Employee Handbook



2026-27

WAKE COUNTY
PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

Human Resources Department
111 Corning Road
Cary, NC 27518
(919) 533-7200

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Welcome to the 2026-27 Employee Handbook

This employee handbook contains links to key Wake Board of Education ("Board") personnel policies, providing expectations regarding staff conduct, rights and responsibilities, and benefits. Per Board Policy 7300: Staff Responsibilities and Code of Ethics, all school system employees "shall be familiar with, support, comply with, and when appropriate, enforce Board policies, administrative procedures, school rules, State board policies, codes of ethics applicable to the position, and applicable laws."

This handbook is one of several resources available to help employees understand and follow Board policies and procedures. All Board policies and procedures are available online in our policy manual. Staff members should review the Board personnel policies (listed in the 7000 series) and other documents, including the DPI Benefits Manual, state law, and information available on WakeConnect.

The material in this handbook is organized by the sections used in the Board's policy manual. It also includes additional district information. Please see the Table of Contents for the specific information within each section. The policies not yet migrated to the updated manual remain for

now in the old policy manual and are designated (“old manual”). You can find both manuals at the link above.

In addition to the many topics covered here, a wealth of additional information can be found on WakeConnect - our employee Intranet. Once you sign into WakeConnect using your WakeID, use the search bar and other features to help locate the information you need.

Please note that this handbook is not a comprehensive list of all district policies and that the summaries are not a substitute for the policies themselves.





Recruitment and Selection of Personnel

(Policies 7100 - 7130)

Recruitment and Selection of Personnel (Policy 7100)

The Board considers the quality of the school system's staff to be critical to attaining excellence in education. The Board endeavors to employ only those individuals who have demonstrated excellence in their preparation and/or performance with the potential to positively contribute to the educational process.

It is Board policy to provide all applicants for employment with equal employment opportunities and to provide current employees with training, compensation, promotion, and other benefits of employment without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, military affiliation, genetic information, sex (including pregnancy and childbirth), age (40 or older), sexual orientation, transgender or gender identity, or disability, except when sex, age, or physical requirements are essential occupational qualifications that are permitted by law.

To further the Board's commitment to diversity and equity, the recruitment and employment program should be designed to encourage a diverse pool of qualified applicants that is aligned

with commitments set forth in Board Policy 1150: Equity. All candidates will be evaluated on their merits and qualifications for positions. All employment decisions will be consistent with the Board's objective of providing students with the opportunity to receive a sound basic education, as required by state law.

The school system shall promote equal employment opportunities through lawful efforts to remove barriers that may deter qualified individuals with disabilities and other historically underrepresented groups from seeking employment or advancement in employment with the Wake County Public School System.

Policy 7100 provides information about:

- Recruitment for specific vacancies;
- Selection process;
- Family relationships and nepotism;
- Criminal history checks and sex offender checks;
- Criminal history checks of child care providers; and
- Criminal charges and/or records, and notice requirements.

Information Provided by Applicant or Employee (Policy 7110)

All information provided to the Human Resources office by an applicant for employment or by an employee must be true, accurate, and complete to the best of that applicant or employee's knowledge. Applicants and current employees are required to update their application with current and correct information or inform the Human Resources office in writing of any changes to their application information.

Presenting information to the Human Resources office that is intended to defraud, falsify, materially misrepresent, or conceal the truth will be considered just cause for terminating the application process or, as a violation of Board policy, grounds for dismissing an employee.

Licensure (Policy 7130)

Policy 7130 provides information about a wide range of licensure topics, including:

- Licensure and other qualification requirements, including alternative licensure;
- Exceptions to licensure requirements, including adjunct CTE instructors, interim principals, service members and their spouses relocating to North Carolina;
- Beginning Teacher Support Program;
- License conversion;
- License renewal;
- Obtaining a license;
- Assistance with licensure issues; and
- Instructional assistant experience credit for teachers.

Praxis Reimbursement

Funds are sometimes available to reimburse WCPSS employees who have taken the Praxis II tests or other required tests in order to maintain their licenses. Employees wishing to add another license area may also be eligible for reimbursement if funding is available. See Praxis/Pearson Reimbursement and Tuition Assistance on WakeConnect for additional information and application forms or search “Praxis Reimbursement.”

Tuition Assistance

Tuition assistance for college course work is sometimes available on a limited basis to active full-time and part-time licensed employees. Applicants should read detailed procedures and eligibility requirements on WakeConnect. See Praxis/Pearson Reimbursement and Tuition Assistance on WakeConnect for additional information and application forms or search “tuition assistance.”





Work Environment

(Policies 7210 - 7280)

Staff Involvement in Decision Making (Policy 7210)

The Board encourages employees to contribute their ideas that support the continuous improvement and overall effectiveness of the school system. School system employees will be offered opportunities to help with developing policies, administrative procedures, and goals and objectives and with planning curricula, instructional programs, services, budgets, facilities, and other operational matters. While this policy affords opportunities for employee input, employees will not be required to participate.

Parental Involvement (Policy 1310/4002; NC Senate Bill 49)

The Board recognizes the critical role of parents and guardians in the education of their children and in the schools and directs school administrators to develop programs to promote and support parental involvement in student learning and achievement at school and at home and encourage successful progress toward graduation.

Parents and guardians are encouraged to learn about the educational program, the educational goals and objectives of the school system, and their student's progress. The Board

also encourages parents and guardians to participate in their children's education and in activities designed by school personnel to involve them, such as parent conferences, in order to foster effective teacher and parent communication. Parents and guardians are responsible for cooperating with school employees to facilitate their children's compliance with Board policies concerning homework, school attendance, and behavior.

Policy 1310/4002 and Senate Bill 49 provide detailed information about parent involvement, including:

- Required parental involvement plans;
- Required regular parent communication, notices, participation, and conferences;
- Required parent notifications and opportunities to withhold consent/opt-out notifications, including required prior parental permission for video or audio recording a student;
- Instances of required parental permission;
- Procedures for parental involvement in student health, including restrictions on gender identity, sexual activity, and sexuality instruction; and
- Parent requests for information.

Surveys of Students (Policy 4720)

The Superintendent shall ensure that all notification requirements of the Parents' Bill of Rights and the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment are met, along with any other legal requirements regarding the surveying of students.

Policy 4720 provides information about the requirement that the school system obtain prior written consent of a parent/guardian or eligible student before the student is required to participate in any survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information concerning certain "protected topics."

The policy also details the required notifications to parents/guardians of the specific or approximate dates of administration of surveys concerning the protected topics and parents/guardians right to review any survey that concerns one of the protected topics or any instructional materials used in any such survey.

Grievance Procedure for Employees (Policy 1750/7220)

The Board acknowledges that it is desirable for employees and their supervisors to resolve problems through informal communication. If the informal process fails to resolve the situation or an employee elects a formal process, a grievance may be filed in accordance with Board Policy 1750/7220, which provides information about the grievance process, including:

- How does an employee file a grievance?
- What qualifies as a grievance under Policy 1750/7220?
- What are the different levels of review in the process?

- What is handled as a complaint (rather than a grievance)?

Complaints

Employee complaints or concerns should first be brought to the immediate supervisor. If the complaint cannot be resolved satisfactorily at this level, the employee should then contact the individual who evaluates the employee's immediate supervisor. Employee Relations reviews those complaints related to violations of Board policy and/or state and federal laws and regulations.

If an employee concern does not meet the definition of a grievance under Policy 1750/7220, it will be reviewed as a complaint by appropriate school system personnel. **Concerns over reprimand letters, written warnings, evaluations, and performance documentation are generally handled through the complaint process.**

Equity (Policy 1150)

This policy reflects the Board's philosophy, goals, and broad commitments regarding equity for the school district. The Board believes in and commits to all students having a fair, just, and equitable education that prepares them to reach their full potential and lead productive lives in a complex and changing world.

To this end, the Board defines equity as an outcome and an action. Equity as an outcome is the elimination of predictability and disproportionality of outcomes based on student characteristics including but not limited to race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, language of origin, disability, sex, gender identity, and sexual orientation. Equity as an action is equipping every student with – and removing barriers to – access to opportunity, support, resources, and an inclusive environment in which they can learn, grow, succeed, and reach their unbounded potential.

Policy 1150 provides important information about:

- Using an equity lens;
- Addressing disparities and impact;
- Examining and reflecting on individual practices and bias; and
- Making commitments to equity.

WCPSS will endeavor to:

- Identify and address systemic deficiencies that create gaps in academic achievement by using disaggregated data to inform district decision-making and strategic planning to identify barriers to equitable opportunities and equitable outcomes for all students;
- Create and nurture an inclusive and welcoming environment for students, families, and staff;
- Identify and provide high quality instructional materials and methods that represent the rich diversity of our nation, respect the legitimacy of different cultures, and empower students to value diverse perspectives. These materials and methods are also

appropriate for the maturity levels and abilities of the students and address a spectrum of learning styles;
- Provide students with equitable access to effective teachers and principals, and sufficient support services, even when this means differentiating resource allocation;
- Provide access to equitable school facilities and support facilities;
- Recruit and retain racially and linguistically diverse and culturally competent administrative, instructional, and support personnel;
- Provide evidence-based professional learning with a focus on understanding, teaching, and serving a diverse population and honors the legitimacy of different cultures and the diverse capabilities, interests, and individual patterns of growth and learning of all students;
- Eliminate practices that lead to the over- or under-representation of any student group compared to peers in areas such as special education, student discipline, academically or intellectually gifted programs, advanced coursework, and Advanced Placement courses;
- Encourage effective partnerships with families, students, and communities to examine issues related to inequity in our schools. These stakeholders will serve as essential partners in planning and decision-making for their student's education and offer diverse perspectives in developing strategies to confront inequities;
- Ensure that the WCPSS Strategic Plan embraces the principle of equity as a key feature and outlines measurable outcomes to attain the goal of preparing all students for college and career readiness; and
- Promote equity in business practices and in the diversification of school system vendors and suppliers in accordance with law and Board policies on Participation by Historically Underutilized Businesses and Minority Business Enterprise Participation in Construction Contracts.

Prohibition against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying (Policy 1710/4021/7230)

The Board acknowledges the dignity and worth of all students and employees and strives to create a safe, orderly, caring, inviting, and inclusive school environment to facilitate student learning and achievement. The Board prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, transgender or gender identity, disability, or age and will provide equal access to designated youth groups as required by law. Any form of unlawful discrimination, harassment, or bullying as defined in this policy in any educational or employment activities or programs is against Board policy.

See Policy 1710 for important information about prohibitions of discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, and bullying.

Reporting and Investigating Complaints of Discrimination, Harassment, or Bullying

⭐Employees are required to report any actual or suspected violations of this policy. Students, parents, volunteers, visitors, or others are also strongly encouraged to report any actual or suspected incidents of discrimination, harassment, or bullying. **All reports should be made in accordance with Policy 1720/4015/7225: Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Complaint Procedure,** and reported to one of the school officials identified in that policy. Reports may be made anonymously, and all reports shall be investigated in accordance with that policy.

Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Complaint Process (1720/4015/7225)

Policy 1720/4015/7225 lays out the complaint and investigation process and procedures for those individuals who believe that they may have been discriminated against unlawfully, bullied, or harassed in violation of Policy 1710/4021/7230: Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying or Policy 1730/4022/7231: Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disabilities.

Where an individual seeks to assert allegations regarding or related to the identification, evaluation, educational placement, or free appropriate public education of a student under Section 504 or the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, such allegations also may be raised through the procedures established through Policy 1730/4022/7231 (Part 6).

Where an individual seeks to assert allegations of sexual harassment pursuant to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the process of investigating and adjudicating such allegations shall follow the regulations prescribed by the U.S. Department of Education contained in Chapter 34, Part 106 of the Code of Federal Regulations, notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this policy. All reports of alleged sexual harassment shall be routed to the appropriate Title IX Coordinator as soon as practicable, who will contact the relevant parties and shall be responsible for assuring compliance with the regulations. **See the Title IX Complaint Procedure for Sexual Harassment.**

Mandatory Reporting by School Employees

Any employee who witnessed or who has reliable information or reason to believe that an individual may have been discriminated against, harassed, or bullied in violation of Policy 1710/4021/7230 or Policy 1730/4022/7231 must report the offense immediately to an appropriate individual designated in the subsection below. An employee who does not promptly report possible discrimination, harassment, or bullying shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Reporting by Other Third Parties

All members of the school community, including students, parents, volunteers, and visitors, are also strongly encouraged to report any act that may constitute an incident of discrimination, harassment, or bullying.

The Board acknowledges that many complaints may be addressed informally through such methods as conferences or mediation. The Board encourages the use of informal procedures such as mediation to the extent possible; however, mediation or other informal procedures will not be used to resolve complaints alleging sexual assault or sexual violence or complaints by a student of sex-based harassment perpetrated by an employee. Informal procedures may be used only if the parties involved voluntarily agree.

No reprisals or retaliation of any kind will be taken by the Board or by any employee of the school system against the complainant or other individual on account of his or her filing a complaint or report or participating in an investigation of a complaint or report filed and decided pursuant to this policy. Disciplinary or other action may be taken against the complainant or other individual if the person knew or had reason to believe that the complaint or report was false or knowingly provided false information.

Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint Procedure (1710/4021/7230) R&P(1)

The Wake County Public School System Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint Procedure is designed to address reports of sex discrimination and sexual harassment in violation of Title IX and Policy 1710/4021/7230. All incidents of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment under that policy are to be reported in accordance with the Title IX Complaint Procedure, including situations where the incidents may also constitute violations of other Board policies or standards of conduct.

⭐Employees who believe they are victims of sexual harassment occurring in the work environment are encouraged to report the matter to the employee's principal/supervisor or to the appropriate Title IX Coordinator as described below. An employee who has actual knowledge of sexual harassment or allegations of sexual harassment occurring in the education program, any activity of the school system, or the work environment **must** report that information immediately to the appropriate Title IX Coordinator (as shown below). Actual knowledge includes any report of sexual harassment, any conduct witnessed that could reasonably be sexual harassment, or any reason to believe that someone may have experienced sexual harassment. Any doubt about whether specific conduct is sexual harassment should be resolved in favor of reporting the conduct.

The Title IX Coordinators below are the district officials who are designated to coordinate the school system's response to allegations of sexual harassment.

For allegations or reports that a STUDENT has engaged in sexual harassment:

Dr. Gia Hoke, Title IX Coordinator
Senior Administrator, Office of Equity Affairs
Phone: (919) 694-7637
Email: ghoke@wcpss.net

For allegations or reports that an EMPLOYEE, volunteer, or contractor has engaged in sexual harassment:

Maureen Hanahue, Title IX Coordinator
Senior Administrator for Performance, Employee Relations
Phone: (919) 694-0528
Email: mhanahue@wcpss.net

Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disabilities (1730/4022/7231)

The Board of Education will not discriminate against qualified persons with disabilities on the basis of disability. This non-discrimination policy includes, but is not limited to, benefits of and participation in system programs and activities.

Accommodation Request Procedures

WCPSS is committed to compliance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) to provide reasonable accommodations to all qualified persons with a disability to enable such person to perform the essential functions of the position for which the employee is employed. WCPSS engages in an interactive process which is the informal process through which the review and response to an employee's request for an ADA accommodation occurs. The process will vary depending on the information that must be evaluated and responded to by the school system. Although there is communication with the employee's supervisor, the employee requesting the accommodation is not required to submit Temporary Accommodation forms, including medical documentation, to their respective supervisor. All documentation may be provided directly to Employee Relations.

Generally, reasonable accommodations are fact-specific and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Employees must be able to perform the essential functions of the position with or without a reasonable accommodation.

While the school system will consider and review the specific accommodation requested by an employee, WCPSS may review and select other effective reasonable accommodation(s) to offer the employee. Information on temporary accommodations is available at ADA Temporary Accommodation Request Process on the Employee Relations WakeConnect site.

Accommodations for Pregnancy-Related Conditions

In addition, WCPSS is committed to compliance with the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act and implementing regulations requiring reasonable accommodations to a qualified employee's or applicant's known limitations related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, absent undue hardship on the operation of the business of the covered entity. Contact Employee Relations with questions.

Section 504 of The Rehabilitation Act Of 1973

WCPSS is committed to ensuring equal access to education and employment for all individuals, in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This federal law prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance.

To support compliance and provide assistance, the district has designated the following Section 504 Coordinators:

For Students:
Joseph Man
Section 504/ADA Student Coordinator jman@wcpss.net
(919) 694-0581

For Employees:
Sally Pitofsky
Section 504/ADA Employee Coordinator spitofsky@wcpss.net
(919) 533-7221

Pregnant, Parenting, and Lactating Students and Employees (Policy 4023/7233)

The Wake County Board of Education, recognizing the well-documented health advantages of breast feeding, is committed to assisting employees and students with the transition back to work/school following the birth of a child by providing lactation support for up to one year after the child's birth. Research has shown that lactation support is beneficial to the working/learning nursing parent and child as well as to schools by decreasing medical expenses, reducing absenteeism, increasing retention, and improving morale.

Policy 4023/7233 addresses:

- Nondiscrimination and equal access;
- Requirements for supporting pregnant, parenting, and lactating students and staff;
- Referral to Title IX coordinator;
- Lactation support (governed primarily by the needs of the nursing mother), including:
    - Lactation breaks;

- Private, clean, and secure space (not a restroom or common area); and
- Complaint process.

Prohibited Conduct on School Property and at School Events (Policy 5021)

No individual shall by use of passive resistance, noise, threat, fear, intimidation, coercion, force, violence, or other form of conduct cause the disruption of any lawful function, mission, or process of the school. Individuals who fail to follow this policy shall be subject to the restriction or revocation of visiting privileges.

In an effort to promote safe schools, good character, and a safe working environment, and to reduce the opportunities for disruption of or interference with school and school-related activities, while preserving the school grounds for their intended purposes and promoting the basic educational mission of the schools, the following conduct shall be prohibited at all times on school grounds and at all school-related events:

- Profane, lewd, obscene or offensive conduct, including the use of profane, lewd, obscene or offensive language;
- Conduct that creates a material and substantial disruption of school activity, the operation of the school, or the rights of students;
- Disorderly or assaultive conduct;
- Defacing public property;
- Commission of any nuisance;
- Threatening the health or safety of others; or
- Harassment as prohibited in Board Policy 1710/4021/7230: Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying; or any other conduct that violates any applicable laws or policies of the Board.

Staff or any other individuals who engage in such conduct are subject to immediate expulsion from school property or from a school-related activity. Where appropriate, individuals engaging in such conduct may be subject to arrest and prosecution. The school principal or other appropriate personnel shall have the authority to take other reasonable measures to implement this policy, including invoking state trespassing laws.

For purposes of this policy, “school property” shall include school parking lots, auditoriums, gymnasiums, athletic fields, buildings, school buses, school bus and carpool drop-off and pick-up locations, as well as all lands surrounding such places that are owned by or leased to the school system. Use of school property for school events is expressly reserved to benefit the character and education of our students. During these times school property is deemed to be a nonpublic forum.

Drug-Free and Alcohol-Free Workplace (Policy 7240)

The Board recognizes that reducing drug and alcohol abuse in the workplace improves the safety, health, and productivity of employees. It is the policy of the Board that a drug-free and alcohol-free workplace must be maintained. For purposes of this policy, "employee" shall include independent contractors and volunteers.

Policy 7240 provides specific information on:

- Prohibited activities, including:
    - Impairment by substances intended to induce exhilaration or euphoria or alter mood or behavior;
    - Impairment by the excessive use of prescription or nonprescription drugs or other lawful products, including but not limited to any legally acquired cannabis products that have intoxicating effects; and
    - Exuding the odor of any alcoholic beverage or controlled substance while acting within the course and scope of employment.
- Proper use of prescription and over-the-counter medications;
- Applications of the policy;
- Reasonable suspicion to search;
- Testing;
- Duty to report;
- Employee assistance; and
- Consequences.

Related policies include:

- Policy 7241: Drug and Alcohol Testing of Commercial Motor Vehicle Operators;
- Policy 5026/7250: Use of Tobacco, Nicotine, and Alternative Nicotine Products;
- Policy 5024/6127/7266: Emergency Epinephrine Delivery Systems;
- Policy 5028/6130/7267: Automated External Defibrillator; and
- Policy 5023/6128/7268: Emergency Use of Naloxone.

School Safety (Policy 1510/4200/7270)

Safe schools are critical to creating a learning environment in which students can succeed. Staff and students share the responsibility for taking reasonable precautions and following established safety measures to create and maintain safe schools.

Policy 1510/4200/7270 provides important information about the following safety measures that must be implemented at each school:

- Supervision of students;
- Supervision of visitors (**see also Policies 5015: School Volunteers, and 5020: Visitors to the Schools**);
- Safety of school buildings and grounds;

- Establishing processes to address potential safety concerns and emergencies:
    - Preventative measures;
    - Use of force;
    - Responding to student altercations and other threats to safety;
    - Training for staff and students;
- Safety equipment;
- Planning for emergencies and conducting fire drills and other emergency drills;
- Reporting suspicious behavior;
- Potential threats of registered sex offenders; and
- Threat assessment teams.

All employees who supervise volunteers in the workplace or on field trips must ensure that the volunteers are properly registered through the WCPSS Volunteer Registration System. Employees cannot relinquish all supervisory responsibility to volunteers. Employees do not need to go through a criminal background check to be a volunteer, but they do need to register.

Weapons Prohibited on School Property (Policy 5027/7275)

The Board is committed to providing a safe school environment that is free from violence, to the maximum extent possible. Employees, students, visitors, and other persons are prohibited from possessing, carrying, using, or threatening to use, or encouraging another person to possess, carry, use, or threaten to use, weapons or explosives on school property or while attending curricular or extracurricular activities sponsored by the school system. This policy applies to weapons or explosives carried openly or concealed.

Policy 7275 provides a detailed definition of the weapons prohibited above and any limited exceptions.

Any employee who violates this policy will be subject to dismissal. Any visitor or other person who violates this policy will be escorted from the premises and/or school activity immediately.

⭐ The Superintendent or principal shall immediately report any violation of this policy to law enforcement officials. Any employee who is aware that a weapon or explosive is present on school property or at a school event in violation of this policy must immediately report this information to the principal or designee or the school resource officer as appropriate.

Prohibition against Retaliation (Policy 1760/7280)

The Board prohibits any form of reprisal, retaliation, or discrimination against any employee who (1) in good faith, has made or intends to make a report that a practice, policy, act, or omission of the Board of Education, school system employee or entity/person with whom the school system has a business relationship violates a federal, state, or local law, regulation, or public policy; or

(2) has refused to carry out a directive which violates a state or federal law, rule or regulation, or poses a substantial or specific danger to public health and safety.

An employee who reasonably believes that any such violation exists may file a grievance in accord with Policy 1750/7220: Grievance Procedure for Employees, or a complaint in accord with Policy 1720/4015/7225: Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Complaint Procedure.

Communicable Diseases or Conditions (Policy 3031/4031 and the R&Ps - old manual) and Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Control (Policy 2332/3032/4032 and the R&Ps - old manual)

Please reference these policies and the accompanying R&Ps for detailed information about procedures used to eliminate or minimize the exposure and spread of a contagious disease or potentially infectious bodily fluids and bodily secretions.

When a director of a county health department, in order to control the spread of contagious disease or to protect the health of an employee, orders an employee to leave the work environment, the Superintendent shall reassign the employee to a safe work environment under conditions agreed to by the director of the county health department or place the employee on leave with pay for the period of time set by the medical director. Leave shall not be charged to the employee's sick leave or other available paid leave. A substitute employed for this reason shall be paid from the same source of funds as the employee (local, federal, or state).

A copy of the Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Control Plan is accessible to all employees on WakeConnect or at each school unit or department. It shall be the duty of each employee to familiarize himself or herself with the provisions of the Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Control Plan and to comply with its provisions. Employees with questions should contact their principal, supervisor, or hssupportcenter@wcpss.net.

Administration of Medicine to Students (Policy 6125)

The administration of medication to students by employees shall be permitted only upon the proper authorization by a physician and the student's parent or guardian. For further information, see Medication on WakeConnect.

Principal's Monthly Fire Drill and Inspection

All school employees should be aware that N.C.G.S. 115C-288(d) requires each principal "to conduct a fire drill during the first week after opening of school and thereafter at least one fire drill each month, in each building in his charge, where children are assembled." It further requires each principal "to inspect each of the buildings in his charge at least twice a month during the regular school session" and to file a report of the Principal's Monthly Fire Drill and

Inspection Report (Form 2906) once each month. WCPSS uses an online submission of the fire drill and inspections report. All principals and assistant principals have access to the app for fire drill and inspections found in the WakeID Portal. Failure to perform these duties is considered a misdemeanor per N.C.G.S. 115C-525(c). Principals will inform employees of the appropriate steps you should take to maintain student safety during these drills. For questions or assistance relating to Fire Drills, Fire Safety Inspections, or Fire Codes contact Risk Management at (919) 588-3470 or (919) 694-7603.

Office of Security

WCPSS Office of Security provides assistance and resources to ensure the safety of students and staff in all schools and administrative offices. Working in conjunction with school system administration, local law enforcement, and other emergency personnel, the Office of Security has implemented a comprehensive system of security measures designed to make WCPSS campuses safe places to learn and work. Employees with any security concerns should notify an administrator at their work site or contact the Office of Security Monday through Friday between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. at (919) 431-7777. Employees may report security concerns after 5 p.m. and on weekends and holidays to the WCPSS Alarm Monitoring Center at (919) 856-2890 or (919) 856-1911.

Identification Badges

All employees will be supplied with a picture identification badge. These identification badges are required to be worn and displayed at all times when on WCPSS properties. For replacement badges or questions, contact the Office of Security Badge Administrator Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at (919) 533-7227.

Systemwide Identification Badges

An employee ID badge may be used to access school sporting events across the district, under the assumption that the badge:

- May be used for admission to all middle and high school regular-season games;
- Admits one person only;
- Does not guarantee admission in the event of a sold-out game;
- May not be transferred to another individual;
- Is not valid for playoff or championship games;
- Is the only WCPSS identification badge that grants employee admission to athletic events; and
- May be revoked if this privilege is misused.

Adjusting Schedules when School Closes for Inclement Weather (Policy 5050)

Each year there is the possibility of weather conditions creating unsafe traffic conditions. When such conditions exist, the schools may be:

- Closed for one or more days;
- Opened later than the normal beginning time; or
- Dismissed earlier than the normal closing time.

Decisions on adjusting schedules are usually made after consulting the weather service, traffic agencies, and others. Roads, streets, and highways in various areas of the school district are also checked. In some situations, action must be based on forecasts by meteorologists.

Policy 5050 provides information on:

- Notification of closures or delays;
- Makeup days;
- Remote learning;
- Other school procedures;
- Cancellation of extracurricular events and before/after school; and
- Reporting employee absences during inclement weather days (Policy 7550).

Emergency Response

WCPSS employees must be prepared to respond to an emergency or traumatic event in an organized and timely manner so that students and staff can continue to function effectively without additional trauma or the development of additional emergencies. Accordingly, every school and administrative building must have an emergency response plan. These emergency plans are designed to protect students and staff during an emergency and to minimize injuries or property loss. All employees should be familiar with the emergency plans that are developed for their work site or school. Additionally, every employee at a school site should maintain a copy of the WCPSS Emergency Guide in their classroom or workspace. For guidance on the emergency response plan, please contact the security team at (919) 431-7777 or visit the North Carolina School Risk Management Plan (https://sera.nc.gov/srmp) for site specific information. The classroom guide provides a quick reference of procedures for managing classroom-based emergency situations. See Policies 1510/4200/7270.

All Emergency Operation Plans shall be NIMS compliant to include implementation of the Incident Command System. The Office Security will be responsible for conducting or coordinating training for staff on the Emergency Operations Plan and emergency procedures.

Annually all schools shall conduct a minimum of two emergency practice drills and one table-top exercise. The minimum drill will consist of one lockdown drill and one severe weather drill. Prior to conducting the first emergency lockdown drill, each school and/or administrative building must receive basic and advanced lockdown procedures training from the Office of Security. In addition to the lockdown trainings, all school administration and other designees shall complete the following to ensure they have the minimum level of emergency preparedness training. School administrators and other designees are responsible for completing the Emergency Operations Plan training and Incident Command System 100 and 200.

Upon completion of a lockdown or severe weather drill, the event must be documented within the WCPSS online reporting tool for drills. Following an actual incident, a Security After Action Review form must be completed. The Office of Security will conduct a security review of every campus on an annual basis. If needed, the Office of Security will conduct an After Action Review following an incident.

Emergency Operations Plan

All schools must be prepared to respond to an emergency or traumatic event in an organized and timely manner so that students and staff can continue to function effectively without additional trauma or the development of additional emergencies.

The district and all schools must have a comprehensive Emergency Operations Plan. School administration will be responsible for reviewing and updating their site Emergency Operation Plans annually. An electronic copy of the site-specific Information must be submitted to the Office of Security by October 1 each school year.

In support of the Emergency Operations Plan, each school should also have:

- Classroom emergency red bag kit;
- Critical incident response kit; and
- Emergency weather radio.



Staff Responsibilities

(Policies 7300-7350)

Staff Responsibilities and Code of Ethics (Policy 7300)

Board policy emphasizes that all school system employees hold positions of public trust and:

- Serve as examples and role models to students;
- Are responsible for both the integrity and the consequences of an employee's own actions;
- Must exhibit the highest standards of honesty, integrity, and fairness when engaging in any activity concerning the school system, particularly in relationships with vendors, suppliers, students, parents, the public, and other employees.

Employee conduct should be such as to protect the person's integrity and/or reputation and that of the school system. An unswerving commitment to honorable behavior by each and every employee is expected. Integrity can accommodate the inadvertent error and the honest difference of opinion; it cannot accommodate deceit or subordination of principle.

Employees shall perform their jobs in a competent and ethical manner without violating the public trust or applicable law, policies, and regulations.

Under Policy 7300, all school system employees shall:

- Be familiar with, support, comply with and, when appropriate, enforce Board policies, administrative procedures, school rules, State Board policies, codes of ethics applicable to the position, and applicable laws;
- Attend to the safety and welfare of students, including the need to provide appropriate supervision of students;
- Demonstrate integrity, respect, and commitment to the truth through attitudes, behavior, and communications with others;
- Address or appropriately direct any complaints concerning school employees, the school program, or school operations;
- Perform their jobs in a competent and ethical manner without violating either the public trust or applicable law, policies, and regulations;
- Comply with the school system's rules prohibiting the recruitment of student athletes;
- Refrain from use of any school system assets, including cash funds, materials, supplies, equipment, or vehicles for any unlawful, unauthorized, or improper purpose;
- Effectively discharge their duties, including complying with the directives of the designated supervisor, supporting the smooth and efficient operation of the school system, and facilitating the growth and development of students;
- Furnish, and not withhold nor conceal, any appropriate information requested by, or to the Board, Superintendent, or designee;
- Support and encourage good school-community relations in all interactions with students, parents, and members of the community; and
- Support parents in effectively participating in their child's education and never encourage or coerce a child to withhold information from a parent.

It is not practical or possible to list all of the situations that might fall under the guidelines of this policy. In addition to other policies, regulations, and approved practices that have been established covering specific areas of activity (such as purchasing), **the absence of a law, policy, or regulation covering a particular situation does not relieve an employee from the responsibility to exercise the highest ethical standards at all times. It shall be the employee's responsibility to be familiar with the rules and procedures associated with this policy.**

Self-Reporting Requirements for Criminal Conduct

Employees shall notify the Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources or designee if they are arrested for, charged with, or convicted of a criminal offense (including entering a plea of guilty or nolo contendere) other than a minor traffic violation (i.e., speeding, parking, or a lesser violation). Notice must be in writing, must include all pertinent facts, and must be delivered to the Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources or designee no later than the next scheduled business day following the arrest, charge, or conviction, unless the employee is hospitalized or incarcerated, in which case the employee must report the alleged violation within 24 hours after the employee's release. Upon judicial action in the matter, the employee must report the disposition and pertinent facts in writing to the Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources or designee no later than the next business day following adjudication.

In addition, all driver education instructors must immediately report to the Board any conviction that results in three or more points, and any conviction that could cause suspension or revocation of the driver license in any state. The Board will notify the Department of Public Instruction when an instructor loses his or her privilege to drive in North Carolina or any other state. The Superintendent or designee shall conduct annual checks of the driving records of all driver education instructors.

Failure by an employee to provide timely notice as described above or comply with any provision in this policy may lead to disciplinary action up to, and including, dismissal. If an employee has any doubt about whether specific conduct should be reported, the employee should err on the side of reporting the conduct.

Criminal Background Checks for Volunteers (Policy 5015)

All employees who supervise volunteers in the workplace are responsible for the proper registration of all volunteers through the WCPSS Volunteer Registration System, including a criminal background check. See www.wcpss.net/volunteer for more information.

Criminal Background Checks for Contractors (See Policies 4260/5022, Section E, and 7100, Section C.3)

All employees who hire or supervise contractors must ensure that the appropriate sexual offender and criminal background checks have been conducted for the contractors. For questions, email crc@wcpss.net.

Testing Code of Ethics

All testing personnel, teachers, and school administrators shall be familiar with the Testing Code of Ethics regarding the statewide testing programs and shall adhere to it

in all aspects of the testing programs. Any employee who violates the Testing Code of Ethics is subject to appropriate disciplinary action. The Superintendent shall report testing irregularities that affect the validity of the test results to the Board of Education.

North Carolina Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct for Educators

All professional educators shall be familiar with and comply with the State's Code of Ethics and Standards for Conduct for North Carolina Educators.

Collaborative Workspaces

Board Policy 7300: Staff Responsibilities and Code of Ethics, makes clear that all employees must exhibit "the highest standards of honesty, integrity, and fairness" in all relationships, including relationships with other employees. The policy further emphasizes that employees must "demonstrate integrity, respect, and commitment to the truth through attitudes, behavior, and communications with others" and "address or appropriately direct any complaints concerning school employees, the school program, or school operations." In order to uphold these standards, employees should:

- Demonstrate professionalism and respect in dealings with coworkers;
- Keep confidential information confidential;
- Minimize use of speaker phones and be mindful of loud conversations;
- Be respectful of those with food or scent sensitivities or allergies, including perfume/cologne, scented lotions, or air fresheners;
- Discuss workplace concerns with the appropriate individual in a professional, respectful manner; and
- Focus on potential resolutions and positive outcomes.

If needed, ask for mediation assistance from your supervisor or the Employee Support and Wellness Program.

Guidance on use of air fresheners and indoor air quality

Maintaining a safe, healthy, and comfortable learning environment is a top priority across all school facilities. As awareness of indoor air quality (IAQ) continues to grow, questions have recently arisen regarding the use of air fresheners and other fragranced products on WCPSS property. Air fresheners and similar products are designed to mask odors rather than eliminate their source. These products may emit small amounts of volatile organic compounds and, in some cases, may contribute to respiratory irritation or discomfort for sensitive individuals, including students and staff with asthma or chemical sensitivities. Additionally, fragrances are subjective and may be perceived differently by building occupants. In alignment with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality, the following expectations are provided for all schools and workspaces:

- Air fresheners, plug-in devices, sprays, essential oils, candles, and other fragranced products are not permitted on district property;
- Staff should not bring or use personal fragranced products intended to scent classrooms, offices, or common areas; and
- Custodial and maintenance teams will continue to use approved products that align with district standards.

Conflict of Interest (Policy 7305)

Employees are expected to avoid engaging in any conduct that creates or gives the appearance to the public of creating a conflict of interest with their job responsibilities. Employees shall not engage in or have a financial interest, directly or indirectly, in any activity that conflicts with duties and responsibilities in the school system.

Employees must review and comply with all Board directives established in Policy 7305, which include:

- Contracts with the Board;
- Misuse of information;
- Non-school employment or non-school activity for compensation;
- Unethical influence of students; and
- Receipt of gifts.

Staff-Student Relations (Policy 4040/7310)

The Board expects all employees to maintain the highest professional, moral, and ethical standards in their interactions with students. Employees are required to provide an atmosphere conducive to learning through consistently and fairly applied discipline and established and maintained professional boundaries. Employees are expected to motivate each student to perform to his or her capacity while modeling the behavior expected of students in staff-student relationships.

The interactions and relationships between staff and students must be based upon cooperation, mutual respect, and an understanding of the appropriate boundaries between adults and students inside and outside of the educational setting. Employees are expected to demonstrate good judgment and to avoid the appearance of impropriety in their interactions with students. Employees must consult their supervisor any time they suspect or are unsure whether conduct is inappropriate or otherwise constitutes a violation of this or any other Board policy. Employees are expected to read Policy 4040/7310, which provides critical information about:

- Prohibitions on romantic relationships and sexual contact;
- Restrictions on electronic communications; and
- Duty to report certain student communications.

Violations will be considered unprofessional behavior subject to discipline, up to and including dismissal. Factors that may be relevant to the determination of an appropriate disciplinary response to unauthorized communications with students include, but are not limited to:

- The content, frequency, appropriateness, educational relevance, subject, and timing of the communication(s);
- Whether the communication(s) could reasonably be viewed as a solicitation of sexual contact or the courting of a romantic relationship, including sexual grooming;
- Whether there was an attempt to conceal the communication(s) from the employee's supervisor and/ or the student's parent or guardian;
- Whether the communication(s) created a disruption of the educational environment; and
- Whether the communication(s) harmed the student in any manner or reasonably could have led to a harm.

Restrictions on Recording Students

Written parental permission is required prior to the creation of a video or voice recording of a student, except a record made in connection with;

- A court proceeding;
- An investigation into alleged neglect or abuse of the child;
- A recording that will be used solely for:
    - A safety demonstration;
    - An academic or extracurricular activity;
    - Classroom instruction;
    - A photo identification card; or
    - Security or surveillance of buildings, grounds, or school transportation.

⭐Reporting Inappropriate Conduct

Any employee who has reason to believe any of the following shall immediately report that information to the Superintendent or designee:

- That another employee is involved in a romantic or other inappropriate relationship or has had sexual contact with a student;
- That another employee has engaged in other behavior prohibited by this policy; or
- That the employee has witnessed behavior by another employee that has the appearance of impropriety, whether or not the behavior may have a valid purpose.

An employee who fails to inform the Superintendent or designee as provided in this section may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

This reporting requirement applies in addition to any duty to report suspected child abuse in accordance with state law and Policy 4240/7312: Child Abuse and Related Threats to Child Safety Policy, as applicable.

Expanded Prohibition on Sexual Activity with a Student and Definition of Student

It is a crime for a school staff member to engage in a sexual act or indecent liberties with a student. “Student” includes both current students and former students who were enrolled as a student within the past six months. For example, a former student who transferred, graduated, or withdrew within the past six months is still considered a “student” for purposes of this prohibited conduct. Such conduct must be reported to law enforcement and, if the employee has a professional educator’s license, also to the State Board of Education.

Use of Seclusion and Restraint and Rules for Use of Seclusion and Restraint in Schools (Policy 4302 and R&P)

It is the policy of the Wake County Board of Education to promote the safety of all students, staff, and visitors in its schools. To further this policy, school personnel may, in compliance with N.C.G.S. §115C-391.1 and state and local policies and procedures, employ reasonable restraint or seclusion techniques with students.

The Superintendent or designee shall provide copies of this policy and N.C.G.S. §115C-391.1 to school personnel and parents/guardians at the beginning of each school year.

School personnel shall promptly notify the principal or principal’s designee of any use of aversive procedures, any prohibited use of mechanical restraint, any use of physical restraint resulting in observable physical injury to a student, or any prohibited use of seclusion or seclusion that exceeds 10 minutes or the amount of time specified on a student’s behavior intervention plan. Principals shall notify the student’s parent or guardian of any prohibited use of seclusion, restraint, or aversive techniques by the end of the workday during which the incident occurred when reasonably possible, but in no event later than the end of following workday, and shall provide a written incident report within 30 days of any such incident as required by N.C.G.S. §115C-391.1 and applicable policies and procedures. The Superintendent or designee shall annually provide a record of reported incidents to the State Board of Education.

No employee of the Wake County Public School System shall retaliate against another employee for making a report alleging a prohibited use of seclusion, restraint, or aversive techniques, provided; however, an employee may be disciplined for making such a report if the employee knew or should have known that the report was false.

Policy 4302 R&P provides definitions and information about:

- Use of physical restraint;
- Use of mechanical restraint;
- Use of seclusion;
- Use of isolation;

- Use of time-out;
- Prohibition - aversive procedures;
- Notice to principal and parent/guardian;
- Reporting and documentation;
- Non-retaliation for reporting; and
- Review of repeated use of restraint and seclusion.

Student Behavior - Code of Conduct, Section D, Corporal Punishment (Policy 4309)

The Wake County Board of Education prohibits the use of corporal punishment. No principal, assistant principal, teacher, substitute teacher, any other school employee, or volunteer may use corporal punishment to discipline any student. Corporal punishment is the intentional infliction of physical pain upon the body of a student as a disciplinary measure. It includes, but is not limited to, spanking, paddling, and slapping. Violations of this prohibition may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. Reasonable force that is necessary to protect oneself or others is not considered corporal punishment (N.C.G.S. 115C-390.3; -391.1).

⭐ Child Abuse and Related Threats to Child Safety (Policy 4240/7312)

The Board is concerned with the health, safety, and welfare of all children and recognizes the legal and ethical obligations that school employees, contractors, and volunteers have to report known or suspected maltreatment of children. **North Carolina has two separate systems that mandate reports to state authorities of suspected child abuse, neglect, dependency, or maltreatment and a third system for mandated reporting of certain crimes against juveniles to local law enforcement.**

When a parent or other caretaker is suspected to have caused a child to be abused, neglected, or dependent, this information **must be reported to the county child welfare agency.**

Suspected human trafficking, involuntary servitude, and sexual servitude of a child and death of a child as a result of maltreatment are special forms of child abuse under law and **must be reported to the county child welfare agency,** regardless of the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator.

Suspected child maltreatment by a caregiver in a childcare facility, including in a licensed preschool classroom or other licensed classroom or program operated by the school system, **must be reported to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE)**. When the source of the harm or threat of harm is uncertain, a report should be made to both the county child welfare agency and DCDEE.

In addition, **state law mandates reports to local law enforcement when a child is a victim of certain violent offenses, sexual offenses, or misdemeanor child abuse**. An adult who knows or reasonably should have known of any of these offenses inflicted upon a child must report that information immediately.

The Board of Education supports all employees who in good faith make a report under North Carolina's mandated reporting laws.

⭐**Policy 7312 provides important information about your REQUIRED:**

- Duty to report certain crimes against children to local law enforcement;
- Duty to report child abuse, neglect, dependency, or death as a result of maltreatment to the county child welfare agency;
- Duty to report child maltreatment in a child care facility to the Division of Child Development and Early Education;
- Duty to report licensed employees to the State Board of Education;
- Cooperation and sharing information with state and local agencies;
- Participation in child sexual abuse and sex trafficking training program; and
- Review of child abuse and neglect information and resources for students.

Reporting Safety and Security Information to External Agencies (Policy 5150/7313)

It is the policy of the Board in serious matters relating to the safety and welfare of students and employees that certain actions and information be reported to external agencies as required by law or regulation. Policy 5150/7313 provides a list of other Board policies addressing safety and security that have reporting requirements:

- Policy 1510/4200/7270: School Safety
- Policy 4040/7310: Staff-Student Relations
- Policy 4230: Communicable Diseases – Students
- Policy 4240/7312: Child Abuse and Related Threats to Child Safety
- Policy 4302: Use of Seclusion and Restraint
- Policy 4335: Reporting Criminal Behavior
- Policy 4345: Student Discipline Records
- Policy 4700: Student Records
- Policy 5027/7275: Weapons and Explosives Prohibited
- Policy 5028/6130/7267: Automated External Defibrillator
- Policy 5120: Relationship with Law Enforcement
- Policy 6120: Student Health Services
- Policy 7100: Recruitment and Selection of Personnel
- Policy 7130: Licensure
- Policy 7240: Drug-Free and Alcohol-Free Workplace
- Policy 7241: Drug and Alcohol Testing of Commercial Motor Vehicle Operators

- Policy 7900: Resignation

Technology Responsible Use (Policy 3225/4312/7320 and R&P)

Policy 3225/4312/7320 governs student and employee use of any technological resources owned, leased, maintained, or otherwise controlled by the school system. The Board intends that students and employees benefit from the variety of technological resources it provides while remaining within the bounds of safe, legal, and responsible use.

The Technology Responsible Use policy details the rules for use of school system technological resources. All users must review Policy 3225/4312/7320 and be familiar with these rules.

In addition, you must review Policy 3225/4312/7320 to understand your obligations regarding

- Restricted material on the internet;
- Privacy considerations;
- Use of personal technology on school system property;
- Staff personal websites and Policy 4040/7312: Staff-Student Relations;
- Use agreements; and
- Consequences for violations of this policy.

Personal Use of Materials, Equipment, and Supplies (Policy 6521)

This policy makes clear that the Wake County Board of Education controls all equipment, materials, and supplies purchased, leased, or received as a gift. School system vehicles and courier services are for official school system use only. School system personnel may employ school system equipment for minimal, infrequent personal use when conditions specified in the policy are met.

Fraud Hotline

The school system will not tolerate fraud or theft. To report incidents of suspected theft of school system property or money, suspected theft of student property or money, suspicion that someone is working together with others to steal or misappropriate money or property, and/or suspicion that someone is tricking or deceiving the school system for personal gain, call the 24-hour fraud hotline at 1-866-674-4872 or report online at wcpss.ethicspoint.com. The hotline is completely anonymous; users do not have to identify themselves. The name of any user that identifies themselves are kept confidential except as may be necessary to investigate a claim or as otherwise required by law.

Employee Dress and Appearance (Policy 7340)

The Board expects all personnel to be professionally, neatly, and appropriately attired for the work to be done. An employee's dress must not disrupt or distract from the educational process or work environment and must be in accordance with health and safety standards.

Policy 7340 provides information on addressing violations of dress and appearance. Guidelines for employee dress and appearance

- Must be gender-neutral and non-discriminatory;
- Must permit protective, natural, or cultural hairstyles, including but not limited to such hairstyles as braids, dreadlocks, locs, twists, tight coils or curls, cornrows, Bantu knots, afros, geles, hair ties, and headwraps;
- May authorize deviations from the guidelines for employees performing specialized duties that require a different form of dress;
- Must comply with any health and safety guidelines for specific positions; and
- Must provide a process for offering reasonable accommodations when required by law.

Any deviations because of specialized duties or restrictions related to health and safety requirements must be applied consistently without regard to race, ethnicity, or other protected status. The principal or department supervisors may develop additional specific dress or appearance requirements for each school or department that are consistent with the guidelines described in this policy. Administrative and supervisory personnel shall encourage and expect employees to dress in accordance with the Board's expectations.





Specific Employment Relationships

(Policies 7400 - 7440)

Teacher Responsibilities and Duties (Policy 7405)

The Board acknowledges that instructing students is the primary mission of the school system. A teacher's primary functions are specified in the teacher job description, Board policies, and laws. A teacher is directly responsible to the principal and may be assigned professional responsibilities and instructional duties, as defined in this policy.

Additionally, to carry out the responsibilities of the school system, principals may require teachers and other employees to perform certain non-instructional and extracurricular duties as described in this policy. Assigned additional duties are considered part of all employees' responsibilities. However, assignment of additional duties to teachers should be minimized to allow time for teachers to plan, collaborate with colleagues, conduct conferences with parents, provide additional support to students, and perform any other activities that have a direct impact on student achievement. Such additional duties shall be distributed equitably among school

employees. Additional compensation is not offered for most instructional, non-instructional, and extracurricular duties as they are within the employee's regular employment responsibilities. However, an employee is eligible to receive additional compensation for an instructional, non-instructional, or extracurricular duty when the duty appears on the Board-approved roster of extra duty positions, see Policy 7602: Extra Duty Program.

Policy 7405 provides detailed information on:

- Professional responsibilities and instructional duties;
- Extracurricular duties;
- Non-instructional duties; and
- Coaching assignments.

See Policy 3120: Lesson Planning for information on:

- Lesson plan objectives;
- Submission of lesson plans;
- Emergency lesson plans;
- Lesson plans while teacher on leave; and
- Planning time.

See Policy 3200: Selection of Instructional Materials, for detailed information about the categories of instructional materials and the procedures used to select and review each category, including:

- Core instructional resources;
- Supplemental materials;
- School library collection materials;
- Instructional materials offered as a gift; and
- Parents/guardian review of or objection to materials.

Any instructional materials may be removed only for legitimate educational reasons and subject to the limitations of the First Amendment. Requests by parents/guardians to remove core instructional materials, supplemental materials, or school library collection materials due to an objection to the materials will be reviewed pursuant to Policy 3210: Parental Inspection of and Objection to Instructional Materials.

See Policy 3432: Professional Learning Communities, for detailed information on the definition, functions, and expectations of PLCs.

For information on contracts, see:

- Policy 7410: Teacher Contracts: Teacher performance expectations, Superintendent's recommendation, determination of contract length, and dismissal and renewal. See also WakeConnect Salary and Contracts page;
- Policy 7422: Deputy/Associate/Assistant/Area Superintendent and Chief Officer Contracts; and

- Policy 7425: School Administrator Contracts.

Substitute Teachers (Policy 7430)

The school system will employ substitute teachers as deemed appropriate by the administration and in accordance with State Board policies. The Board recognizes the importance of employing licensed teachers as substitutes and will give first priority to substitutes who hold or have held any teaching license and second priority to those who have completed Effective Teacher Training or comparable professional development courses. Teaching experience and other relevant experience also will be considered.

A criminal history check and a check of sex offender registries will be conducted on applicants for substitute teaching positions in accordance with Policy 7100: Recruitment and Selection of Personnel, and administrative procedures.

Policy 7430 provides information on:

- General employment of substitutes;
- Assignment and selection of substitutes, including training and approved lists;
- Instructional assistants serving as substitutes during their primary assignments; and
- Notification of parents or guardians.

Training

Substitute teachers are considered employees of the school system and must complete any training assigned by the school system. Substitute teachers are subject to the same responsibilities assigned to other school system employees under law, state and local board policies, administrative regulations, and other administrative rules or directives.

Red Rover - Automated Substitute Teacher Management Service

WCPSS uses an internet-based system to fill teacher and special program instructional assistant absences. Absences may be recorded at any time, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Access to the substitute teacher management system Red Rover is found online at https://app.redroverk12.com/. School administrators and staff can create a list of Preferred Substitutes based on need and preference. Administrators, lead secretaries, and back-ups for Red Rover can view filled and unfilled jobs, run reports, enter absences, and assign substitutes as needed.

Substitutes are notified by text messages from Red Rover or by proactively logging into the system for job availability. Subs should be proactive in searching for substitute jobs. Available jobs are online, including via the mobile app, 24 hours a day. Substitute teachers are required to remove themselves from a job and contact the school if unable to fulfill an assignment.

Registering an absence with the online system does not excuse an employee from also contacting the school or work site to report an absence.

Substitute Teacher Folder

To enable substitute teachers to provide better services to students during planned and/or emergency absences, all regular teachers must prepare an emergency substitute teacher folder. **The folder must be updated periodically as necessary.**

Upon arrival to the classroom, if the Substitute Teacher Folder is not available, other school personnel will need to provide the lesson plans and other information necessary to maintain the integrity of the instructional curriculum.

As applicable, the folder should include the following information for each class/group:

- Attendance procedures and an up-to-date class roster;
- Lesson plans along with texts, guides, handouts, or equipment;
- Instructions for using electronic equipment such as SmartBoards;
- Daily schedule for students and teacher (pull-out programs);
- Discipline/management procedures (group and/or individual plans);
- Medical plans and/or procedures for students with physical disabilities;
- Lunch procedures, money, and student lunch cards (mainly for elementary);
- Accident procedures, reports;
- Any extra duties that the absent teacher may have (carpool, bus, lunch duty); and
- Emergency procedures.

Employees, including teachers, who are on medical or other approved long-term leave cannot be required to perform work (e.g., lesson plans, interim reports, grades, or IEP meetings). For long-term substitute teachers, if the teacher has not left adequate information for the substitute, the responsibility falls upon the individual teams, department chairs, administrators, and other staff members to provide/cover the necessary lesson plans, interim reports, grades, IEP meetings, or teacher/parent conferences. Substitutes cannot be required to attend IEP meetings or teacher/parent conferences.

Substitutes cannot be required to work beyond the regular school hours or on teacher workdays. Employees cannot work as a substitute teacher during regular school hours on days that they are taking annual vacation leave, including any days on their calendar that are designated as annual vacation leave days. All employees are responsible for knowing which days are designated for annual vacation leave on their calendar.

General Practices

Schools should provide a lunch break to substitute teachers working a full day, consistent with the applicable time restraints as full-time teachers. Substitute teachers should have the ability to choose the classrooms they will perform their substitute duties. However, if there is a greater

need within the school due to the lack of substitute teacher coverage, it is in the discretion of the school to place the substitute in a different classroom than what was originally accepted by the substitute teacher. Ultimately, the substitute can choose not to accept the change in assignment and leave for the day.

Schools are not required to provide a lesson planning period for substitute teachers. If there are times throughout the day where students are not in the classroom, the school can have the substitute teacher help out in other areas. On planned early release days, it is the expectation that substitute teachers will work the full duration of the job hours. The school may have the substitute teacher help out in other areas once students have been released. It is at the school's discretion to allow substitute teachers to leave once students have left for the day.

Active substitute teachers are not required to go through the yearly volunteer criminal background check if they want to volunteer in our schools. However, they must go through the WCPSS Employee Volunteer registration process.

In the event of inclement weather, substitute teachers will follow the change in schedule for students. If students are delayed reporting for school, substitutes would be delayed reporting for work. If schools are closed, substitutes would not report. Workdays missed due to inclement weather are not paid.

Emergency Procedures

Questions concerning emergency procedures should be directed to the school front office. Schools should provide substitute teachers with a method for locking the classroom door in case of an emergency.

Cancellation Practices

Substitute teachers can cancel a job up to the start time of the job.

- Please only cancel a job if absolutely necessary. Last minute cancellations cause a hardship for the school. Frequent last-minute cancellations, late arrivals, and early departures from a scheduled job may result in the school submitting a "Do Not Use" request to block a sub from their school.
- If a job must be cancelled within 48 hours of the job start time, the sub must remove themselves from the job in Red Rover and call the school and leave a message for the lead secretary.
- If a job is cancelled by a sub on the same day they are scheduled to work, the online substitute system will block the sub from picking up another job for the day.
- Long-term subs must communicate with the lead secretary if they need a day off during their long term assignment.
- Teachers can cancel a job up to the start time of the job.

Substitute “Do Not Use” Requests

In the event that a substitute does not work out at a particular school, the school administrator may submit a “Do Not Use” request to the Substitute Office in Human Resources requesting that the substitute’s name be removed from the list of available substitutes for that particular school. The school administrator must inform the substitute teacher of the reasons for the “Do Not Use” request in person or by phone.

If the “Do Not Use” request is approved by Human Resources, the substitute teacher will receive a warning letter. If a second “Do Not Use” request from another school is submitted to Human Resources and approved, the substitute teacher will receive another warning letter stating the person’s continued status as a substitute teacher is in jeopardy, and that receipt of a third “Do Not Use” request can result in termination of employment.

A substitute teacher may submit a letter of rebuttal to the school administrator and Substitute Office for any “Do Not Use” request. The school administrator will consider all rebuttals and inform the substitute teacher if the “Do Not Use” request will be rescinded with Human Resources approval.

If a substitute teacher receives a third “Do Not Use” request and is terminated from employment, the substitute teacher may submit a written appeal to the Substitute Office. A substitute teacher will be blocked from taking additional substitute teaching jobs during the time of such an appeal. While an important action in protecting the integrity of the educational environment for students, “Do Not Use” requests are not common. Most substitute teachers are in good standing.

Substitute Teacher Renewal

All substitute teacher profiles automatically renew at the end of each school year. Subs will receive an email each year in April with a form to complete if they wish to end their sub assignment at the end of the current school year. Subs may also use the normal resignation process to end employment.

Student Teachers (Policy 7431)

Under the direction of the Superintendent, student teachers from accredited colleges and universities may be assigned for student teaching experiences in the Wake County Public School System. The specific assignment of student teachers shall be determined through cooperative involvement of placement contacts with the institution of higher education, Human Resources staff, the respective principals, and appropriate teachers, and shall be assigned by the Superintendent or designee.

Student teachers assigned in the Wake County Public School System shall be subject to the policies, practices, and procedures of the school system. A student teacher may be removed by the Superintendent or designee if it is determined that the student teacher’s performance or conduct is detrimental to the welfare of students, or the school system, or if it is found that the

student teacher has otherwise violated Board policy. Removals shall also be consistent with the process set forth in the applicable memorandum of agreement between the school system and the institution of higher education.

Athletic Directors Serving as Coaches (Policy 7432)

The Board recognizes that the duties, time requirements, and responsibilities of coaches and athletic directors are demanding, and that a coach or athletic director can be more effective if not serving in both capacities at the same time. However, the Board recognizes that this separation of assignments will not always be possible. The principal of a school is in the best position to determine who will serve as coaches and who will serve as athletic director.

Generally, athletic directors should infrequently serve concurrently as coaches, especially at the high school level. As long as there exists a shortage of qualified and/or interested teachers who wish to be coaches or athletic directors, the principal may hire one teacher to serve concurrently as coach and athletic director provided the principal has determined the individual is able to effectively perform both roles. The principal must complete the appropriate form for an extra duty request to serve in dual roles and submit the request to Human Resources for its approval.

If an individual is selected to serve concurrently as a coach and athletic director for a given academic year or sports season, the principal must revisit the decision annually by posting the coaching position to determine if there are qualified and/or interested individuals who wish to be coaches. Prior to selecting an athletic director to continue to concurrently serve as a coach for a subsequent season, the principal must receive approval from Human Resources. If one person is chosen by the principal to serve as both coach and athletic director, that person will receive extra-duty pay for both assignments in accordance with the extra-duty implementation guidelines.

Drivers (5016/6315/7435)

Safety is of paramount concern in providing student transportation services and when otherwise driving for school system purposes. Consistent with the Wake County Board of Education's goals for student and employee safety, all drivers involved in transporting students or driving vehicles for school system purposes must comply with all Board requirements for licensing, qualifications, training, approvals, and procedures as set forth in Policy 5016/6315/7435, including:

- Requirements for school bus and activity bus drivers;
- Requirements for drivers of other WCPSS vehicles;
- Requirements for approved school volunteers or coaches driving students in private vehicles for school-sponsored activities;
- Requirements for employees driving students in private vehicles in unexpected or emergency situations; and
- Requirements for employees driving private vehicles for other work purposes.

In addition, the **R&P for Policy 5016/6315/7435: Drivers** provides additional information about requirements for:

- Approved school volunteers or coaches driving students in private vehicles for school-sponsored activities and
- Employees driving students in private vehicles in unexpected or emergency situations.

Assignments/Reassignments/Transfers (Policy 7440)

All assignments and transfers of employees to schools are the responsibility of the Superintendent. In-school staffing assignments are the responsibility of the principal. The Board must be promptly notified of all employee transfers authorized by the Superintendent. Transfers of beginning teachers will be consistent with any applicable provisions in the school system's Beginning Teacher Support plan.

Policy 7440 provides information on:

- School system initiated transfers of employees and
- Employee-initiated transfers.

Job Sharing for Certified Employees (DPI Benefits Manual §17.1)

Job sharing is available to certified employees working in school-based assignments. Under the job-sharing policy, two employees must split equally a 40-hour per week position that has been deemed a job-sharing position by the principal or hiring manager. Job sharing provides that an employee in a permanent job-sharing position who works at least 20 hours per week shall receive paid legal holidays, annual vacation leave, sick leave, and personal leave on a pro-rata basis. Such an employee also receives service credit under the state retirement system and insurance benefits. Participation in the State Health Plan is an optional benefit. If the employee elects to participate in the State Health Plan, the employing school unit pays 50% of the Plan's total noncontributory premiums and the employee pays the balance.

Because the benefits for staff employed in job-sharing positions include retirement, retirees can only be employed in temporary job-sharing positions. Retirees employed in temporary job-sharing positions do not earn leave benefits.



Workday and Absences

(Policies 7500 - 7575)

Workday and Overtime (Policy 7500)

This policy provides information on employee workdays and schedules. Employees shall strictly follow the working hours set by the principal or supervisor. All work schedules will be consistent with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). Policy 7500 gives information about: *FLSA exempt school-based employees and non-exempt employees, including instructional assistants (other employees).*

In addition, Policy 7500:

- Defines the workweek;
- Discusses the earning of overtime and compensatory time;
- Provides information on completing an accurate timesheet and consequences for falsely reporting your time; and
- Sets out attendance expectations.

Timesheets should reflect hours actually worked, not the employee's work schedule. To report incidents where you suspect that someone is falsely reporting time on timesheets for personal gain, call the 24-hour fraud hotline at 1-866-674-4872 or report online at wcpss.ethicspoint.com.

Employee Absences (Policy 7501)

The Board recognizes the vital importance of having a low absentee rate among school personnel in order to provide consistent services and instruction to students. Regular attendance is a duty of employment and an essential function of the job for all school system employees. All employees are expected to comply with all applicable absence procedures, including the reporting of absences.

Policy 7501 provides information on:

- Entitled leave;
- Excessive absences;
- Chronic absences; and
- Job abandonment.

Teleworking (Policy 7503 and R&P)

The Board understands the benefits of offering innovative workplace flexibility through teleworking but recognizes the importance of employees performing work at their regularly assigned place of work, to allow for in-person education and services, support and collaboration, and an efficient workplace.

The Telework Policy R&P provides important and detailed information about telework categories, including:

- Emergency situations (including closures for inclement weather);
- Central Services staff in designated hybrid or full telework positions;
- School-based positions:
    - Telework on unprotected teacher workdays;
    - Intermittent telework on a non-instructional day for 11- and 12-month school-based administrative or clerical employees assigned to work on non-instructional days in the summer, winter or spring breaks, or other non-instructional days; and
- Discretionary telework – available to both school-based and Central Services employees who meet the criteria for discretionary telework, are in good standing to telework, and **do not primarily provide in-person instruction or in-person services.** Discretionary teleworking is expected to be used on an infrequent basis.

As described more specifically in Policy 7503 and the R&P, different types of telework have different eligibility criteria. All employees must complete a Telework Agreement as part of their annual training, usually at the beginning of the school year and prior to requesting telework.

Requests to telework as a reasonable disability accommodation will be reviewed and evaluated pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Leave Policies

It is recommended that employees refer to both the North Carolina Public Schools Benefits and Employment Manual ("**DPI Benefit Manual**") and the individual Board leave policies for complete information about leaves.

In the event that changes to state or federal law or regulation conflict with current State Board or local Board policies, the Board intends that its leave practices be modified to the extent necessary to comply with current law until such time as conforming changes to State Board and/or local Board policy are made. (See Board Policy 7505: Compliance with State Board of Education Employment Policies.

The provisions that refer to the DPI Benefits Manual are intended for guidance only and are not intended to alter or expand the school system's responsibilities beyond the requirements of law.

Definition of Immediate Family Member - DPI Benefits Manual §§ 1.1.12 and 8.2.1

For purposes of most leave policies below, "immediate family" means the employee's: spouse, children, parents, brothers, sisters, grandparents, grandchildren, and dependents living in the employee's household. Also included are step, half, and in-law relationships.

As used in the federal Family Medical Leave Act, "immediate family" is parent, spouse or child.

Leave (Policy 7510)

The Board believes that it is important for employees to have leave available for personal, civic, and professional matters. This need for leave is to be balanced with the need to provide an effective instructional program for students. No employee may be discharged, demoted, or otherwise subjected to adverse employment action for taking legally entitled leave in accordance with Board policies and administrative procedures.

Policy 7510 provides information about:

- General leave requests and reporting procedures;
- Consequences for not following procedures;
- Minimum leave time;
- Use of paid leave before nonpaid leave;
- Unauthorized absences; and
- Job abandonment.

Employees shall follow the absence reporting and leave request procedures as set forth in this policy and any other specific policy below addressing the type of leave requested. Additional information regarding leave options and forms is available on WakeConnect.

Annual Vacation Leave (Policy 7511) and DPI Benefits Manual § 3.1

All full time and part-time permanent employees who work or on paid leave for one-half or more of the workdays in a monthly pay period are entitled to earn annual vacation leave. Leave for part-time employees is earned on a pro rata basis, The Board's Annual Leave policy includes information on:

- Rate of earning annual leave;
- Requests and approval process for annual leave;
- Restrictions on annual vacation leave use for instructional personnel;
- Important restrictions on the use of annual leave;
- Accumulation/conversion of annual leave to sick leave;
- Separation from employment and annual leave;
- Transfer of leave;
- Bonus vacation leave; and
- Annual leave for catastrophic illness.

Instructional personnel, including teacher assistants, who require a substitute may not take annual leave on days students are in school, except as permitted by the Board under Policy 7511 or the DPI Benefits Manual Section 3.1.

Employees can find out complete information about annual vacation leave in Policy 7511 and in the DPI Benefits Manual Section 3.1.

Sick Leave (Policy 7512) and DPI Benefits Manual § 4.1

All eligible employees will earn sick leave at the rate established by state law, and employees may use sick leave for the purposes permitted by state law and State Board of Education policies.

Under DPI Benefits Manual 4.1.2, sick leave may be used for:

- The employee's own illness, injury, or medical appointments, or an illness or medical appointment of the employee's immediate family member that necessitates the employee's attendance.
- Death in the immediate family. For sick leave, this means: spouse, children, parents, siblings, grandparents, grandchildren, and any dependents living in the employee's household. Also included are step, half, and in-law relationships.

- Pregnancy.
- Recuperation from childbirth (paid parental leave can be used in lieu of or in addition to sick leave for this purpose). Requests for paid parental leave are governed by Board Policy: Parental Leave, and the DPI Benefits Manual (Section 8.1).
- Adoption/foster care placement.
- Short-term disability. For eligible employees, sick leave may be used during the 60-day waiting period for short-term disability, or in lieu of approved short-term disability benefits.
- Supplementation of Workers' Compensation payments.
- Military caregivers - employees who are also military caregivers may choose to exhaust available sick and/or annual/bonus leave, or any portion, or go on leave without pay.

Verification of the Need for Sick Leave

Unless waived by the employee's supervisor, absences of more than three days duration (consecutive) must be supported by a physician's statement or other acceptable proof that the employee was unable to work due to personal illness, medical appointment, or illness or death in the immediate family.

For shorter absences, the Superintendent or designee (usually the Employee Relations Performance Team) may also require a statement from a medical doctor or other acceptable proof that the employee was unable to work due to personal illness, medical appointment, illness or death in the family, foster care or emergency placement of a child, or adoption.

While an employee is required to provide notice and proper leave forms to the supervisor, an employee is not required to provide to the supervisor any documents that reveal specific medical information about the employee or family member, including the medical certification form. An employee may send such medical forms and documentation directly to Human Resources.

Extended Sick Leave for Teachers and Media Coordinators (DPI Benefits Manual § 4.2)

Extended sick leave is available to classroom teachers and media coordinators who require substitutes for absences due to their own personal illness. Extended sick leave cannot be used to attend to an immediate family member's illness. In addition, accumulated sick leave must be exhausted before extended sick leave is granted.

See Board Policy 7512 and the DPI Benefits Manual for all information, including:

- Earning sick leave;
- Purposes for which sick leave may be used;
- Absence reporting procedures;

- Foreseeable and unforeseeable absences;
- Prolonged, emergency absences;
- Teacher responsibilities during long-term leave;
- Accumulation/conversion of annual leave to sick leave;
- Reinstatement following sick leave; and
- Sick leave and retirement.

Personal Leave (Policy 7513) and DPI Benefits Manual § 5.1)

Eligibility

Personal leave is earned by classroom teachers and school media specialists who require substitutes. Non-classroom teachers who are restricted in their use of annual leave when students are in school also earn personal leave. For purposes of this policy, these eligible positions are referred to as “teachers.” Central Services-based teaching positions are not eligible to earn personal leave.

Use of Personal Leave

Personal leave may be used only upon the authorization of the immediate supervisor. Personal leave (**as opposed to sick leave)** may be used on any instructional day or workday except for the following restricted days: first day teachers are required to report for the school year, protected teacher workdays, days scheduled for State testing, or on the last working day before or the next working day after holidays or annual vacation days scheduled in the calendar. **Personal leave may be used on a restricted day subject to principal approval, subject to the salary deduction described below.**

A teacher who requests to use personal leave for a non-restricted day at least five days in advance shall be automatically granted the request subject to the availability of a substitute teacher. When at least five days’ notice is provided, the teacher making the request cannot be required to provide a reason for the request, but if a reason is not provided, the teacher will be subject to the substitute salary deduction described in Policy 7513. Teachers who have received approval by the principal to use personal leave on a restricted day are always subject to the substitute deduction if students are in attendance, even if a reason was provided.

See Policy 7513 for important information about:

- The five-day notice required;
- The limitations of personal leave; and
- The salary deduction and providing a reason for taking the leave.

Educational Leave (Policy 7514) and DPI Benefits Manual § 6.1

Educational leave can be used for full-time and part-time permanent employees to attend workshops, staff development, departmental meetings, or extended leaves as addressed in Policy 7514. However**, if an employee is assigned or approved by the immediate supervisor to attend an off-site training or program for the benefit of the school system, the employee is not required to take leave for such attendance.**

Policy 7514 addresses:

- In-service school projects and school system trainings;
- State-sponsored staff development activities;
- North Carolina Center for Advancement of Teaching (NCCAT) trainings; and
- Unpaid educational leave: Meetings and workshops not sponsored by the school system or assigned by the supervisor or leave of absence for educational credential.

Professional Organization Leave (Policy 7515) and DPI Benefits Manual § 6.2

Only full-time and part-time permanent employees are eligible for professional organization leave, which is limited to attending meetings and duties where the employee has responsibilities to the professional organization as described in Policy 7515.

Civic Responsibility Leave (Policy 7516) and DPI Benefits Manual § 7

Policy 7516 explains the procedures to use leave for:

- Community function attendance;
- Wake County volunteer activities;
- Jury duty;
- Certain court attendance; and
- Service as elected government officials.

Family and Medical Leave Act (Policy 7520) and DPI Benefits Manual § 8.2

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) allows eligible employees to take 12 workweeks (or 26 workweeks in certain cases) of unpaid, job-protected leave for their own serious medical condition or that of an immediate family member, defined as parent, spouse or child in any 12-month period.

Board Policy 7520 includes:

- Who is eligible for FMLA Leave?
- What is the period of protected leave available?
- Does FMLA run consecutively with other types of leave?
- What are the employee's responsibilities when requesting FMLA leave?
- What medical information is required?
- Are health benefits continued?

Parental Leave (Policy 7525) and DPI Benefits Manual § 8.1

The sections of Policy 7525 provide information about different types of leave available to parents.

Paid Parental Leave - Section A

This section gives detailed information about:

- Definitions of important terms;
- Eligibility for paid parental leave;
- Leave available for full-time employees;
- Leave for part-time employees;
- Documentation needed of qualifying event (e.g., childbirth or adoption);
- Leave request process and absence coverage;
- Leave usage; and
- Unused paid parental leave.

Nonpaid Parental Leave and Substitution of Paid Leave During Nonpaid Parental Leave - Section B (DPI Benefits Manual 8.1.7 and 8.1.8)

In addition to any authorized paid parental leave as described above, all full-time permanent or part-time permanent employees may take a leave of absence without pay for up to one calendar year from the date of birth or adoption to care for a newborn child or for a newly adopted child. Employees, including teachers, also may elect to use appropriate earned leave during the time of nonpaid parental leave, including annual vacation leave (including on instructional days; see Policy 7511; DPI Benefits Manual, section 3.3), personal leave (see Policy 7513), or sick leave (see Policy 7512). An employee may use up to 30 days of earned sick leave to care for a child placed with the employee for adoption. See DPI Benefits Manual section 4.1.2(a).

Leave taken pursuant to this section must be for consecutive workdays during the first 12 months after the date of birth or placement of the child unless the employee and Superintendent's designee agree otherwise. For the purposes of educational continuity, with the approval of the Board, the unpaid leave of absence may be extended for the remainder of the school year when the leave would otherwise end in the latter half of the school year. The The Superintendent's designee may also determine when the leave will begin or end, based on a consideration of the welfare of the students and the employee and the need for continuity of

service.

Spouses who are both employed by the school system are limited to a combined total of 12 months of parental leave without pay during the year following birth or adoption.

Requests and Approval Process for Parental Leave - Section C

Whenever possible, employees must submit a written request 30 days in advance of their intention to use paid parental leave notifying their supervisor so that appropriate coverage may be secured. The leave request must specify whether the employee is seeking to use the leave on a continuous or intermittent basis.

Parental Involvement in Schools Leave - Section D and DPI Benefits Manual 8.3)

Any employee who is a parent, guardian or person in loco parentis may take up to four hours per fiscal year to attend or otherwise be involved at a school attended by the employee's child. "School" includes a public school, private school, preschool, or child day care. Parental Involvement leave is nonpaid, but the employee may choose to substitute eligible accrued leave for the absence.

When requesting such leave for parental involvement, the employee must submit a request using the school system's written leave form at least 48 hours in advance. Parental involvement leave is subject to supervisor approval, but such approval must not be unreasonably withheld when appropriate notice has been given. The supervisor may require that the employee furnish written verification from the child's school that the employee attended or was otherwise involved at the school during the time of the leave.

Military Leave (Policy 7530) and DPI Benefits Manual § 10

An employee will be eligible for all considerations of military leave in accordance with State Board of Education policy, the federal Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA), and Article 16 of Chapter 127A of the North Carolina General Statutes.

Employees are encouraged to schedule short periods of required active duty during vacation periods so as not to interfere with regular duties of the individual's employment.

See Policy 7530 for information on:

- Notice and documentation requirements;
- Short-term military leave with pay; and
- Unpaid military leave for extended active duty.

Voluntary Shared (Donated) Leave (Policy 7540) and DPI Benefits Manual §§ 4.3 and 1.1.10

The purpose of voluntary shared leave ("donated leave") is to enable employees and other authorized individuals to donate earned leave to a fellow employee or other authorized individual who has exhausted all earned leave and continues to be absent due to serious medical conditions. Donations made pursuant to this policy are voluntary. No employee should feel pressured or coerced to participate. The donating employee may not receive compensation in any form for the donation of leave.

Policy 7540 provides information about:

- Who is eligible to request donated leave?
- How to apply for donated leave?
- What are the rules around receiving donated leave?
- What happens to unused donated leave?

Absences Due to Inclement Weather (Policy 7550)

On a day that employees have the option to report for a workday but students are not required to attend school due to inclement weather, employees have the following options:

- Report to work;
- Take accumulated annual (vacation) leave;
- Take accumulated personal leave, if available (teachers only);
- Take leave without pay;
- Use compensatory leave already accumulated (compensatory leave must be used prior to other eligible leave);
- Telework in accordance with Policy 7503: Teleworking, (only with supervisor's approval); or
- Make up the time missed (only with supervisor's approval). The employee and immediate supervisor must mutually agree upon a makeup time and at a time when the supervisor is normally scheduled to be at work.

Unless otherwise authorized by the Superintendent or designee, employees who are non-exempt under the Fair Labor Standards Act may make up missed time only if the time will be made up within the work week established by the Board (see Policy 7500: Workday and Overtime) or may make up the time within 45 calendar days in a manner that does not result in accruing overtime. Teachers and other employees who are classified as exempt under the Fair Labor Standards Act must make up the time within 45 calendar days or before the end of their employment contract, whichever is sooner.

When the school system is closed to staff and students due to inclement weather, the Board will consider options within the requirements of law for addressing the missed days within the

school calendar, giving the greatest weight to how to best maintain the opportunity and environment for student learning. In situations where a make-up day is not required, the Superintendent will determine options for staff on days the school system is closed due to inclement weather.

Pursuant to Policy 7503: Teleworking, when the Superintendent determines that any employees cannot or should not work at their regularly assigned place of work as a result of inclement weather, the Superintendent may, consistent with state and federal law, permit or require individual employees or classes of employees to temporarily telework. Employees may be eligible to telework if, under the circumstances of the emergency situation, they can temporarily perform their essential job duties at an alternative work location, have an available and suitable designated workspace at the alternative work location, and have access to any computer and telecommunications equipment necessary for the completion of tasks. As needed, the school district will provide additional guidance to employees about teleworking due to inclement weather.

When teleworking is not an option for an employee and the employee is unable to report to the work location due to inclement weather, the employee may take any appropriate available leave or make up the day on a whole day or piecemeal basis.

Paid Legal Holidays (DPI Benefits Manual § 2.1)

Permanent public school employees receive pay for the same number of legal holidays occurring within the period of employment as those designated by the State Personnel Commission for State Employees. Permanent part-time employees are entitled to paid holidays on a pro rata basis. Temporary employees are not entitled to paid holidays.

Paid holidays are granted only to employees who are in pay status through the day on which the holiday is scheduled, or in pay status for one-half or more of the workdays in the month. This includes Independence Day for summer employment. Employees do not earn holidays scheduled before their date of employment or after their date of separation or when the employee is on leave without pay for more than half of the workdays and holidays in the month. The local board of education determines when holidays are scheduled in the school calendar.

Some examples include:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Veterans' Day
- Thanksgiving - Two days

- Christmas (two days if on Friday, Saturday, Sunday, or Monday or three days if on Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday)

Employee Absences for Bona Fide Religious Holidays (Policy 7551) and DPI Benefits Manual § 2.2

Employees may be absent with pay for up to two days within any school year to observe bona fide religious holidays with prior approval and subject to the conditions below. Days designated may not be already scheduled as vacation or other holidays in the school calendar. Employees have the following options to take leave or to make up work for these two days:

Using Accrued Leave

Employees may use eligible, accrued paid leave for religious holidays that are not already scheduled as vacation or holidays on the school calendar. When an employee intends to use such eligible, accrued paid leave, the employee should follow the leave request process applicable to that type of leave (e.g., personal leave, eligible annual vacation leave). An employee using accrued leave is not required to use the process detailed below to make up missed time.

Using Agreed-Upon Make-Up Time (DPI Benefits Manual § 2.2.1)

An employee must notify the supervisor and submit an absence request in writing at least one week in advance of the anticipated absence for the holiday. The employee must agree to make up the amount of time for which the absence has been excused. The time must be made up at a time agreed upon by the employee and immediate supervisor or principal. For non-exempt employees, the time must be made up in a manner that does not result in the accrual of overtime.

Once an employee has identified a suitable plan for making up the time for a bona fide religious holiday, the supervisor may approve up to two days of absences in the school year. Prior to denying any request for such an absence, the supervisor must first consult with Human Resources.

Using Nonpaid Leave

If the employee lacks eligible, accrued leave and does not want to make up the time missed for the holiday, the employee may request nonpaid leave for up to two days per school year for this purpose. Such a nonpaid leave request must be submitted at least one week in advance of the anticipated absence for the holiday and using the Online Leave Request system. Nonpaid leave taken under this policy will not be considered an excessive absence.

Leaves of Absence without Pay (Policy 7575)

Policy 7575 includes information about:

- Discretionary nonpaid leave (required procedures and authorizations);
- Leave to teach at a charter, regional, or lab school; and
- Leave for teachers on loan to DPI.





Benefits

(Policies 7602 - 7650)

Compensation Services

The Compensation Services Department consists of three teams:

- **Payroll Processes:** Email: payroll@wcpss.net
- **Reporting Processes:** Email: reporting@wcpss.net
- **Benefit Processes:** Email: benefits@wcpss.net

Additional information and materials about pay and benefits topics the Compensation Services Department oversees can be found on the Compensation Services site on WakeConnect. Inquiries can be answered via email, fax or by appointment for more complex questions.

Pay Dates & Pay Periods

Pay dates and pay periods for employees vary based upon employee positions and work calendars. Not all pay dates and pay periods run from the 1st to the end of the month. As a result, employees are encouraged to review these dates noted on work calendars, which can be found on the Employee Calendars site on WakeConnect or requested from a supervisor. Employees also can review their salary schedule and other compensation schedules on WakeConnect under Salary and Contracts.

WCPSS Employee Self-Service accounts have meaningful pay-related information and include:

- Earnings Statements & Total Compensation Statements, updated monthly after the last working day of the month, and
- Banking information that employees are required to provide for payroll payments via direct deposit. Some employees will receive their first payment as a paper check mailed to the address on file. Employees are encouraged to validate their address.

Direct Deposit

Employees are required to receive pay payments via direct deposit. Employees can enter banking information electronically through their secure Employee Self-Service account or submit a paper Form #1616 to the Compensation Services Department.

Employees who do not have direct deposit are required to pick up their paychecks from the Compensation Services Department. Checks will not be mailed or sent to their schools or worksite.

Be mindful that closing or making changes to an employee's direct deposit account may cause a delay in receipt of the payroll payment. Also, changes made **after the 5th of the month** will be processed on the following month's pay cycle. Employees should plan accordingly.

Pay Statements

Using the WakeID Portal, employees can access their secure Employee Self-Service accounts to review and print the Earnings Statement (reflecting actual pay and benefits) and the Total Compensation Statement (reflecting the projected pay with elected benefits for the entire year).

W-2 Form and 1095 Form

The annual W-2 Form, 1095 Form, and other tax documents are released to employees within the IRS required deadlines. Employees can select to receive their W-2s electronically in their Employee Self-Service portal. Paperless W-2s provides employees with more security

and faster access, without waiting for the mail to arrive. Employees can download their W-2 form as soon as it is posted.

To request a reprint of any tax form, complete a Duplicate W-2 Request Form and either email a request to reporting@wcpss.net or fax it to 919-626-4328. Include the employee's full name and employee number and allow 5-7 business days for processing.

Federal and State Withholding

Employees must complete both the W-4 Tax Withholding Form and NC-4 Tax Withholding Form for federal and state tax withholdings respectively. Non-specified tax withholdings will default per the IRS guidelines. Changes can be made via Employee Self-Service.

FICA Withholding

As of January 2024: Social Security and Medicare Taxation continue at 7.65% as follows:

- Social Security 6.2% rate has an earnings limit of $184,500.
- Medicare 1.45% rate has an unlimited earnings limit.

Payroll Deductions

Voluntary payroll deductions are allowed via an active Payroll Deduction Authorization Form for any Board-approved vendor and at the election of the employee. Involuntary deductions are taken whenever there are overpayments of wages or state/federal mandated garnishments for reasons required by law.

NC State Retirement Contributions

As a participating employer in the North Carolina Retirement System, all full-time permanent employees are required to contribute 6% of their gross wages toward their defined benefit plan through the Teachers and State Employees' Retirement Plan.

Longevity

For detailed information on Longevity Payments, including: eligibility, earning NC State Service, payment of Longevity Pay, Leave Without Pay and Longevity Pay, and New Employees' Longevity Credit, see DPI Benefits Manual § 13.1 and Policies 3800 and 4800 (old policy manual).

The amount of annual longevity pay is a percentage of the employee's annual rate of pay on the eligible employee's anniversary date and does not include bonuses, pay for extra duty/extended employment, or overtime. The longevity percentage used to calculate the amount of annual longevity pay is determined by the length of state service as follows:

Years of State Service:

- 10 but less than 15 years = 1.50% longevity pay rate
- 15 but less than 20 years = 2.25% longevity pay rate
- 20 but less than 25 years = 3.25% longevity pay rate
- 25 or more years = 4.50% longevity pay rate

Master's Pay For Certified Staff

The Board will pay teachers and certified instructional support staff who missed the state deadline but would have otherwise been eligible to receive pay for their relevant master's, advanced, or doctoral degrees, beginning in July 2023. For questions, contact Human Resources at gradpayreview@wcpss.net.

Employee Benefits

A comprehensive benefit package is offered to eligible employees and their dependents in accordance with the Department of Public Instruction and Board of Education policy. The Benefits team can assist employees with insurance enrollment, plan transfers or changes, qualifying life events, and insurance-related payroll deductions.

Insurance providers can assist employees with plan ID cards, insurance claims, coverage types, and investment options. Insurance claims are not processed through Compensation Services. Concerns can be addressed by emailing your situation to benefits@wcpss.net or faxing it to 919-626-4328. For more complex situations, arrange for an in-person consultation at 111 Corning Road, Suite 110, Cary, NC 27518.

Employee Obligation

Employees are required to notify the Benefits team specifically when they:

- experience a change to their eligibility status,
- have any legal or court ordered garnishments,
- enter or return from a Leave of Absence or Workers' Compensation status, or
- experience a qualifying life event that may require benefit changes.

Insurance Changes

Employees have the option to add, drop, or change benefit elections during the designated annual enrollment period each year. Employees must experience a Qualifying Life Event to make any changes during the plan year and outside of the designated annual enrollment period. **Employees have 30 days from the life event effective date to make benefit changes.**

Enrollment changes to all health benefits (Medical, Dental, Vision, and Flexible Spending Plans) can be made at https://nc.secure-enroll.com/go/WCPSS or by calling 855-856-0966. Enrollment changes to Colonial voluntary benefits can be made at harmony.benselect.com/wcpss or by contacting Pierce Group Benefits at 919-577-0700.

Cafeteria Benefit Plans

The 125 Cafeteria Plans are administered by Board approved vendors and include: The State Health Plan (Medical), Delta Dental (Dental), and The Pierce Group Benefits (all others including Vision)

Pre-tax Programs (qualified plans)

- Flexible Spending Account (FSA) Plans (Healthcare and Dependent Care)
- Accident Insurance
- Medical, Dental & Vision
- Cancer Insurance Plan
- Medical Bridge/Hospital Indemnity

Post-tax Programs (non-qualified plans)

- Life Insurance
- Critical Illness Insurance
- Supplemental Disability Insurance

Benefits

Employees contributing to the Teachers and State Employees' Retirement Plan are eligible to participate in the below plans. Eligibility does not guarantee employer contribution towards premiums.

Insurance Benefits	Employee	Dependent Coverage	Annual Enrollment	Late Enrollment	FMLA Nonpaid Leave
State Health Plan (pre-tax)	Full time/ job share/ part time	Available	Oct. (as offered by the State Health Plan)	Qualifying events only	Available on direct bill with the State Health Plan
Dental Plan (pre-tax)	Full time/ job share	Available	Sept.-Nov. (as offered by provider)	Qualifying events only	Only with direct payment to WCPSS

Flexible Spending Accounts -Dependent Care and -Health/ Medical (pre-tax)	Full time/ job share	May file claim for legal dependent	Sept.-Nov. (as offered by provider)	Qualifying events only medical-only during annual enrollment	Employee account closed/ suspended
Life Insurance (post-tax)	Full time/ job share (After 90 days)	Available	Sept.-Nov. (as offered by provider)	Dependent on medical history review	Direct Pay to vendor: MetLife or Colonial Life
Vision Plan (pre-tax)	Full time/ job share	Available	Sept.-Nov. (as offered by provider)	Qualifying events only	Available via COBRA with Forest T. Jones (EyeMed COBRA administrator)
Other Voluntary Benefits (pre/post-tax)	Full time/ job share	Each insurance product may vary	Sept.-Nov. (as offered by provider)	Qualifying events only	Direct pay to vendor: Colonial Life
401(k) Supplemental Retirement Saving Plans (pre/post tax)	Full time/ job share	Not applicable	Open	Open	Not available
403(b) or 457 Supplemental Retirement Saving Plans (pre/post tax)	All employees	Not applicable	Open	Open	Not available

Qualifying Events

Eligible employees and/or dependents may enroll or make changes within thirty (30) days of hire date or due to a qualifying event:

- Change to legal marital status
- Birth, death, or adoption
- Termination or commencement of employment
- Change to hours of employment involving loss or addition of insurance benefits
- Dependents cease or commence to satisfy requirements due to age
- Dependents cease or commence to satisfy requirements due to student status
- Eligibility for Medicare or Medicaid
- Extended leave of absence or military leave
- Gaining or losing other coverage (exception Affordable Care Act (ACA) Marketplace)
- Court order enforcing insurance provisions

Verification of dependent status and qualifying event is required within 30 days of hire date or qualifying event.



COBRA Benefits

The Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) offers an employee and their dependents an opportunity to continue participating in the following insurance plans at group rates:

- State Health Plan
- Delta Dental
- EyeMed Vision

Qualifying Event	COBRA Eligibility	Coverage Continuation
Separation of employment	Employee and dependents	18 months
Legal separation or divorce	Spouse	36 months
Age limitation	Dependent children	36 months
Student eligibility	Dependent children	36 months
Medicare eligibility	Dependent w/Medicare as primary insurance	36 months
Death of employee	Dependents	36 months

Employee Insurance Benefits Quick Reference Guide

Provider	Products	Customer Service	Web
Aetna	Enrollment and Eligibility Support Center	(855) 859-0966	nc.secure-enroll.com/go/WCPSS
NC State Health Plan	Health insurance (Claims support/appeals, replacement ID cards)	(833) 690-1037	Aetna Member Portal

eBenefits	Benefits enrollment	(855) 859-0966	nc.secure-enroll.com/go/WCPSS
CVS CareMark	State Health Plan Pharmacy	(888) 321-3124	caremark.com
Delta Dental	Dental insurance	(800) 662-8856	deltadentalnc.com
EyeMed Vision	Vision insurance	(866) 723-0513	eyemed.com
Pierce Group Benefits	Colonial products and Flex Accounts	(919) 577-0700	piercegroupbenefits.com
MetLife	Group universal life insurance	(800) 438-6388	metlife.com/mybenefits
NC 401(k) Plan (Empower)	401(k)	(866) 627-5267	myncretirement.com
VOYA	403(b) Annuity & 457 Deferred Compensation	(919) 789-7100	voyaretirementplans.com
NC State Treasurer	Defined benefit retirement plan	(877) 627-3287	myncretirement.com

Summary of Benefits

All insurance vendors should provide a summary to each enrolled employee. Insurance cards are provided by the insurance vendor where applicable. Updates to benefits or premiums and other information are available on https://wakeconnect.wcpss.net.

Extra Duty Program (Policy 7602)

The extra duty program shall consist of those activities for which employees are paid to perform duties that are in addition to those duties covered by their regular

employment responsibilities. Any extra duty position must be on the Board-approved roster of extra duty positions before it is filled.

Extra duty assignments shall be made for a given school year or sports season. An employee does not have an expectation that an extra duty assignment will be renewed for a subsequent school year or sports season.

The Superintendent shall be responsible for the preparation of a standardized extra duty salary schedule(s) for presentation to the Board for approval. Further information regarding Extra duty positions is found on the Extra Duty site on WakeConnect.

Workers' Compensation Leave Policy 7633; DPI Benefit Manual § 9.2

Employees must report on-the-job injuries to their supervisor immediately and submit a Statement of Injury form within 24 hours of the injury. Failure to provide notice of injury may result in forfeiture or delay in workers' compensation benefits.

Use of Leave During the Required Seven-Day Waiting Period

No compensation, as defined in the Workers' Compensation law, shall be allowed for the first seven calendar days of disability resulting from an injury, except medical treatment and supplies as defined in G.S. 97-28. One of the following two options may be chosen by the employee during the seven-day waiting period:

- **Use of paid leave:** Elect to take earned sick leave during the required waiting period. If the employee does not have sick leave available during the waiting period, the employee may use other eligible paid leave during the waiting period.
- **Use of nonpaid leave**: Elect to go on workers' compensation leave with no pay for the required waiting period.

After the seven-day waiting period, an employee may begin receiving workers' compensation weekly benefits.

Use of Leave to Supplement Weekly Compensation

In order to provide an income approximately equal to, but not to exceed, the employee's weekly salary, earned sick leave days may be used while an employee is receiving workers' compensation weekly benefits. Employees who have exhausted sick leave may also request to use earned annual vacation leave, if eligible, or request to use earned annual vacation leave for catastrophic illness to supplement their weekly benefits.

Employees who wish to use sick and annual vacation leave to supplement the workers' compensation weekly benefits as provided in this section must submit a written request to the Compensation Services Department before the seventh day of absence resulting from the initial injury to avoid delay in receiving payment. Except upon approval by the Superintendent or

designee, supplementary sick or annual vacation pay will not be provided retroactively. Sick and annual vacation leave used to supplement weekly compensation will be calculated based on a formula provided by the state and rounded to the nearest half-day increment.

Episode Of Violence (Policy 7634; DPI Benefits Manual § 9.3)

Any permanent full-time employee who suffers an injury or disability while engaged in the course of employment shall receive full salary if the injury or disability arose from an episode of violence and the employee did not participate in or provoke the violence. An employee who while engaged in the course of employment or in any activities incidental thereto, suffers any injury or disability resulting from or arising out of any episode of violence by one or more persons shall be entitled to receive full salary during the shortest of these periods: one year, the continuation of the employee's disability, or the time during which the employee is unable to engage in employment because of injury. This allocation will be made if the employee is not receiving benefits from workers' compensation.

Policy 7634 also covers: 1) the application process for benefits and 2) review of your request for benefits.

Return-To-Work Program (Policy 7635)

The Board supports the practice of bringing employees back to work after a work-related injury or illness as soon as they are medically able in order to enhance the employees' recovery while minimizing the impact of work-related injuries on school system operations.

In Policy 7635, the Board

- Describes the goals of the Return-to-Work Program;
- Directs the Superintendent to establish procedures for the program (see Policy 7635 R&P);
- Expects all supervisory employees to fully comply with the program procedures; and
- Expects employees experiencing work-related injuries or illnesses to fulfill all responsibilities assigned to them under the return-to-work program and fully comply with the applicable requirements of the North Carolina Workers' Compensation Act.

If an employee refuses an approved transitional duty assignment or other suitable employment offered under this policy or under the return-to-work program required by this policy, the Superintendent or designee shall notify the workers' compensation administrator, who may apply to terminate the employee's workers' compensation benefit payments in accordance with the North Carolina Workers' Compensation Act. In addition, the employee will be subject to disciplinary action to the extent consistent with law.

Policy 7635: Return-to-Work Program R&P provides staff with specifics about the district's Return-to-Work program.

When an employee sustains a work-related injury or illness compensable under workers' compensation, and the treating physician releases the employee to return to work, the school system will make reasonable efforts to enable the employee to return to his/her own job. The employee, supervisor, and Return-to-Work Coordinator are all involved in the administration of this program. Their respective duties and responsibilities are set forth in Policy 7635 R&P.

Disability Income Plan

The Disability Income Plan of North Carolina provides short-term disability, extended short-term disability, and long-term disability benefits at the employer's expense for permanent full-time employees of WCPSS who have an extended absence due to an illness or nonwork-related injury and who meet certain state service requirements.

The North Carolina Department of the State Treasurer and the Board of Trustees of the Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System administer the Disability Income Plan of North Carolina within the terms and conditions of the Plan as set forth in the North Carolina General Statutes. Find detailed information on the Disability Income Plan on the State Retirement System site.

The Disability Income Plan of NC is not the same as supplemental disability that you may purchase as a benefit, such as through Colonial or Sun Life.

Employee Support And Wellness Program

The Employee Support and Wellness Program was designed to support and encourage a holistic approach to employee well-being by creating an organizational culture of health and wellness. The Employee Wellness Coordinators can assist with:

- **Employee Mental Health** - Providing referrals and resources to help employees address mental health issues that impact their well-being.
- **Employee Wellness** – Giving presentations and hosting workshops on wellness, stress management, and self-care.
- **Employee Crisis Response** - Responding on-site or virtually to crisis situations.
- **Support for Supervisors** - Addressing employee mental health and wellness concerns.
- **Mediations/Restorative Conversations** – Resolving conflicts between staff members, working toward resolution, and strengthening team building.
- **Employee Assistance Program** – Offers short-term counseling for an individual or family members and recommends resources for elder care, pet care, legal consultation, financial resources, and more.

Contact the Employee Wellness Coordinators at:

- Nia Rose, Program Coordinator, at nrose@wcpss.net
- Sherri Brown, Assistant Program Coordinator, at sbrown20@wcpss.net

See additional information on WakeConnect.

Employee Assistance Program (Policy 7645)

The Wake County Board of Education is committed to maintaining and strengthening its most important resource - its employees. The Board recognizes that many kinds of personal or professional challenges may impact job performance. To support employees in addressing such challenges, the Board has made available the AllOne Health Employee Assistance Program to provide confidential short-term counseling and referral services for eligible employees and their immediate family members. The establishment of this program reflects the Board's concern for its employees, as well as its dedication to the effective accomplishment of the objectives of the school system.

For more information about this confidential program, see the Employee Assistance Program site on WakeConnect. The Employee Assistance Program website is allonehealth.com/deeroaks. Employees may also call the Employee Assistance Program 24 hours a day at 1-888-993-7650.

Employee Travel and other Expense Reimbursement (Policy 7650)

The Board may reimburse employees for reasonable and necessary travel and other expenses incurred while performing school system business. All employee requests for reimbursement for travel or other expenses are subject to this policy. **Review the full policy for detailed reimbursement information.**



Non-Job Related Activities

(Policies 7710-7735)

Membership in Professional Organizations (Policy 7710)

Every employee will have the right to freely join and support any professional organization. Unless otherwise approved by the Superintendent or designee, any costs associated with membership in a professional organization or association will be the employee's responsibility. The Board and administration of the school system will not attempt to influence a teacher or other employee's decision as to whether to join any organization or association.

School system personnel should not participate in membership while they are expected to be performing job-related duties unless specifically authorized by the principal or supervisor.

Employee and Volunteer Political Campaign Activities (Policy 7720)

Employment or volunteer service with the school system does not preclude an individual from participating in political campaign activities, such as registering and voting, campaigning for or against particular candidates or issues, opposing or endorsing a referendum, running for or serving in public office, attending political events, and contributing funds to partisan groups or candidates. However, such political campaign activities must not: (1) take place during work hours; (2) involve expenditure of school system funds or use of public resources; (3) encourage or coerce students, employees, or others to support or oppose a political issue, party, or candidate, while acting in an official capacity as a school system employee; or (4) violate any federal laws, state laws, or Wake County Board of Education policies.

As specified in Policy 2220: Official School Spokesperson, only the Board Chair and the Superintendent or designee(s) are the official spokespersons for the school system. Employees, when exercising their rights as citizens, should take reasonable steps to ensure that their personal political activities or opinions are not erroneously attributed to the Board or the school system. Additionally, as specified in Policy 7300: Staff Responsibilities and Code of Ethics, school system employees are role models, and their conduct should protect the integrity and/or reputation of both the employee and the school system.

This policy should not be construed as prohibiting the impartial study and discussion of political issues in the classroom setting when such study and discussion is properly executed and consistent with the approved curriculum and guidance from supervisors on instructional content and methods. However, employees must be mindful of their responsibility to refrain from endorsing or opposing a referendum, election, or a particular candidate for elective office with students in the classroom or when otherwise engaged in the instruction of students.

Tutoring or Providing Services to Students for Pay (Policy 7735)

Employees are prohibited from tutoring or providing other services in a private capacity for a fee to students whom they are **currently assigned to teach or serve**, whether on or off school system property.

Policy 7735 provides information on:

- Definition of “private capacity;”
- Prohibition of use of school system equipment, materials, and supplies;
- Compliance with applicable laws, policies, and regulations; and
- Limited exceptions.

To the extent that tutoring or providing other services are permitted under this policy, *it is imperative that there be no pressure on students or parents to participate in such services and that there be no favoritism shown toward students who participate in such services*.



Development & Evaluation

(Policies 7800-7825)

Professional Learning (Policy 1610/7800)

The Board believes a strong relationship exists between the quality of education provided to students and the competency and training of all personnel employed by the school system. The Board considers the time a teacher is provided for working and planning for instruction and participating in professional learning to be vital and places a high priority on securing the most competent personnel available and, once they are employed, providing them with opportunities for professional growth and development throughout their careers. The goal of professional learning opportunities for licensed professional employees and support staff is to improve the instructional program, create a safe learning environment for all students, and expand the skills of all personnel.

Policy 1610/7800 provides information about:

- Professional learning development opportunities;

- Self-directed improvement;
- Plans for growth and improvement; and
- Payment of costs.

Office of Professional Learning

The Office of Professional Learning promotes a districtwide culture of learning through the support and development of professional learning systems for all employees. WCPSS provides many professional learning opportunities for employees, which are developed using best practices in instructional design for adult learners, led by qualified personnel, aligned with the WCPSS Standards for Professional Learning.

Earning CEUs (Continuing Education Units) is a professional responsibility. While WCPSS provides many opportunities for professional learning, it is the employee's responsibility to find and participate in appropriate learning opportunities to renew their licenses. Registration for professional learning opportunities in the district is available through the WakeLearns software. See the WakeConnect Professional Learning page for guidance.

National Board Certification

The Wake County Public School System remains a national leader in the number of National Board Certified Teachers (NBCT). The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) was created in 1987, establishing a system of advanced certification for teachers and counselors based on high and rigorous standards. It identifies five core propositions that describe the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that characterize accomplished teaching. For more information on the National Board Certification process, visit the NBPTS website at www.nbpts.org.

North Carolina offers a state loan for initial candidacy fees. Details and the loan eligibility requirements can be found on the DPI website.

Teachers who complete initial National Board candidacy earn eight renewal credits that satisfy one complete renewal cycle to renew their North Carolina teaching license, regardless of whether certification is achieved. These credits must be applied during the same NC licensure renewal cycle in which they are earned. They cannot be "banked" for future use.

Teachers who maintain their National Board Certification through the Maintenance of Certification (MOC) process earn two licensure renewal credits (2 General Credits or 2 Subject Area Credits). These renewal credits must be used during the same NC licensure renewal cycle in which they are earned. They cannot be banked for future use.

WCPSS offers a program for beginning teachers to assist them in preparing to pursue their National Board Certification during a future school year. The Beginner to

Board-Certified program is a national model for teachers in their early years of teaching, providing a career trajectory toward accomplished teacher leadership.

WCPSS also offers information sessions and organizes cohorts led by NBCT coaches to assist employees who are seeking initial National Board Certification and those who are completing the MOC process. Registration for information sessions, support cohorts, and the district's National Board email list are advertised via the WPCSS Employee News and accessible on the National Board Certification site on WakeConnect beginning in late August. Teachers are encouraged to take advantage of the additional resources on WakeConnect as well as those available on the NBPTS website.

Email: boardcertified@wcpss.net or call (919) 533-7219 for additional information.

Community Schools

Lifelong Learning with Community Schools offers two valuable opportunities to connect the community with WCPSS. Requested by parents, the Triangle Camps, Track-Out, and More publication and web directory shares local youth opportunities, camps, track-out options, and additional valuable resources in North Carolina. The publication is printed and shared at all WCPSS schools, Wake County public libraries, and local businesses bi-annually in the spring and fall. Learn more at wcpss.net/camps.

There also are online classes for employees through Lifelong Learning, offering: personal enrichment classes, career training certifications, and online teacher CEU classes. Interested employees should visit the Community Services site on WakeConnect for more information.

Evaluation of Licensed Employees (Policy 7810)

The Board places a high priority on securing the most competent personnel available and, once they are employed, in assisting them in their professional growth and development throughout their careers. An effective evaluation program that clearly describes an employee's performance is a critical aspect of professional growth and assistance. Further, performance evaluation data is an important factor for consideration in decisions regarding continued employment. The Superintendent must be able to substantiate any recommendation for continued employment with evaluation data, among other factors.

Policy 7810 provides information on:

- State requirements for an effective evaluation system for licensed personnel, including the type of evaluation (e.g., comprehensive, standard, and abbreviated) and frequency of evaluation;

- The processes for evaluating licensed employees in schools designated as low performing;
- Guidelines or strategies developed by the State Board;
- Teacher access to EVAAS data;
- Additional formal or informal observations or other evaluation measures; and
- Evaluation of principals and assistant principals.

In addition, Policy 7810 details expectations for use of the evaluation system.

Plans for Growth and Improvement of Licensed Employees (Policy 7811)

The Board expects all professionally licensed employees to maintain high levels of performance. If an employee does not meet this standard, the Superintendent and administrative staff shall address any identified performance or other deficiencies through appropriate means, including placing the employee on a monitored growth, directed growth, or mandatory improvement plan when required by state law, State Board policy, or this policy, or when otherwise deemed necessary.

Growth and mandatory improvement plans as defined by law and this policy are valuable tools to promote the professional development of licensed employees. The Board recognizes, however, that not all conduct and performance issues require the development of a plan. Administrators and supervisory personnel are authorized to address inappropriate conduct and/or inadequate performance using such other lawful means as they may deem appropriate. This policy should not be interpreted to limit in any way the authority of administrators or other supervisory personnel to direct and reprimand licensed employees for inappropriate conduct or inadequate performance.

Further, the Superintendent may move to recommend nonrenewal, dismissal, or demotion of a licensed employee whether or not the employee has been first placed on a growth or other improvement plan.

Policy 7811 provides information about use and review of:

- Individual, monitored, and directed growth plans for teachers;
- Professional growth plans for principals and assistant principals; and
- Mandatory improvement plans.

Evaluation of Non-Licensed Employees (Policy 7815)

The Board attaches a high priority to securing the most competent personnel available and, once they are employed, in assisting them in their growth and development throughout their careers. Regular evaluation of non-licensed employees is encouraged. Non-licensed employees

may be evaluated at any time, including at the end of the first three months of employment and annually.

Policy 7815 provides information on the detailed expectations that apply to the evaluation of non-licensed employees.

Personnel Files (Policy 7820)

Personnel files will be maintained in the Human Resources office for all employees as provided by law. The Superintendent and all supervisors are directed to ensure that all appropriate employment-related information is submitted to the files. Every employee has the right to inspect the employee's own personnel file, including any portions of the file maintained in electronic format only, during regular working hours, provided that five workdays' notice is given to the Human Resources office.

Policy 7820 provides information about:

- Employee records maintained;
- Employee records maintained separately;
- Complaints/reports of harassment or discrimination;
- Placement of records in personnel file; and
- Access to personnel file.

Petition for Removal of Personnel Records (Policy 7821)

Any employee may petition the Superintendent to have removed from the employee's personnel file any information that the employee believes to be invalid, irrelevant, or outdated. See Policy 7821 for information about the petition, the process used to review the petition, and appeal process. See the Petition to Remove information from the Personnel File on WakeConnect.

Confidentiality of Personal Identifying Information (Policy 4705/7825 and R&P)

The Wake County Board of Education recognizes the need to protect students and employees from the improper release of social security numbers and other personal identifying information. To this end, the Board requires that all school employees comply with the Identity Protection Act of 2005 and any other federal and state laws governing the collection, use, and disclosure of personal identifying information. No person may knowingly disclose, transfer, or unlawfully use the social security number or other personal identifying information of any employee, student, or other individual.

Policy 4705/7825:

- Defines personal identifying information for purposes of the policy;
- Sets forth the limited circumstances in which social security numbers shall be collected and the required process used for such collection; and
- Provides the consequences for failure to comply with this policy.

Policy 4705/7825 R&P provide detailed information on the rules governing the collection, use, and disclosure of social security numbers and “personal identifying information” as defined in

Policy 4705/7825 and includes information about:

- Limits on collection and use of social security numbers;
- Authorized purposes for collection;
- Disclosure restrictions and authorized disclosures;
- Public records, public display, or mailing or faxing documents
- Access to social security numbers or personal identifying information;
- Storage and disposal;
- Improper collection, disclosure, or use (security breach); and
- Disciplinary action for failure to follow policy restrictions and procedures.





Separation

(Policies 7900 - 7950)

Resignation (Policy 7900)

Policy 7900 provides information about:

- Resignation procedures;
- Notice of requirements; and
- Required reporting to the State Board of Education.

Retirement (Policy 7910)

There is no mandatory retirement age for school system employees. Retirement policies and procedures are in accordance with statutes establishing and empowering the function of the Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System of North Carolina. Unless specified otherwise in a written contract, any employee who anticipates retirement should complete a Retirement Resignation Form and submit it to the Human Resources Retirement Team at least 60 calendar days, but no more than 120 days, prior to intended retirement date, except in the

cases where conditions of health or other extenuating circumstances make shorter notices necessary.

Please read Policy 7910 and reference the Retirement site of WakeConnect and the State Retirement System's website for full information about retirement. You can also contact the Human Resources Retirement Team at hrretirement@wcpss.net or at (919) 533-7243. The Retirement Benefits Manual online provides the following information about retirement benefits.

Service Retirement (Unreduced Benefits)

You may retire with an unreduced service retirement benefit after you:

- Reach age 65 and complete five years of membership service;
- Reach age 60 and complete 25 years of creditable service; or
- Complete 30 years of creditable service at any age.

Early Retirement (Reduced Benefits)

You may retire early with a reduced retirement benefit after you:

- Reach age 50 and complete 20 years of creditable service; or
- Reach age 60 and complete five years of membership service.

Sick leave remaining at retirement will be converted to service, which will be counted toward the creditable service requirements above. For details, see the "Sick Leave Upon Separation" subsection under Leaves and Absences.

Early retirement benefits are calculated using the same formula as a service retirement multiplied by a reduction percentage based on your age and/or service at early retirement. If you are between ages 60 and 65, with less than 25 years of creditable service, your early service retirement benefit will be reduced to the following percentages. If you are between birthdays when payments start, the reduction will be adjusted proportionally.

If you are this age when payments start	You receive this percentage of your benefit
64	97%
63	94%
62	91%
61	88%
60	85%

If you are between ages 50 and 59 with less than 30 years of creditable service, your early retirement will be reduced by the percentages shown in the table below.

Years of Creditable Service

	29	28	27	26	25	24	23	22	21	20
59	95%	90%	85%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%
58	95%	90%	85%	80%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%
57	95%	90%	85%	80%	75%	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%
56	95%	90%	85%	80%	75%	70%	65%	65%	65%	65%
55	95%	90%	85%	80%	75%	70%	65%	60%	60%	60%
54	95%	90%	85%	80%	75%	70%	65%	60%	55%	55%
53	95%	90%	85%	80%	75%	70%	65%	60%	55%	52%
52	95%	90%	85%	80%	75%	70%	65%	60%	55%	50%
51	95%	90%	85%	80%	75%	70%	65%	60%	55%	50%
50	95%	90%	85%	80%	75%	70%	65%	60%	55%	50%

Employment after Retirement: DPI Benefits Manual § 16.1

Often after retiring, employees are interested in returning to the school system either on a part-time or full-time basis. State law addresses the provisions and limitations afforded to retirees who wish to return to work. See the DPI Benefits Manual linked above.

Reduction in Force for Contract Employees (Policy 7920) and Reduction In Force for Employees without Contracts (Policy 7921)

Policy 7920 provides information about reductions in force for full-time WCPSS employees who have employment contracts. Policy 7921 provides information about reductions in force for full-time WCPSS employees who do not have employment contracts.

These policies provide information about:

- Grounds for reduction in force;
- Preliminary determinations;
- Criteria;
- Limitations;
- Procedures for termination/reemployment/nonrenewal; and
- Notice of decision.

Demotion, Dismissal, Suspension, Nonrenewal

Policy 7930: Employees with Contracts: Demotion and Dismissal

Policy 7940: Employees in Non-Contract Positions: Suspension, Demotion and Dismissal

Policy 7950: Non-Career Status Teachers: Nonrenewal



WAKE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

Understanding the Importance of your Workday Calendar

Pre-paid wages apply to Certified Staff.

Blocked Payroll Schedule

Period Begins	Period Ends	Pay Dates
No Check		07/31/26
08/17/26	09/15/26	08/31/26
09/15/26	10/14/26	09/30/26
10/15/26	11/13/26	10/30/26
11/13/26	12/14/26	11/30/26
12/15/26	01/13/27	12/18/26
01/13/27	02/11/27	01/22/27
02/12/27	03/15/27	02/26/27
03/15/27	04/13/27	03/31/27
04/14/27	05/13/27	04/30/27
05/13/27	06/11/27	05/28/27
No Check		06/29/27

At the beginning of each year, every staff member should print out and review their specific calendar. Calendars are located on the intranet under *Workspaces* > *Employee Portal* > Calendars. Please ask your secretary if there are any questions concerning what calendar should be used.

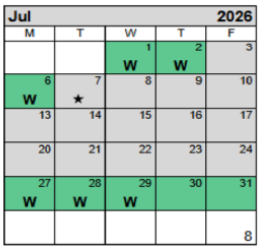
PLEASE HANG YOUR CALENDAR IN A LOCATION WHERE YOU WILL SEE IT DAILY.

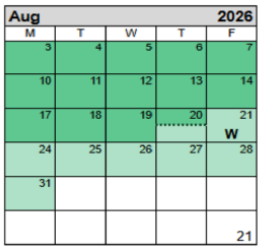
Payroll Schedule:
On the right-hand side of every calendar there is a payroll schedule.
It lists the **Pay Dates** for that calendar. *The example to the right shows 10 pay dates starting in August and ending in May for Traditional 10 Month Certified Instructional staff.*

Calendar Legend:



- **Pay**
  Pay Periods are marked by alternating shades of color of the particular calendar.
  - *Example: Track 4 Calendars are in light and medium green*
  - Any day that is in color is a PAID day.
  - Except for days marked H and A, all days in color must be worked or *eligible* leave must be taken.





- **Track out** days are shaded **grey** on every calendar.
  - These days are not paid.
  - **These are the only days that can be worked at another location as a regular substitute.**
- **A – Required Annual Leave**
  - These annual days are pre-scheduled for 10- and 11-month employees.
  - They cannot be swapped with other days and must be followed as indicated on the calendars.
  - These are paid days and Annual leave is automatically deducted for these days.
  - Since this is already a paid day, employees cannot work at another location as a regular substitute. ***Employees cannot be paid twice for the same day.***
- **H – Holiday**
  - Do not work
- **W – Workday**
  - Workdays are only listed on instructional calendars.
  - At this time *Personal Leave* may be taken on these days with no monetary deduction. Oracle will automatically process this unless the employee has a custom calendar.
    - Employees with custom calendars will need the Secretary to contact Payroll.

Please Remember: Your pay is based on your calendar. These days should be worked exactly as listed on your calendar. If you are audited for any reason, it will be done based on the track you are listed as working. If you have not worked according to that calendar, you may end up being **overpaid**.

A customized **(waiver)** calendar requires **approval** from Human Resources.

Timesheets are for record keeping purposes only. Please refer to employee calendars for pay periods.
For additional details, please visit our intranet site under Compensation Services.

Calendars

To download and view WCPSS calendars, visit the following websites:

- Employee calendars
- School calendars

Student Holidays (Traditional Calendar)

- September 7, 2026 - Labor Day
- September 21, 2026 - Teacher Workday
- October 12, 2026 - Teacher Workday
- November 3, 2026 - Election Day/Teacher Workday
- November 11, 2026 - Veterans' Day Holiday
- November 25-27, 2026 - Thanksgiving Break
- December 21, 2026 - January 1, 2027 Winter Break
- January 18, 2027 Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday
- January 19, 2027 - Teacher Workday
- February 15, 2027 - Presidents' Day/Teacher Workday
- March 10, 2027 - Teacher Workday
- March 26 - April 2, 2027 Spring Break
- April 5, 2027 - Teacher Workday
- May 17, 2027 - Teacher Workday
- May 31, 2027 - Memorial Day

Holidays For 10-Month and 11-Month Employees

- September 7, 2026
- November 11, 2026
- November 26-27, 2026
- December 24, 25, 28, 2026
- January 1, 2027
- January 18, 2027
- March 26, 2027
- May 31, 2027

Holidays For 12-Month Employees

- July 3, 2026
- September 7, 2026
- November 11, 2026
- November 26-27, 2026
- December 24, 25, 28, 2026
- January 1, 2027
- January 18, 2027
- March 26, 2027
- May 31, 2027

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