upon resignation.

Paulding County Schools

8/24/2001

**Administrative Regulation
Classified Personnel Overtime Pay**

Descriptor Code: GCRD-R (1)

RATIONALE

The Paulding County School District (District) complies with the provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act which established a minimum wage and overtime pay requirement for non-exempt employees.

FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT (ACT) PROVISIONS

For non-exempt employees the Act provides, in part:

1. An employer must pay at least the minimum wage set by the Act for the hours worked in a workweek.
2. An employer must pay at least one and a half times an employee's regular rate for work in excess of 40 hours in a workweek; and
3. A public employer, under certain circumstances, may grant compensatory time off in lieu of overtime compensation; provided that the compensatory time must be earned at a rate of at least one and a half hours of compensatory time for each hour worked over 40 hours in a workweek.

DEFINITIONS

1. All hours worked: All hours worked for the District in any capacity, including all supplemental work, such as the Facility Use Program, local school extracurricular events, etc.

2. Non-exempt employees: Employees, such as clerical, hourly, paraprofessionals, and custodians, etc., must receive at least the minimum wage and are eligible to receive overtime pay and/or compensatory time off. The District's Human Resources Department determines whether a position should be classified as non-exempt or exempt based on FLSA rules and regulations.

3. Exempt employees: Employees, such as executives, administrators, managers, supervisors, and professional employees, who will be paid on a salary basis and are not eligible to receive overtime pay and/or compensatory time off.

4. Over-Time Hours: Hours subject to the overtime rate of compensation in either pay or compensatory time off consist of actual hours worked. Vacation hours used, paid Holiday hours, personal leave, short-term leave, administrative leave with pay or any other type of leave with or without pay are not included in the calculation of overtime hours.

GUIDELINES

1. Work Time:

All non-exempt employees' time spent doing work for the employer is counted as work time. This includes the time a non-exempt employee spends performing work when he/she is:

- a. Away from his/her work site;
- b. On lunch or an authorized break;
- c. On approved vacation; and
- d. Working for the District in an extracurricular activity.

2. Compensatory Time:

a. Accumulation:

(1) The supervisor must ensure the employee has agreed to receive compensatory time off instead of overtime pay before the extra time is worked, and must maintain a record of this agreement, such as a memorandum to the employee's personnel file.

(2) The supervisor must ensure that non-exempt employees who work more than 40 hours in a workweek receive either:

- (a) Overtime pay equal to 1 and ½ times their regular pay rate for each hour worked over 40 hours in a workweek; or
- (b) 1 and ½ hours of compensatory time for each hour worked over 40 hours.

(3) As a general rule, employees may only accumulate 8 hours of earned but unused compensatory time. Supervisors must ensure the following requirements are met with respect to employees' use of compensatory time:

(1) Compensatory time should be used by employees within a reasonable amount of time after earning it, so that a large amount of compensatory time does not accumulate.

(2) An employee requesting to take previously earned compensatory time off will be permitted to do so within a reasonable period of time after making the request as long as taking the requested time will not unduly disrupt operations.

b. Payment for Compensatory Time:

(1) If an employee changes from a non-exempt to an exempt job, or if an employee changes from one non-exempt job to another non-exempt job for another supervisor, then the employee will be paid for any earned but unused compensatory time at the employee's current rate of pay.

(2) At the end of an employee's employment by the District, the employee will be paid for any earned but unused compensatory time at a rate equal to the higher of:

- (a) The average regular rate earned by the employee during the last three years of employment; or

(b) The final regular rate earned by the employee upon termination of employment.

3. Coaching/Volunteering:

Following procedures established by the Human Resources Department, the District may allow non-exempt employees to serve as community/lay coaches and/or volunteer for afterhours school related functions.

Non-exempt employees may continue to volunteer as parents to support their children's school activities. Non-exempt employees may not volunteer to perform work that is similar to their normal duties outside their normal workday without pay

Paulding County Schools

Date Issued: 6/22/2010

Board Policy
Internet Acceptable Use

Descriptor Code: IFBG

Technology Acceptable Use and Internet Safety

Purpose

The Paulding County School District ("District") makes available to its students, employees and guests the use of technology resources, including the Internet, electronic media, hardware and network for educational and business purposes. Students, employees and authorized users ("Users") are expected to follow legal, ethical, district policies and school rules regarding the use of the Internet, technology and electronic media.

The policy of the Paulding County School District is to prevent any use of the computer network for transmission of inappropriate material using the Internet, electronic mail and electronic media; prevent unlawful online activity, including unauthorized access; prevent online disclosure, use or dissemination of personal identification information of minors and staff; educate minors regarding appropriate online behavior including the safety of online interaction with other users and cyberbullying awareness and response; and compliance with the following acts for safety and privacy of individuals and data: Children's Internet Protection Act of 2000 (CIPA), Children's Online Privacy Protection Rule (COPPA), Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA).

Students, employees and authorized users must understand that the use of the District's technology resources, including network and Internet, is a privilege and violating the District's policies and rules with inappropriate use may result in a revocation of that privilege, potential disciplinary action and potential referral to law enforcement, as appropriate. Users of the District's technology resources should have no expectation of privacy regarding their use, which may be monitored by the District's administration or designees. The District's technology resources are provided for the education of District students and District business to support the education of students.

The District provides Internet content filtering to block or filter access to inappropriate content on the Internet to meet CIPA requirements, but it should not be assumed that all inappropriate content is prevented from being accessed.

I. Acceptable Use

A. Acceptable Use Agreement

Students/parents, employees and authorized users must complete the *Technology Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Agreement* [Exhibit: IFBG-E (1)] agreeing to abide by all rules and regulations as stated in the *Technology Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Policy* prior to receiving access to the District's technology resources.

B. District Technology Resources

1. Access to District technology resources including the network and Internet is provided for District instructional, educational and business use. All communications and information transmitted by, received from, or stored within the District's technology resources are the property of the District.
2. Users should have no expectation of privacy regarding their use of their District technology resources and may have their use monitored. The District reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy, review and store, at any time and without prior notice, any and all usage of the technology resources, network and Internet.
3. An employee's personal files, records and communications prepared and maintained or received on or using Paulding County School District's technology, including e-mail, may be subject to disclosure under Georgia's Open Records Act, O.C.G.A. 50-18-70.
4. Users are responsible for monitoring and appropriately rejecting malicious materials, links, dialogue, and information accessed or received by them, such as spyware, malware, and viruses.
5. Users will be courteous and use appropriate language with communications while using the District's network applications and Internet access.
6. Users must accept responsibility for keeping copyrighted materials from entering the school via the Internet, storage devices, or any other method and comply with federal, state or local laws governing copyrighted material.
7. Users will refrain from accessing inappropriate content via the District's technology resources and Internet that may be deemed offensive to students, employees or parents including but not limited to topics related to profanity, vulgarity, obscenities, nudity, pornography, adult content, harassment, threats, violence or illicit/illegal content.

C. Software Applications and Third-Party Services

1. Software applications for instructional and business use in the District must be approved for use by appropriate channels, including administration and the District's Technology Division through the District's software approval process.
2. The use of hosted services for applications must comply with all applicable laws, including but not limited to: CIPA, COPPA, FERPA, HIPPA and District data privacy rules and policies.

II. Internet Safety

A. Internet Access

1. Connections to the Internet should only be made through the District's network with District-approved devices that provides appropriate content filtering.
2. Students should be supervised by faculty when accessing the District's network and Internet and should only access applications and websites for educational purposes that are relevant to approved curriculum.
3. Employees may utilize the Internet for incidental personal use outside of designated work times provided that it does not interfere with District operations, is not for personal business or monetary gain, is not unethical or illegal, and does not negatively affect or harm the District, District personnel or students.

The District will have the following in continuous operation, with respect to all devices that connect to the Internet in the District:

1. A qualifying “technology protection measure,” as that term is defined in CIPA, to block or filter access to the Internet by adults and minors to visual depictions that are obscene, pornographic or harmful to minors as those terms are defined by CIPA.
2. Procedures, materials and/or guidelines developed by the District which provide for monitoring the online activities of users and the use of the chosen technology protection measure to protect against access through such computers to visual depictions that are obscene, pornographic, or harmful to minors, as those terms are defined by CIPA, and to material deemed inappropriate for minors as determined by the District. Such procedures, materials or guidelines will be designed to:
 - a. Provide for monitoring the online activities of users to prevent, to the extent practicable, access by minors to harmful or inappropriate matter on the Internet;
 - b. Promote the safety and security of minors when using electronic mail, chat rooms, social networking, and other forms of direct electronic communications;
 - c. Prevent unauthorized access, including “hacking,” and other unauthorized activities by minors online;
 - d. Prevent the unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors; and Restrict minors’ access to materials “harmful to minors,” as that term is defined by CIPA.
3. Educational materials, guidelines and procedures which shall be used to educate minors on appropriate online behavior, including without limitation interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and chat rooms and cyberbullying awareness and response.

C. Education, Safety and Security of Minors

Teachers and others working with students will, in accordance with District guidelines, educate minors on appropriate online behavior, including but not limited to: interacting with other individuals online and cyberbullying awareness and response, and caution students that they should:

1. Never place personal contact information or a personal photograph on the Internet, email or any online communication device. Personal contact information includes full name, address, telephone number, school address, or names of family or friends.
2. Never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone you meet online.
3. Never open attachments or files from unknown senders.
4. Always report to a teacher any inappropriate sites you observe being accessed by another user or that you access accidentally.

III. Network, Computing and Information Systems Security

Maintaining network, computing and information systems security is the responsibility of all users. Users are to adhere to the following rules for appropriate and secured access of District technology resources.

1. Users should not leave an unsecured workstation without logging out of the network; users are ultimately responsible for all activity utilized with their accounts and passwords.

2. Users should never share or disclose passwords.
3. Users are to notify the Paulding County School District's Technology Division and appropriate supervisory personnel immediately if a potential security incident is identified.
4. The District has placed certain security restrictions on computers to protect our computer and network resources. Attempting to subvert or avoid the security restrictions is considered an attempt to damage school property. Users are responsible for monitoring and appropriately rejecting materials, links, dialogue, and information accessed or received by them, such as spyware, malware, and viruses.
5. Users are not to connect personal technology devices to the District's network (wired or wireless) except for District approved computing devices connected to designated Wi-fi networks. Network switches are not to be accessed by anyone other than the District's Technology Division personnel.
6. Users' generated data files, electronic communications and web postings are the property of the District and may be accessed by authorized system personnel as appropriate.
7. Users are to complete and adhere to any required cybersecurity training and/or guidelines provided to employees and students by the District.

IV. Email

District email accounts are provided to users for the District's business and educational use only. Employees and students are to adhere to the following rules with the utilization of District email accounts and communications.

1. Employees and students are not to use District email for personal business or personal gain.
2. Employees are to include the following disclaimer as the signature of District email: "Confidentiality Notice: The information contained in this email and any attachments may be legally privileged and confidential. If you are not an intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any dissemination, distribution, copying or use of this email is strictly prohibited and may violate State and Federal law. If you have received this email in error, please notify the sender and permanently delete the email and any attachments immediately."
3. Users are to assume no privacy with electronic communications, including email; therefore, users should not include confidential information regarding staff or students in email communications. Appropriately secured and District approved portal applications are to be used for submitting sensitive or confidential data for staff or students.
4. The District's network contains antivirus and spam filtering software, but the district cannot guarantee incoming email files are free of malicious code that may compromise the network or District data. Users should exercise good judgment and follow cybersecurity guidelines when opening and responding to emails. Users should refrain from clicking on unknown links that may contain malware and viruses and should never provide personal information including account credentials.
5. Users will not use email to distribute inappropriate material through items such as pictures, text, forwarded email, or attachments.
6. Users will not use email to harass others and will not send anonymous email.

V. Prohibited Uses

Allowable use of District technology prohibits the following activities by all users.

1. Users will not lend their account or password to others, nor will they use another person's account or password.
2. Users will not download or utilize non-district approved files, software, applications, programs, websites, etc.
3. Users will not download software, games, music, graphics, videos, text or other materials that are copyrighted.
4. Users may not utilize non-district provided Internet service providers.
5. Users must not attempt to bypass or circumvent the network security, firewall, content filtering, policies, and malware/virus protection including but not limited to the use of any firewall bypass programs including VPNs (virtual private networks), wireless hotspots, etc.
6. Users may not attempt to disrupt District technology resources and use by destroying, altering or modifying technology, including but not limited to files, data, passwords, creating or disseminating viruses, malware, DoS (denial of service) attacks or participating in similar disruptive activities.
7. Users may not attempt to gain unauthorized access to District networks, devices, systems, switches, servers, files, applications, accounts, etc. whether on or off school property (hacking).
8. Users are not allowed to plug any device into a network switch or connect any non-district approved device to the network (wired or wireless). Network switches are not to be accessed by anyone other than the District's Technology Division personnel.
9. Users will refrain from accessing or distributing inappropriate content via the District's technology resources and Internet that may be deemed offensive to students, employees or parents including but not limited to topics related to profanity, vulgarity, obscenities, nudity, pornography, adult content, harassment, threats, violence or illicit/illegal content.
10. Cyberbullying is not tolerated by the Paulding County School District.
11. Users will not reveal or share personal information and data including demographic, financial, medical, educational, etc. through unsecure electronic communications, such as district email or postings to non-district approved third party applications, regarding themselves or others including all employees, students and student families/guardians. All employee, student and student family/guardian data is to be protected for privacy according to Children's Internet Protection Act of 2000 (CIPA), Children's Online Privacy Protection Rule (COPPA), Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA).

VI. Penalties for Prohibited Use

Users who violate the District's policies governing the use of the District technology or network resources may have their privileges suspended or revoked and are subject to appropriate disciplinary action. The District's administration may also refer incidents to law enforcement or other authorities as appropriate.

Unauthorized devices that are found connected to the District's network may be subject to confiscation or destruction, as they may interfere with District network operations including but not limited to online standardized testing, wireless Internet access, and telecommunications.

VII. Definitions

As used in this Policy, the terms and definitions contained in CIPA are expressly incorporated herein by reference and the following additional definitions shall also apply:

1. **Blog:** dynamic website consisting of regularly updated entries displayed in reverse chronological order. Blogs read like a diary or journal, but with the most recent entry at the top. Blogs can allow for open comments meaning other individuals can respond to a posted entry. Open comments are an optional feature for most blog websites.
2. **Chat Room:** a website, part of a website, or part of an online service, that provides a venue for communities of users with a common interest to communicate in real-time.
3. **Cookies:** messages that may include personally identifiable information, which are stored in a text file and used to identify visitors and possibly prepare customized webpages for them.
4. **Cyberbullying:** the act of harassing someone online by sending or posting mean messages, usually anonymously.
5. **DoS attack:** a denial-of-service attack designed to overload an electronic network with useless traffic and messages.
6. **Educational purposes:** related to curriculum and instruction, research, professional development, or administrative purposes.
7. **Email:** an electronic message generated using the District's web-based email or personal web-based email account. It is also used generically to mean either the District's email system or a web-based email system.
8. **External site:** websites and materials not hosted on the District's network or servers.
9. **Hacking:** refers to the practice of modifying or altering software and hardware to accomplish a goal that is outside of the creator's original objective.
10. **Inappropriate material:** material that does not serve an instructional, educational or District business purpose and that includes, but is not limited, to material that:
 1. is profane, vulgar, lewd, obscene, offensive, indecent, sexually explicit, or threatening;
 2. advocates illegal or dangerous acts;
 3. causes disruption to the District, its employees or students;
 4. advocates violence; or
 5. contains knowingly false, recklessly false, or defamatory information.
11. **Instructional or educational activity:** a classroom activity that focuses on appropriate and specific learning goals and objectives.
12. **Malware:** software intended to damage a computer, mobile device, computer system or computer network, or to take partial control over its operation.
13. **Phishing:** to try to obtain financial or other confidential information from Internet users, typically by sending an email that looks as if it is from a legitimate organization, usually a financial institution, but contains a link to a fake website that replicates the real one.

14. Social networking: the use of websites or other online technologies to communicate with people and share information, resources, etc.
15. Spam: disruptive online messages, especially commercial messages posted on a computer network or sent as email.
16. Spyware: software that is installed surreptitiously and gathers information about an Internet user's browsing habits, intercepts the user's personal data, and transmits information to a third party.
17. Teacher directed: that the teacher gives to the students' specific instructions for activities and assignments.
18. Teacher supervised: a staff member will oversee the activities of the students.
19. Technology: including but not limited to electronic media systems such as computers, computing devices, peripheral devices, telecommunication equipment, electronic networks, messaging, and website publishing, and the associated hardware and software programs used for purposes such as, but not limited to, developing, retrieving, storing, disseminating, and accessing instructional, educational, and administrative information.
20. Users: District students, employees, including school and central office staff, and other authorized persons who use the District's technology.
21. Web Page: a single document or file on the web, identified by a unique URL (Uniform Resource Locator- web address).
22. Website: a collection of "pages" or files on the web that are linked together and maintained by a company, organization, or individual.
23. Spoofing: a technique used to gain unauthorized access to a computer by sending messages and pretending that these messages originate from a trusted computer.
24. Virus: a segment of self-replicating code planted illegally in a computer program, often to damage or shut down a system or network.
25. Vlog: a blog that features mostly videos rather than text or images.

Paulding County Schools

Date Adopted: 8/24/2001
Last Revised: 4/11/2023

Board Policy
School Ceremonies and Observances

Descriptor Code: IKD

Pledge of Allegiance

Each school day, at the beginning of the school day or during the homeroom period, students in the district shall be afforded the opportunity to recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America.

Students participating in the recitation of the Pledge will be expected to stand, face the flag and recite the Pledge in unison.

Students not participating in the recitation of the Pledge may (a) stand and refrain from reciting the Pledge; or (b) remain seated.

Teachers shall be informed of this policy and shall adhere to the same.

Moment of Silence

In compliance with Georgia law, at the opening of school on every school day in each public-school classroom, the teacher in charge shall conduct a brief period of quiet reflection for not more than sixty (60) seconds with the participation of all the pupils. This moment of quiet reflection is not intended to be a religious service or exercise but shall be considered as an opportunity for a moment of silent reflection on the anticipated activities of the day.

Teachers and administrators shall not suggest or imply that students should or should not use the moment of reflection for prayer, nor shall they deny to any student the right to use it for a moment of quiet prayer.

Paulding County Schools

Date Adopted: 8/24/2001

Date Last Revised: 12/13/2022

Board Policy Reporting Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect

Descriptor Code: JGI

REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT

The State of Georgia requires by law that any employee and any volunteer who attends to a child pursuant to his or her duties for the school system must report all cases of suspected child abuse of children under eighteen years of age immediately, but in no case later than twenty-four hours from the time there is reasonable cause to believe that suspected child abuse has occurred. Under no circumstances shall any principal or their designee to whom such notification has been made exercise any control, restraint, modification, or make other change to the information provided by the reporter.

The law requires the reporting of injuries or neglect of minors, provides immunity for those reporting in good faith, and provides a penalty for violation of the law.

In accordance with this law, the Superintendent shall establish the necessary rules and regulations.

Paulding County Schools

Date Adopted: 8/24/2001

Last Revised: 12/12/2022

Reporting Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect

Georgia law O.C.G.A. §19-7-5 and Board policy requires all school personnel and volunteers having reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused and/or neglected to report such suspected cases immediately, but in no case more than 24 hours from the time there is reasonable cause to believe that suspected child abuse has occurred. Personnel who report cases of suspected child abuse and/or neglect are immune from prosecution if such reports pursuant to Georgia law are made in good faith. Any person required by Georgia law to report suspected child abuse or neglect who knowingly and willingly fails to do so may be subject to criminal penalty.

As used in this regulation, the term:

- (1) "Abused" means subjected to child abuse
- (2) "Child" means any person under the age of eighteen
- (3) "Child Abuse" means:
 - (A) Physical Injury or death inflicted upon a child by a parent or caretaker thereof by other than accidental means
 - (B) Neglect or exploitation of a child by a parent or caretaker
 - (C) Sexual abuse or unwelcome touching of a child
 - (D) Sexual exploitation of a child

The State of Georgia requires by law the reporting of injuries or neglect of minors, provides immunity for those reporting in good faith, and provides a penalty for the violation of the law. The referral information must be completed by the administrator or designee prior to making the report to a child welfare agency providing protective services, as designated by the Department of Human Resources, or in the absence of such agency, to an appropriate authority. Any persons or school system participating in the making of the report, or participating in any judicial proceeding, resulting therefrom, shall be immune from any liability, civil, or criminal, that might otherwise be incurred or imposed, providing such participation is made in good faith.

In a reported case of child abuse, the student may be interviewed by law enforcement officer or other appropriate governmental investigating official without notifying the parent; however, no investigation of child abuse shall be conducted at school without the knowledge of the principal/designee.

The State of Georgia requires by law that any principal, teacher, counselor, or other school administrator having cause to believe that a child under the age of eighteen has had physical injury or injuries other than by accidental means by a parent or caretaker or has been neglected or exploited by a parent or caretaker, or has been sexually assaulted, shall report such incidents.

The State of Georgia requires by law that any principal, teacher, counselor, or other school administrator report all cases of suspected child abuse of children under eighteen years of age immediately, but in no case later than twenty four hours from the time there is reasonable cause to believe a child has been abused. Under no circumstances shall any principal or their designee to whom such notification has been made exercise any control, restraint, modification, or make other change to the information provided by the reporter.

The law requires the reporting of injuries or neglect of minors, provides immunity for those reporting in good faith, and provides a penalty for violation of the law.

The referral information must be completed by the administrator or designee prior to making the call to a child welfare agency providing protective services, as designated by the Department of Human Resources, or in the absence of such agency, to an appropriate police authority [JGI~E (1)]. Such reports shall contain the names and addresses of the child and parents or caretakers, if known, the child's age, the nature and extent of the child's injuries (including any evidence of previous injuries), and any other information that the reporting person believes might be helpful in establishing the cause of the injuries and the identity of the person(s) who caused them. An oral report shall then be made immediately by telephone and followed by a report in writing, if requested.

Once the call has been made, you are to complete a documentation letter [JGI~E (2)], maintaining one copy for your records in a locked file and forwarding one copy to the School Social Worker at the Central Office. This copy is to be sent in a sealed envelope marked "Confidential." This documentation letter will serve as your verification of compliance.

Any persons or school system participating in the making of the report, or participating in any judicial proceeding resulting there from, shall be immune from any liability, civil or criminal, that might otherwise be incurred or imposed, providing such participation is made in good faith.

Any person or official required by 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 and may be punished.

Symptoms of Possible Child Abuse/Neglect

Symptoms of possible child abuse/neglect may include physical and behavioral signs as well as indirect comments made by the child. There are several clues which indicate the possibility of child abuse/neglect. One sign alone may not be a positive indication, but if a number of signs are present, the possibility of child abuse/neglect should be strongly considered.

Physical signs may include:

- Hematomas (localized swelling filled with blood)

- Lacerations
- Irritation, Pain, or Injury to the Genital Area
- Vaginal or Penial Discharge
- Difficulty with Urination
- Pregnancy
- Venereal Disease in Young Child
- Nightmares, Change in Sleep Pattern
- Sudden Onset of Enuresis or Encopresis
- Increase in Headaches, Stomach Aches, and Miscellaneous Illness
- Sudden Eating Disturbances
- Sudden Appearance of Speech Problems

Behavioral signs may include:

- One child being treated by a parent in a significantly different way from the other children in the family
- Arriving Early at School and Leaving Late
- Nervous, Aggressive, Hostile, or Disruptive Behavior Toward the Parents
- Increased Irritability and/or Tantrums
- Running Away
- Use of Alcohol or Drugs
- Overly Compliant Behavior
- An Appearance of Mental Retardation (Not wanting to grow up, be sexual)
- Regressive Behavior (Such as acting childish, crying excessively, sucking the thumb, withdrawing into fantasy worlds)
- Obsessive Cleanliness, Obsessive Number of Baths
- Pseudo-Mature Behavior and Dress
- Poor Peer Relationships, Inability to Make Friends, Withdrawal
- Unwillingness to Participate in Physical Activities, Refusal to Dress Out in Physical Education Class
- Drop in Academic Performance or School Avoidance
- Acting-out aggressions, sometimes including petty thefts, giving trinkets to other children to form friendships, stealing merchandise or money
- Sudden reluctance to go with or stay with a certain person
- Frequent tugging at underwear, scratching selves

Paulding County Schools Date Adopted: 8/24/2001
Last Revised: 6/29/2023

**Board Policy
Student Records**

Descriptor Code: JR/FERPA

It is the policy of the Board of Education that the School District 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). For the purposes of this policy, a “parent” is defined as a natural parent, a guardian, or an individual acting as a parent in the absence of a parent or guardian. An “eligible student” is defined as a student who has reached 18 years of age or is attending an institution of postsecondary education.

The Superintendent shall implement procedures whereby every principal is directed to develop a means to notify, on an annual basis, parents and eligible students, including parents or eligible students who are disabled or who have a primary or home language

other than English, of their rights under the FERPA and the Act, either through a student handbook distributed to each student in the school or by any means that are reasonably likely to inform them of their rights. Generally, a parent or eligible student will be permitted to obtain a copy of the student's education records upon reasonable notice and payment of reasonable copying costs.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

Confidentiality of student records shall be preserved while access is provided to parents, eligible students, and school officials with legitimate educational interests, as described in the annual parent notice.

With the exception of directory information as defined below, personally identifiable information will not be released by the school district from an education record without prior written consent of the parent or eligible student, except to the extent authorized by the FERPA and its implementing regulations at 34 C.F.R. § 99.31.

The Board of Education designates the following information as "directory information." Unless a parent or eligible student makes a timely request to the principal of the school where the student is enrolled that such information not be designated as directory information for the individual student, such information will not be considered confidential and may be disclosed upon request.

The following information is designated as directory information:

- a. Student's name, address, and telephone number;
- b. Student's date and place of birth;
- c. Student's e-mail address;
- d. Student's participation in official school activities and sports;
- e. Weight and height of members of an athletic team;
- f. Dates of attendance at schools within the district;
- g. Honors and awards received during the time enrolled in district schools;
- h. Photograph; and
- i. Grade level.

Original Adopted Date: 8/24/2001
Last Revised Date: 12/13/2022

Acknowledgement of Receipt of Employee Handbook

I have received a copy of the Paulding County School District Employee Handbook. I understand I am to become familiar with its contents, as the handbook outlines employee responsibilities, benefits and company policies.

Further, I understand and agree to the following:

- This handbook is a brief summary of some of the more important PCSD policies. Consequently, the handbook is not all inclusive.
- PCSD retains the sole right in its business judgment to modify, suspend, interpret, or cancel in whole or in part, at any time, and with or without any notice, any of the published or unpublished policies or practices.
- The contents of this handbook do not constitute an expressed or implied contract of employment.

Employee Name (**Please Print**)

Employee Signature

Date



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Updated: June 2024