



2017- 2018

# Dodge County Schools Personnel Handbook



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## Dodge County Schools Mission Statement



### Vision Statement for Dodge County Schools

The vision of the Dodge County School System is that success leading to graduation is a portal to lifelong learning.

#### Core Values:

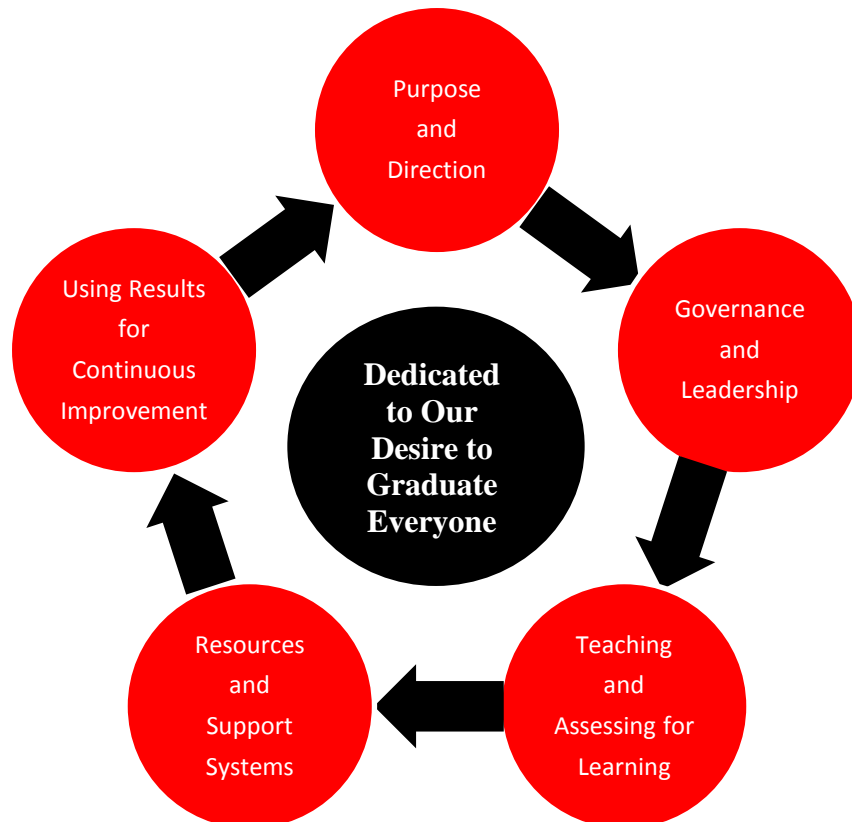
- All students can learn.
- All students possess a desire to learn and come to school with varying levels of readiness.
- Knowledge is a key to success in life.
- Learning is a life-long process.

#### Belief Statements:

- Self-concept affects the achievement of students.
- Every student has the right to learn and experience success in school.
- Schools will provide the knowledge for all students to become productive members of society.
- Effective education must be applicable to the rapidly changing world.
- Community and parental support are vital to a successful school environment.
- The educational process must meet the individual needs of the students.
- The educational process of today will determine the future.
- A safe and orderly learning environment is essential to a quality education.

- Excellence in education is achieved through quality programs and staff.
- High school completion is the focal priority for all stakeholders.

## Goals for Dodge County Schools



### **TITLE IX-NON-DISCRIMINATION**

There will be no discrimination on the basis of race, creed, religion, color, national origin, sex, marital status, disability, or age in the educational programs, activities, or employment practices in this system.

### **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYMENT**

It is the policy of the Dodge County Board of Education not to discriminate on the basis of race,

creed, religion, color, national origin, sex, marital status, disability, or age in employment and educational program.

## **FOREWORD**

This handbook has been designed and produced for the purpose of providing useful information to professional personnel. It is accessible online at <http://www.dodge.k12.ga.us> by clicking the **For Staff** link under **Quick Links**. It is requested that you keep it accessible. Please consult your handbook prior to making decisions which concern policy related information. If the desired information is not in this handbook, please consult the system policy manual; or the school administration can be contacted if additional information is needed.

Your comments and suggestions are welcome as relative to the improvement of this handbook. Feel free to offer such to the superintendent's office at any time during the course of the school term.

Please remember that the classroom teacher is the most important element of the entire educational process. Have a great year.

## **BOARD MEMBERS**

District 1-----Roscoe Bennett  
District 2-----Jesse Mincey  
District 3-----Robert Peacock  
District 4-----Ricky Hargrove, Vice Chair  
District 5-----Mark Driggers, Chairperson  
District 6-----David Yawn  
District 7-----Shirley Ikedionwu

## **CENTRAL OFFICE PERSONNEL**

Superintendent-----T. Michael Hilliard  
\_\_\_\_\_, Superintendent Secretary/Receptionist/Business Management  
Chief Financial Officer-----Georgette Evans  
Accounts Payable/Financial Assistant-----Carla Mills  
Human Resources-----Misty Selph  
Director of Curriculum/Professional Development/Federal Programs-----Dr. Lawanda Gillis



Karen Fordham, Secretary

School Social Worker-----Jodi Brewer

Coordinator of Exceptional Education-----Tonya Brown  
Elizabeth Peacock, Special Education Records Clerk

Technology Director-----Rick Rogers

School Food Service Supervisor-----Dena Barrows  
Debbie Skipper, Secretary

School Psychologist/Exceptional Education Director-----Tracy Hickman

Testing Director/Title I Director-----Dr. Denise Brown  
Lisa Evans, Title I Secretary  
Sherry Mincey, Parent Involvement Coordinator

Information Services/Student Information Coordinator-----Davey Sheffield

**PRINCIPALS AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF**

Dodge County High School-----Dr. Susan Long, Principal  
Pam Melvin, Assistant Principal, Vocational Supervisor  
Alvin Williams, Assistant Principal  
Richard Gay, Assistant Principal

Dodge County Middle School----- Dr. Elvis Davis, Principal  
Marcie Jones, Assistant Principal  
Jennifer Belflower, Assistant Principal

North Dodge Elementary School-----Cindy Screws, Principal  
Russell Bazemore, Assistant Principal

South Dodge Elementary School-----Sonya Bundick, Principal  
Dana Brown, Assistant Principal

Dodge Pre-Kindergarten-----Keri Lancaster, Director  
Sherry Mincey, Site Coordinator

Alternative School (DAC) -----Jennifer Belflower, Director

## EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

The Board of Education has adopted the following general philosophy as the standard for the educational program of the Dodge County School System.

Believing that the democratic way of life contributes the most benefit and happiness to members of society generally, the school as an agency of society should then be dedicated to the development, improvement, and preservation of all democratic ideals. All individuals should be given an equal opportunity to develop to the greatest possible extent their capacities for happy, useful, successful lives.

In line with this general statement of the theme of the educational program for the Dodge County School System, the Board of Education shares the belief that free education should be provided to all children and youth until they have completed a curriculum appropriate to their needs and abilities.

In keeping with this general philosophy, the Dodge County Board of Education has further adopted the following objectives:

**Health** – To protect the right of the child to a healthy body through provision of physical education, health education, and necessary preventive health services

**Mental Growth** – To encourage and stimulate the continuous growth in the pupil of his ability to think clearly, logically, and independently; and to know and master his own powers and potentialities and to exercise those powers with due regard to the rights of others.

**Individual Difference** – To provide such modifications in the educational program for each pupil as are required by his particular capacities.

**Character Growth** -- To develop a moral and ethical sense in each pupil so that he or she will manifest toward others fairness, justice, tolerance, courtesy, and kindness, and for himself or herself, achieve an appreciation of his personal worth.

**Social Adjustment** – To prepare students psychologically for a well-balanced and happy individual, social, and family life.

**Core Subjects** – To give each pupil, insofar as his ability permits, a mastering of the tools of learning and communication, including reading, writing, arithmetic, and the use of written and spoken language.

**Understanding Environment** – To develop in each pupil an understanding of the physical, economic, and social world in which he lives and to assist him to adjust himself effectively to his surroundings.

**Citizenship** – To develop in each child, youth, and adult student an understanding and appreciation of the forces and ideals of democracy which have made America great and to foster a sense of his personal opportunities and responsibilities as a citizen of his community, his state, his nation, and the world.

**Earning a Living** – To help the pupil find his most productive role in life and to develop through work experience good work habits. To give those who do not go to college or a university, enough fundamental science and vocational training so that they will be able to qualify for work at their highest skills and can be properly prepared to earn a living.

**Aesthetic Development** – To provide for each pupil a comprehensive understanding of cultural subjects and the fine arts.

**Recreation and Play** –To encourage wholesome and creative forms of recreation and play.

**Community Relations** – To make the school an essential part of community relations by serving all of the people in various ways according to their needs.

The Dodge County Board of Education will proceed continuously in accord with this philosophy and its objectives.

## **PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL ETHICS**

The Dodge County Board of Education believes that there should be established criteria for professional practices in the area of ethical and professional performance.

The Code of Ethics of the education profession sets certain standards for the educator regarding his commitments. The Dodge County Board of Education supports the following standards:

### **Preamble**

The educator believes in the worth and dignity of man. He recognizes the supreme importance of the pursuit of truth, the devotion to excellence, and the nature of democratic citizenship. He regards as essential to these goals the protection of the freedom to learn and to teach and the guarantee of equal educational opportunity for all. The educator accepts his responsibility to practice his profession according to the highest ethical standards.

The educator recognizes the magnitude of the responsibility he has accepted in choosing a career in education and engages himself, individually and collectively with other educators, to judge his colleagues, and to be judged by them, in accordance with the provisions of this code.

## **Commitment to the Student**

In fulfilling his obligation to the student, the educator

1. shall not, without just cause, restrain the student from independent action in his pursuit of learning, and shall not, without just cause, deny the student access to varying points of view;
2. shall not deliberately suppress or distort subject matter for which he bears responsibility;
3. shall make a reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to learning or to health and safety;
4. shall conduct professional business in such a way that he does not expose the student to unnecessary embarrassment or disparagement;
5. shall not on the grounds of race, color, creed, religion, or national origin exclude any student from participation in or deny him benefits under any program, nor grant any discriminatory consideration or advantage;
6. shall not use professional relationships with students for private advantage;
7. shall keep in confidence information that has been obtained in the course of professional service, unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law;
8. shall not tutor for remuneration students assigned to his classes, unless no other qualified teacher is reasonably available.

## **Commitment to the Public**

In fulfilling his obligation to the public, the educator

1. shall not misrepresent an institution or organization with which he is affiliated, and shall take adequate precautions to distinguish between his personal and institutional or organizational views;
2. shall not knowingly distort or misrepresent the facts concerning educational matters in direct and indirect public expressions;
3. shall not interfere with a colleague's exercise of political and citizenship rights and responsibilities;

4. shall not use institutional privileges for private gain or to promote political candidates or partisan political activities;
5. shall accept no gratuities, gifts or favors that might impair or appear to impair professional judgment, nor offer any favor, service or things of value to obtain special advantage.

### **Commitment to the Profession**

In fulfilling his obligation to the profession, the educator

1. shall not discriminate on grounds of race, color, creed or national origin for membership in professional organizations, nor interfere with the free participation of colleagues in the affairs of their association;
2. shall accord just and equitable treatment to all members of the profession in the exercise of their professional rights and responsibilities;
3. shall not use coercive means nor promise special treatment in order to influence professional decisions of colleagues;
4. shall withhold and safeguard information acquired about colleagues in the course of employment, unless disclosure serves professional purposes;
5. shall not refuse to participate in a professional inquiry when requested by an appropriate professional association;
6. shall afford the aggrieved party upon request the opportunity to discuss in private the specific reason for recommendations that lead to the denial of increments, significant changes in employment, or termination of employment;
7. shall not misrepresent his professional qualifications;
8. shall not knowingly distort evaluations of colleagues.

### **Commitment to Professional Employment Practices**

In fulfilling his obligation to professional employment practices, the educator:

1. shall apply for, accept, offer, or assign a position or responsibility on the basis of professional preparation and legal qualifications;

2. shall apply for a specific position only when it is known to be vacant, and shall refrain from underbidding or commenting adversely about other candidates;
3. shall not knowingly withhold information from an applicant regarding a position, nor misrepresent an assignment or conditions of employment;
4. shall give prompt notice to the employing agency of any change in availability of service, and the employing agent shall also give prompt notice of change in availability or nature of a position;
5. shall not accept a position when so requested by the appropriate professional organization;
6. shall adhere to the terms of a contract or appointment, unless these terms have been legally terminated, falsely represented, or substantially altered by unilateral action of the employing agency;
7. shall not delegate assigned tasks to unqualified personnel;
8. shall permit no commercial exploitation of his professional positions;
9. shall use time granted for the purpose for which it is intended.

## **505-6-.01 THE CODE OF ETHICS FOR EDUCATORS**

**Effective June 15, 2015**

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

### **(2) Definitions.**

- (a) “Certificate” refers to any teaching, service, or leadership certificate, license, or permit issued by authority of the Georgia Professional Standards Commission.
- (b) “Child Endangerment” occurs when an educator disrespects a substantial and/or unjustifiable risk of bodily harm to the student.
- (c) “Educator” is a teacher, school or school system administrator, or other education

personnel who holds a certificate issued by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission and persons who have applied for but have not yet received a certificate. For the purpose of the Code of Ethics for Educators, “educator” also refers to paraprofessionals, aides, and substitute teachers.

- (d) “Student” is any individual enrolled in the state’s public or private schools from preschool through grade 12 or any individual between and including the ages of 3 and 17 under the age of 18. For the purpose of the Code of Ethics and Standards of Professional Conduct for Educators, the enrollment period for a graduating student ends on August 31 of the year of graduation.
- (e) “Complaint” is any written and signed statement from a local board, the state board, or one or more individual residents of this state filed with the Georgia Professional Standards Commission alleging that an educator has breached one or more of the standards in the Code of Ethics for Educators. A “complaint” will be deemed a request to investigate.
- (f) “Revocation” is the invalidation of any certificate held by the educator.
- (g) “Denial” is the refusal to grant initial certification to an applicant for a certificate.
- (h) “Suspension” is the temporary invalidation of any certificate for a period of time specified by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission.
- (i) “Reprimand” admonishes the certificate holder for his or her conduct. The reprimand cautions that further unethical conduct will lead to a more severe action.
- (j) “Warning” warns the certificate holder that his or her conduct is unethical. The warning cautions that further unethical conduct will lead to a more severe action.
- (k) “Monitoring” is the quarterly appraisal of the educator’s conduct by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission through contact with the educator and his or her employer. As a condition of monitoring, an educator may be required to submit a criminal background check (GCIC). The Commission specifies the length of the monitoring period.
- (l) “No Probable Cause” is a determination by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission that, after a preliminary investigation, either no further action need be taken or no cause exists to recommend disciplinary action.

### (3) Standards

- (a) **Standard 1: Legal Compliance** – An educator shall abide by federal, state, and

local laws and statutes. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to the Commission or conviction of a felony or of any crime involving moral turpitude; of any other criminal offense involving the manufacture, distribution, trafficking, sale, or possession of a controlled substance or marijuana as provided for in Chapter 13 of Title 16; or of any other sexual offense as provided for in Code Section 16-6-1 through 16-6-17, 16-6-20, 16-6-22.2, or 16-12-100; or any other laws applicable to the profession. As used herein, conviction includes a finding or verdict of guilty, or a plea of *nolo contendere*, regardless of whether an appeal of the conviction has been sought; a situation where first offender treatment without adjudication of guilt pursuant to the charge was granted; and a situation where an adjudication of guilt or sentence was otherwise withheld or not entered on the charge or the charge was otherwise disposed of in a similar manner in any jurisdiction.

(b) **Standard 2: Conduct with Students** – An educator shall always maintain a professional relationship with all students, both in and outside the classroom. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. committing any act of child abuse, including physical and verbal abuse;
2. committing any act of cruelty to children or any act of child endangerment;
3. committing any sexual act with a student or soliciting such from a student;
4. engaging in or permitting harassment of or misconduct toward a student that would violate a state or federal law;
5. soliciting, encouraging, or consummating an inappropriate written, verbal, electronic, or physical relationship with a student;
6. furnishing tobacco, alcohol, or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any student; or
7. failing to prevent the use of alcohol or illegal or unauthorized drugs by students who are under the educator’s supervision (including but not limited to at the educator’s residence or any other private setting).

(c) **Standard 3: Alcohol or Drugs** – An educator shall refrain from the use of alcohol or illegal or unauthorized drugs during the course of professional practice. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:



1. being on school or Local Unit of Administration (LUA)/school district premises or at a school or LUA/school district-related activity while under the influence of, possessing, using, or consuming illegal or unauthorized drugs; and
2. being on school or LUA/school district premises or at a school-related activity involving students while under the influence of, possessing, or consuming alcohol. A school-related activity includes, but is not limited to, any activity sponsored by the school or school system (booster clubs, parent-teacher organizations, or any activity designed to enhance the school curriculum i.e. Foreign language trips, etc.).

(d) **Standard 4: Honesty** – An educator shall exemplify honesty and integrity in the course of professional practice. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to, falsifying, misrepresenting or omitting:

1. professional qualifications, criminal history, college or staff development credit and/or degrees, academic award, and employment history;
2. information submitted to federal, state, local school districts and other governmental agencies;
3. information regarding the evaluation of students and/or personnel;
4. reasons for absences or leaves;
5. information submitted in the course of an official inquiry/investigation; and
6. information submitted in the course of professional practice.

(e) **Standard 5: Public Funds and Property** – An educator entrusted with public funds and property shall honor that trust with a high level of honesty, accuracy, and responsibility. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. misusing public or school-related funds;
2. failing to account for funds collected from students or parents;
3. submitting fraudulent requests or documentation for reimbursement of expenses or for pay (including fraudulent or purchased degrees, documents, or coursework);
4. co-mingling public or school-related funds with personal funds or

checking accounts; and

5. using school or school district property without the approval of the local board of education/governing board or authorized designee.

(f) **Standard 6: Remunerative Conduct** – An educator shall maintain integrity with students, colleagues, parents, patrons, or businesses when accepting gifts, gratuities, favors, and additional compensation. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. soliciting students or parents of students, or school and/or LUA/school district personnel, to purchase equipment, supplies, or services from the educator or to participate in activities that financially benefit the educator unless approved by the local board of education/governing board or authorized designee;
2. accepting gifts from vendors or potential vendors for personal use or gain where there may be the appearance of a conflict of interest;
3. tutoring students assigned to the educator for remuneration unless approved by the local board of education/governing board or authorized designee; and
4. coaching, instructing, promoting athletic camps, summer leagues, etc. that involves students in an educator’s school system and from whom the educator receives remuneration unless approved by the local board of education/governing board or authorized designee. These types of activities must be in compliance with all rules and regulations of the Georgia High School Association.

(g) **Standard 7: Confidential Information** – An educator shall comply with state and federal laws and state school board policies relating to the confidentiality of student and personnel records, standardized test material and other information. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. sharing of confidential information concerning student academic and disciplinary records, health and medical information, family status and/or income, and assessment/testing results unless disclosure is required or permitted by law;
2. sharing of confidential information restricted by state or federal law;
3. violation of confidentiality agreements related to standardized testing

including copying or teaching identified test items, publishing or distributing test items or answers, discussing test items, violating local school system or state directions for the use of tests or test items, etc.; and

4. violation of other confidentiality agreements required by state or local policy.

(h) **Standard 8: Abandonment of Contract** – An educator shall fulfill all of the terms and obligations detailed in the contract with the local board of education or education agency for the duration of the contract. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. abandoning the contract for professional services without prior release from the contract by the employer, and
2. willfully refusing to perform the services required by a contract.

(i) **Standard 9: Required Reports** - An educator shall file reports of a breach of one or more of the standards in the Code of Ethics for Educators, child abuse (O.C.G.A. § 19-7-5), or any other required report. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. failure to report all requested information on documents required by the Commission when applying for or renewing any certificate with the Commission;
2. failure to make a required report of a violation of one or more standards of the Code of Ethics for educators of which they have personal knowledge as soon as possible but no later than ninety (90) days from the date the educator became aware of an alleged breach unless the law or local procedures require reporting sooner; and
3. failure to make a required report of any violation of state or federal law soon as possible but no later than ninety (90) days from the date the educator became aware of an alleged breach unless the law or local procedures require reporting sooner. These reports include but are not limited to: murder, voluntary manslaughter, aggravated assault, aggravated battery, kidnapping, and any sexual offense, any sexual exploitation of a minor, any offense involving a controlled substance and any abuse of a child if an educator has a reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused.\

(j) **Standard 10: Professional Conduct** – An educator shall demonstrate conduct that follows generally recognized professional standards and preserves the dignity and integrity of the education profession. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to any conduct that impairs and/or diminishes the certificate holder’s ability to function professionally in his or her employment position, or behavior or conduct that is detrimental to the health, welfare, discipline, or morals of students.

(k) **Standard 11: Testing** – An educator shall administer state-mandated assessments fairly and ethically. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. committing any act that breaches Test Security; and
2. compromising the integrity of the assessment.

**(4) Reporting**

(a) Educators are required to report a breach of one or more of the Standards in the Code of Ethics for Educators as soon as possible but no later than ninety (90) days from the date the educator became aware of an alleged breach unless the law or local procedures require reporting sooner. Educators should be aware of legal requirements and local policies and procedures for reporting unethical conduct. Complaints filed with the Georgia Professional Standards Commission must be in writing and must be signed by the complainant (parent, educator, or other LUA/school district employee, etc.).

(b) The Commission notifies local and state officials of all disciplinary actions. In addition, suspensions and revocations are reported to national officials, including the NASDTEC Clearinghouse.

**(5) Disciplinary Action**

(a) The Georgia Professional Standards Commission is authorized to suspend, revoke, or deny certificates, to issue a reprimand or warning, or to monitor the educator’s conduct and performance after an investigation is held and notice and opportunity for a hearing are provided to the certificate holder. Any of the following grounds shall be considered cause for disciplinary action against the holder of a certificate:

1. unethical conduct as outlined in The Code of Ethics for Educators, Standards 1 – 11 (GaPSC Rule 505-6-.01);

2. disciplinary action against a certificate in another state on grounds consistent with those specified in the Code of Ethics for Educators, Standards 1 – 11 (GaPSC Rule 505-6-.01);
  3. order from a court of competent jurisdiction or a request from the Department of Human Resources that the certificate should be suspended or the application for certification should be denied for the non-payment of child support (O.C.G.A. §19-6-28.1 and §19-11-9.3);
  4. notification from the Georgia Higher Education Assistance Corporation that the educator is in default and not in satisfactory repayment status on a student loan guaranteed by the Georgia Higher Education Assistance Corporation (O.C.G.A. §20-3-295);
  5. suspension or revocation of any professional license or certificate;
  6. violation of any other laws and rules applicable to the profession; and
  7. any other good and sufficient cause that renders an educator unfit for employment as an educator.
- (b) An individual whose certificate has been revoked, denied, or suspended may not serve as a volunteer or be employed as an educator, paraprofessional, aide, substitute teacher or in any other position during the period of his or her revocation, suspension or denial for a violation of The Code of Ethics. The superintendent and the educator designated by the superintendent/Local Board of Education shall be responsible for assuring that an individual whose certificate has been revoked, denied, or suspended is not employed or serving in any capacity in their district. both the superintendent and the superintendent’s designee must hold GaPSC certification. Should the superintendent’s certificate be revoked, suspended, or denied, the Board of Education shall be responsible for assuring that the superintendent whose certificate has been revoked, suspended, or denied is not employed or serving in any capacity in their district.

Authority O.C.G.A. § 20-2-200; 20-2-981 through 20-2-984.5

## **INFORMATION NEEDED FOR BOARD OFFICE**

1. Teacher service record and data sheet, giving number and type of certificate, number of years of teaching experience, and other requested information
2. Copy of teacher certificate

3. Employee's withholding certificate or income tax deductions (Form W-4)
4. Georgia withholding certificate for income tax deductions (Form G-4)
5. Social Security Number
6. State Security Questionnaire
7. Payroll Deduction Forms (Health, Life, Disability, etc.)
8. Medical History Form

If the need develops for any other information, the employee will be expected to furnish it immediately upon receipt of request, making sure that all forms are properly notarized. It is important that all information requested be filed in the Board of Education office during pre-planning week.

It should be noted that all employees of the Dodge County School System are subject to a criminal background check as outlined in State Board Policy 526.

## **CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL CRIMINAL RECORD CHECK**

It is the policy of the Dodge County Board of Education to comply with O.C.G.A. 20-2-211, as amended by the 1994 General Assembly by Senate Bill 526, and the implementing regulations as promulgated by the State Board of Education.

Every person who is employed by the Dodge County Board of Education for the first time to fill a certificated position with this school district shall be fingerprinted and have a criminal record check prior to the issuance of a standard school year contract of employment. The method of obtaining fingerprints and of submission to the Georgia Crime Information Center and National Crime Information Center shall be as prescribed by O.C.G.A. 20-2-211, as amended, and by the State Board of Education's policies, rules, and regulations. The school district will pay all costs associated with the background check.

Each person employed for the first time to fill a certificated position with the school district shall be issued a temporary contract valid for 200 calendar days, pending the results of the criminal records check. If the criminal record check reflects that the employee has not been arrested, charged, pleaded guilty or no contest, or been convicted of any criminal offense other than a minor traffic violation, the superintendent shall have the authority without further authorization from the board to sign on behalf of the board a standard employment contract with the employee for the balance of that school year based on the terms and conditions of employment and the assignment of the employee as previously approved by the board.

In the event the criminal record check reflects the employee has been charged with, pleaded to or been convicted of an offense other than a minor traffic violation, the superintendent shall bring the matter to the Board of Education at its next meeting or sooner, if warranted, for a decision. If the superintendent elects, the employee may continue in the employment of the school district pending final board decision.

## **CERTIFICATION FACTS**

**Traditional Routes** - Obtaining a Georgia certificate by completing a state-approved educator preparation program, usually at a college or university. This process could include earning a college degree along with the state certificate, or you might complete the requirements just for a certificate after you have already finished your Degree. In addition, educators who move to Georgia with an out-of-state certificate must meet Georgia's certification requirements through reciprocity procedures. For the most part, the traditional initial programs are completed prior to employment in a public school and lead directly to Georgia's Clear Renewable Certificate.

**Alternative Routes** - Obtaining a Georgia certificate while you work as an educator. Alternative routes are designed for "career switchers" who already hold degrees and have various life experiences, as well as former educators with expired or invalid certificates who wish to return to the classroom. These routes are not limited to, but are of particular importance when completed in high need, shortage fields such as math, science, foreign language and special education.

Initial eligibility requirements lead a Non-Renewable Certificate and remaining requirements are completed while the individual is serving as an educator in a Georgia public school. Upon completion of this route, the Clear Renewable Certificate is issued.

**International Exchange Teacher Route** - Obtaining a Georgia certificate based on your teacher certification in another country.

International exchange certificates may be awarded to teachers certified in their native country who are not U.S. citizens but who wish to come to Georgia and teach for up to three years.

**Permit Route** - Obtaining a Georgia permit to teach in special restricted circumstances.

Permits allow performing artists, retired teachers and native foreign language speakers to teach in Georgia classrooms and selected business/professional leaders to serve in Superintendent

positions based on their rich expertise.

Each route is designed to combine high standards with flexibility to bring quality teachers into the classroom. While each route has a unique set of eligibility requirements and different ways to achieve certification, the standards and requirements for a Clear Renewable Certificate are the same regardless of the route chosen.

The teaching certificate is a most important document as relative to employment. State law mandates that each employee must continue to hold a current in-field certificate. State pay cannot be received for out-of-date or out-of-field certification.

It is each employee's responsibility to know the status of his certification and keep current all provisions. Important aspects are: in-field provisions, expiration dates, method of renewal, and procedures for renewal. The Dodge County Board of Education will not accept responsibility for omissions regarding an individual's certificate; however, the Board office will assist in every possible manner.

Each teacher must have a copy of his/her valid certificate on file at the board office to assure full payment of salary. If the certificate arrives late, a teacher's salary is retroactive when the certificate is received, relative to the certificate date. This includes those renewing after summer school and any other. Otherwise, only substitute pay will be authorized. Do not neglect attending to this important task.

## **CERTIFICATE LEVEL**

Each certificate is assigned one level. This level applies to all fields held by an individual and indicates the Commission's determined equivalent of an individual's level of education. Generally, the certificate level equates to the education level completed as follows:

- Level 1 High School Diploma (Vocational Education fields only)
- Level 2 Associate of Arts (Vocational Education fields only)
- Level 4 Bachelor
- Level 5 Master
- Level 6 Education Specialist
- Level 7 Doctorate

## **LOCAL SALARY SUPPLEMENT**

The Dodge County Board of Education currently pays the following local supplement:



T-4	\$600
T-5	\$800
T-6	\$1000
DD-7	\$1200
Sp. Ed	\$500

## TEACHER RETIREMENT

Individuals meeting the following criteria are **required** to become members of TRS as a condition of employment:

- Personnel who are employed one-half time or more in **specific positions** of the state’s public school systems, regional libraries, county libraries, and regional educational service agencies, such as:
  - Teachers
  - Administrators
  - Supervisors
  - Clerks
  - Teacher aides
  - Secretaries
  - Paraprofessionals
  - Public school nurses
  - Employees of the Agricultural Extension Service

Any **vested** member of the Employees’ Retirement System (ERS) who accepts employment from an employer normally covered by TRS may elect to remain a member of ERS or to join TRS. A written election must be made to the respective retirement system within sixty days of such employment and is irrevocable once the election is made. Members and their employers will be required to make the appropriate contributions to the respective retirement system.

All new employees will be automatically enrolled as members of TRS based on the information submitted electronically by the employer. You will not complete a paper application.

## SOCIAL SECURITY

All employees of the Dodge County Board of Education are covered by Social Security.

Deductions for this purpose are made from salary at the current rate of 7.65% (6.20% for O.A.S.D.I. and 1.45% for H.I.).

## **PAY DAY**

Pay Day is the last working day of each calendar month. However, an exception is made in November and December. It is customary for the board to make payment at the time school is dismissed for Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays *when funds are available*.



**Direct Deposit is available.** If it is not chosen, checks will be delivered at the schools by principals during the school year. Payroll checks may be picked up at the Central Office during the summer months. Teachers will receive pay for 190 days service, but their annual salary will be divided into twelve equal payments. Salaries for new teachers just finishing college or transferring from another entity will be divided into thirteen equal payments in their first year of service in Dodge County if they elect to do so. Payroll is made up on the basis of number and status of employees on the 15th day of the month. Automatic deductions will be made for the following purposes:

1. Teacher Retirement
2. Social Security
3. Federal Income Tax
4. Health Insurance and other supplemental insurance, when authorized
5. PAGE/GAE dues, when authorized
6. Days of leave in excess of authorized leave
7. Georgia Income Tax
8. Tax Shelter Annuity, when authorized
9. Garnishments, tax levy, child support, etc., when so ordered by the court.

Providing accurate state and federal tax withholding forms, retirement system membership number, and the social security number to the payroll manager is the responsibility of the employee.

## **TEACHER ACCOUNTABILITY**

It is the belief of the Dodge County School System that student learning and accomplishment can be observed and measured. It is felt that educators need to show that learning is taking place. Teacher evaluation is an on-going process designed to improve the quality of instruction and to judge the effectiveness of employee performance and of the school system accomplishments. Supervisors are responsible for observing and assessing the performance of staff members and

assisting them in improving their professional competencies as may be identified.

Local policy mandates that all Board of Education employees will be evaluated annually on appropriate criteria. Please see the school principal when questions exist.

## **MENTOR TEACHER**

Each new teacher will be assigned a veteran teacher to serve as his or her mentor. The mentor will work with the beginning teacher a minimum of one year.

## **IDENTIFICATION BADGE**

Every Dodge County teacher will be issued an identification badge. This badge will allow the teacher free admission to all sports events at Dodge County Middle School and Dodge County High School. The badges are to be returned when the teacher is no longer employed by the system.

## **CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT**

The State of Georgia requires by law that any principal, teacher, counselor, or other school administrator report all cases of suspected child abuse of children under eighteen years of age. The law requires the reporting of injuries or neglect of minors, provides immunity for those reporting in good faith, and provides a penalty for violation of the law.

Child abuse involves any child under eighteen years of age who is believed to have had physical injury or injuries inflicted upon him other than by accidental means, by a parent or caretaker, or has been neglected or exploited by a parent or caretaker, or has been sexually assaulted. Neglect of child may include lack of food, clothing, shelter, or sleeping arrangements; exposure to amoral or asocial circumstances; failure to attend school properly due to parental neglect or disinterest; failure to provide adequate supervision; failure to receive proper and necessary medical care; and suffering from emotional deprivation or inhumane treatment.

The following procedures should be followed for reporting child abuse:

1. Staff reports suspected case to principal.
2. Principal reports case to the School Social Worker (SSW).
3. The SSW will make contact with the child for verification and report findings to the Department of Family and Children Services (DFACS).
4. In the event that the SSW can't be reached, the principal will make a report to DFACS.
5. The Social Worker Referral Form should follow immediately to document all referrals.

## COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

### Pediculosis (Head Lice)



The Dodge County Board of Education acknowledges that pediculosis is a health problem which, if not properly controlled, can reach epidemic proportions and create an unsanitary and unhealthy environment. In order to prevent epidemics of pediculosis and insure the health of Dodge County students, the following actions should be taken when pediculosis is present.

1. Upon the discovery of pediculosis in any of its forms (head lice, head lice eggs, or head lice cases), promptly notify the parents or guardian of the student. The Dodge County Health Department should also be informed of the infestation, including the name of the student, the student's parents and/or guardian, address and telephone number, and any other information relevant to the infestation.
2. Upon the discovery of infestation with pediculosis a student is immediately prohibited from participation in all school activities including classroom attendance. So long as he is infested, the student will continue to be excluded from classes and school activities. Homebound instruction for the student will be permitted if the requirements for participation in the homebound program are met.
3. An infested student may be readmitted to the Dodge County schools upon the written certification of the Dodge County Health Department, school health nurse, or a physician licensed to practice medicine in the State of Georgia that the student has been properly treated for pediculosis, that the student is free from pediculosis, that the family has been properly counseled in the control of pediculosis, and that the student is no longer a health hazard to himself or others.

### AIDS

*\*\*Refer to Dodge County Board of Education Policy Manual.*

## **TEACHER ATTENDANCE**

It is expected that employees under contract with the Dodge County Board of Education will be present and will fulfill their contractual obligations for the number of days called for in the contract of employment. The only excused absences are those outlined in the policies in the Dodge County Board of Education or those specifically approved by the Board of Education on an individual basis. Absences for reasons other than set forth herein shall constitute a breach of contract of employment, and the contract, at the discretion of the Board, may be terminated.

## **EMPLOYEE TARDIES**

If you are going to be late, please call the school/headquarters as soon as possible. In the event you are late, you will be responsible for securing someone to cover your homeroom or duty until you arrive. If you are consistently late to work, the corrective action/employee discipline procedures will be followed.

\*This area will be noted in TKES Standard 9.

### **Corrective Action/Employee Discipline Procedures**

The following procedures will be followed by the administration of Dodge County Schools when addressing the actions and/or activities of employees who fail to comply or willfully disobey the policies, procedures, and/or directives of the administration, superintendent, and Board of Education:

- Step 1:** 1 – 4 tardies – Verbal warning; dated and noted in personnel file.
- Step 2:** 5<sup>th</sup> tardy – Formal written warning; dated and copied to the employee and placed in employee’s personnel file.
- Step 3:** 6<sup>th</sup> tardy and subsequent tardies – Formal disciplinary action; reflected in annual evaluation and possible Professional Development Plan (PDP); dated and copied to the employee, employee’s personnel file, and superintendent.

## **EMPLOYEE ABSENCES**

### **Board Policy GARH**

This policy shall apply to all employees of the Dodge County Board of Education. All employees are required to follow the work calendar established by the Board of Education and

may take leave from work only in accordance with this policy or other leave policies enacted by the Board of Education. Unless otherwise provided by the Board of Education, principals and other supervisors are not authorized to rearrange the work calendars of employees.

### **Accrual of Sick Leave and Absence for Medical and Related Reasons**

Each employee of the Board of Education shall be entitled to sick leave, with full pay, computed on the basis of one and one-fourth working days for each completed school month of service, cumulative up to 45 days.

Sick leave may be taken for absence due to illness, injury, or other temporary disability, or necessitated by exposure to contagious disease in which the health of others would be endangered by his/her attendance, or for illness or death in the employee's immediate family.

Employees transferring from one Georgia school system to another shall be credited with any unused sick leave accumulated by such employee up to 45 days accumulation as mandated by law.

For absences above those entitled by this policy, an amount equal to one day's salary for each day's absence shall be deducted.

Absences resulting from the following causes shall be chargeable to sick leave:

1. Personal illness or critical illness in the immediate family.
2. Death in the immediate family.
  - a. Members of immediate family shall be confined to father, mother, grandfather, grandmother, husband or wife, son, daughter, brother, sister, mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister-in-law, brother-in-law, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, or relatives living in the home of the employee.
  - b. The number of days allowed for death in the family shall be three (3).

### **Short Term**

Short term sick leave shall be defined as absence for ten (10) working days or less.

The Board may from time to time require permission to be given by the principal before short term sick leave is taken, and/or a doctor's certificate of the teacher's inability to be present.

### **Long Term**

Long term sick leave shall be defined as absence for eleven (11) working days or longer. Employees granted leave for longer than the actual period of their disability are not covered

under this policy.

Long term sick leave shall be granted employees in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. Notice – Physician Statement. The employee shall notify the Superintendent of his/her intention to take such leave as soon as practical. The notice shall be accompanied by a doctor's statement of anticipated date and length of physical disability.
2. Determination of Commencement of Leave. The long term sick leave shall begin at the time to be determined by the employee, the physician and the Superintendent. The employee anticipating physical disability may continue in active employment as long as he/she is able to properly perform the required functions of his/her job.

In case of dispute, final determination of his/her ability to so perform shall be made by the Board of Education after a hearing in which the teacher and the Superintendent or other representatives of the local system shall be heard. The Superintendent or Board may require that the employee submit to an examination by a physician selected and paid by the Board, and a refusal by the employee to submit to such an examination shall be grounds for terminating the contract or other employment of such employee.

If the Superintendent determines that the status of an employee's ability to perform properly the required functions of his/her job may change within a short period of time, the Superintendent may require that the employee present a physician's statement on a weekly basis.

3. Sick Leave Benefits. The employee shall be entitled to utilize all of his/her accumulated sick leave for long term absences due to illness, injury, or other temporary disability, or other causes described previously.
4. Duration – Return to Work. An employee who has been granted long term sick leave shall be entitled to return to active employment upon presentation of a physician's statement certifying that he/she is able to perform the required functions of the job. If the Superintendent and Board concur with such statement, the employee shall return to work in accordance therewith, to be assigned to a substantially equivalent position to be approved by the Superintendent.

In case of dispute, final determination of his/her ability to so return shall be made by the Board of Education after a hearing in which the teacher and the Superintendent or other representatives of the local system shall be heard. The Superintendent or Board may require that the employee submit to an examination by a physician selected and paid by the Board and a refusal of the employee to submit shall be grounds for termination, or not issuing a new contract if the employee wishes to return at the beginning of the new school year.

In any instance, an employee's return to active employment may be delayed until the beginning of a quarter or semester.

5. School System's Responsibility to Employee. Each employee wishing to apply for long-term sick leave shall be given a copy of this policy.

Each grant or long-term sick leave shall specify the beginning and ending of such leave (e.g., from beginning to end of physical disability; from beginning of physical disability to the first quarter semester beginning after the end of the employee's physical disability; from that date to the end of the school year, etc.). An employee who does not request his/her return to work in accordance with the provisions of #4 above when his/her grant of long-term sick leave says he/she will return to work without receiving a change in his/her long-term status from the Superintendent shall forfeit all further rights under this policy.

Nothing in this policy shall be construed to confer on an employee any rights to continued employment which they do not have under (1.) the Fair Dismissal Law of Georgia, or (2) the Constitution of the United States.

### **Personal Leave**

Up to three days of sick leave may be used by the teacher for personal reasons and at the teacher's discretion, provided that:

1. The principal recommends approval of the leave to the Superintendent.
2. Two weeks notice is given to provide adequate lead time to secure substitute teachers and lesson plans from the teacher requesting personal leave.
3. Leave shall not be taken preceding or following a school holiday or vacation period.

In emergency situations, the two-week notice may be waived.

The days used for personal leave will be deducted from the number of days that can be accumulated from sick leave. Personal leave days are not cumulative from year to year.

### **Professional Leave**

Leave for personnel to attend professional conferences shall be requested at least one week prior to the date of the leave.

Professional leave may be granted for attendance at meetings of professional organizations in-state; however, travel and expenses will not be reimbursed, unless approved by the Dodge County Board of Education.

Employees incurring expenses for staff development and/or professional conferences for which



prior approval has been granted will be reimbursed by the Dodge County Board of Education.

### **Observance of Religious Holidays**

Employees may use personal leave for the observance of recognized religious holidays. If an employee desires to take leave for the observance of recognized religious holidays in excess of the days allowed for personal leave, the employee may take unpaid leave for such purposes provided that such leave is not excessive and does not interfere with fulfilling the obligations of his or her job.

### **Jury and Witness Leave**

Each person employed by the Board shall be allowed leave with pay for the purposes of serving as a juror in any court or when attending a judicial proceeding in response to a subpoena or other court order or process that requires the employee's attendance at the judicial proceeding. Jury and/or witness leave shall not be deducted from an individual's accumulated personal, professional, or sick leave. No employee utilizing jury and witness leave shall be required to pay the cost of employing a substitute to serve during his or her absence for such leave. Employees who serve on juries or who are subpoenaed to attend a judicial proceeding must sign over the jury/witness pay they receive to the Board of Education.

### **Military Leave**

All employees of the Board of Education are entitled to paid leave not to exceed eighteen days in any one federal fiscal year for the purpose of complying with ordered military leave duty with the armed forces of the United States or State of Georgia, including duty as a voluntary member of the militia or reserve component of the United States or State of Georgia. Employees also are entitled to leave not exceeding thirty days in any one federal fiscal year if ordered to duty as a result of the declaration of any emergency by the governor or the appropriate officials of the United States armed forces. Employees who have military commitments shall inform the Superintendent or designee annually and shall cooperate to the extent possible in scheduling such leave so as to minimize the disruption in those employees' duties and the mission of the Board of Education.

### **Bereavement Leave**

In the event of a death in the immediate family, as defined above under "sick leave", a leave of absence will be granted in accordance with rules and regulations of the Board. All such bereavement leave will be charged against the employee's sick leave.

## Family & Medical Leave Act

To the extent that any provision in this policy conflicts with or is superseded by the Family and Medical Leave Act (“FMLA”), the regulations promulgated thereunder, or any other federal law, the provision of the FMLA, its regulations or other law, as the case may be, control.

## WORKERS COMPENSATION

Our workers compensation insurance is with GEWCT. We want to ensure that all employees are aware of the policies and procedures they need to follow to report injuries.

Steps the employee should follow to report their workplace injury:

1. Inform your supervisor immediately
2. Your supervisor will contact the central office.
3. WC-1 will be completed by the central office.
4. Central office will assist you in scheduling an appointment.
5. Point of Contact at central office for school food service employees:

Debbie Skipper, Telephone (478) 374-6491

Email: [dskipper@dodge.k12.ga.us](mailto:dskipper@dodge.k12.ga.us)

Point of Contact at central office for all other employees:

Carla Mills, Telephone (478) 374-3783 Ext. 113

Email: [cmills@dodge.k12.ga.us](mailto:cmills@dodge.k12.ga.us)

## PERSONNEL CONDUCT AND DRESS CODE

There is abundant research to show that personal appearance has a significant effect upon other people. School system personnel are professionals. The dress, grooming, and mannerisms of school system staff members have an impact upon the way students and parents respond to our leadership. Staff members are expected to dress in a **professional manner at all times.** **Without fail, all staff should know the student dress code and go above and beyond to meet the expectations of the student dress code.**

Teacher dress and personal appearance while attending the schools of Dodge County, and while representing the schools in connected activities, should be such as to reflect dignity and pride in the schools. Dodge County School System employees are expected to dress in an appropriate and professional manner as dictated by job duties and responsibilities. The building level administrator has the authority to make exceptions on “special days.”

The following are considered inappropriate professional dress and are unacceptable:

- Sweat suits and wind pants
- Any oversized or tight fitting clothing
- Low-cut tops, bare and midriff outfits
- Any see-through garments
- Bedroom slippers, house shoes, or flip flops (No rubber slipper type sandals/flip flops) – Shoes should be appropriate for safe participation in all job related activities.
- Dresses, skirts, and shorts must be ***no higher than one inch above the knee and must look professional***. Leggings, jeggings, tights, yoga pants, or spandex pants may be worn only under appropriate length (no higher than one inch above the knee) dress, skirt, shirt, etc. No baggy, sagging, ragged pants, or pants with holes may be worn.
- PE instructors may wear wind pants and coaching shorts of an appropriate length only in the gym and on the field.

More casual dress may be worn during pre-planning, post planning, and on teacher work days, but must be an appropriate length and fit the dress code. (No mini-skirts or short-shorts, etc.)

Each principal or supervisor is responsible for maintaining an acceptable standard for employees under his/her supervision. The first time a staff member is dressed inappropriately, he/she will be sent home to change to appropriate clothing, will receive a warning, and the incident will be documented. The second time a staff member is dressed inappropriately, he/she will be sent home to change to appropriate clothing, the incident will be documented, and his/her personal leave will be docked for the time away from school related duties. Schools' maintenance, janitorial, cafeteria, and custodian employees are required to wear nonskid closed-toe shoes.

*\*\*Approved January 12, 2017*

## MANDATED TRAINING

In accordance with O.C.G.A. – 20-2-751.7, all certified staff are required to receive training in sexual misconduct reporting. All Dodge County employees are required to complete this training annually. The training module is available through Compliance Director. The instructions for staff are as follows:

Step 1: [www.compliancedirector.org](http://www.compliancedirector.org)

Step 2: Click on the state in which you work.

Step 3: Click on the module you have been requested to take. (This may take the form of a *current standard* module or a *Custom* module unique to your system.)

Step 4: Your username is DodgeCounty and your Password is marker. (These are your username and password into any module you take).

Step 5: Complete the training and assessment. (They are usually about 15 minutes.)

Step 6: When you have *successfully completed* a module, it will ask you to select your system's name and then to login. This last username and password will allow you to successfully register

thus creating a legal record that you have taken the training.

Your system registration username is: Dodge County

Your system registration password is: marker

**\*\*Please note:** *It is important that you log in after you complete each module. Otherwise, the system will not record completion of the module and you will be required to repeat the module.*

### **Required Modules to Complete:**

Ethical Use of Social Media

Blood Born Pathogens

Copyright for Schools

Sexual Misconduct

Suicide Prevention

Code of Ethics

Mandated Reporting

Sexual Harassment

## **CERTIFICATE RENEWAL**

Effective July 1, 2017 505-2-.36 RENEWAL REQUIREMENTS

**(1) Purpose.** Certificate renewal is an outcome of applying Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC)-accepted continuing professional learning toward the continued validity of a state certificate or license. While it is essential for individual educators to maintain valid certificates and licenses, professional learning should be focused toward school improvement leading to improved teaching and increased student learning. The goal of certificate renewal and professional learning is for educators within a Georgia local unit of administration (LUA) to work together to enhance established educational goals for the individual educator, the school and the LUA to assist students in meeting state standards for student achievement. Written Professional Learning Plans (PLPs) or Professional Learning Goals (PLGs) shall be required for all certificate holders employed by a Georgia LUA. PLPs outline requirements for the professional growth of educators as well as clearly delineate support the school or school system will provide for the educator’s professional growth. PLGs outline identified areas for educator growth for those educators not required to have PLPs. All professional learning approved for certificate renewal shall be designed around national professional learning standards as outlined by Learning Forward (formerly the National Staff Development Council). This requirement applies to the design of school and LUA learning communities, the selection of workshops that support learning communities, and any other professional learning designed for certified educators.

**(2) Requirements.** Georgia’s renewable certificates are the Standard Professional, Performance-Based Professional, Advanced Professional, Lead Professional and Life certificates. Renewable licenses are Adjunct, Educational Interpreter, Non-Instructional Aide, Paraprofessional and

Support Personnel. These certificates and licenses are valid for a five (5)-year period (except for the Life certificate), during which time the following requirements must be met:

(a) Employment in a Georgia LUA at the time of renewal application, with the following exception: 1. Renewal of professional certificates held by educators who have at least one (1) year of successful educator experience in a Georgia LUA, as outlined in GaPSC Rule 505-2-.25 EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS, paragraph (3)(a)

1. The educator must have held a valid Georgia renewable, professional certificate at the time the experience was earned;

(b) A criminal record check, unless exempted in section (4) below;

(c) For the Performance-Based Professional certificate, a minimum of two (2) Proficient or Exemplary annual performance ratings earned on the Teacher Assessment on Performance Standards (TAPS) component of the statewide evaluation system, Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES), within five (5) years of the renewal date:

1. Performance-Based Professional certificates will be renewed as Standard Professional certificates if the educator has earned fewer than two (2) Proficient or Exemplary TAPS performance ratings within five (5) years of the renewal date, and has no more than one (1) unremediated unsatisfactory, needs development, or ineffective performance rating(s);

(d) Advanced Professional and Lead Professional certificates may be renewed as Standard Professional certificates if the educator received one (1) annual performance rating below the Satisfactory or Proficient level during the most recent five (5) year validity period of the certificate;

(e) Certificate and license holders who are employed by a Georgia LUA in a position requiring certification at the time of renewal application must satisfy professional learning requirements as outlined below, with the exceptions noted in section 5 below. Employing LUAs shall document fulfillment of these requirements and verify their completion as part of the renewal application package:

1. Engaging in professional learning on a continuing basis by fully participating in the LUA's 505-2-.36 Page 2 professional learning community as documented by the educator's supervisor and described in GaPSC Guidelines accompanying this rule;

2. Setting written Professional Learning Goals (PLGs) or developing a written Professional Learning Plan (PLP) and making acceptable progress, as defined by the employing LUA, toward accomplishing these goals or completing the PLP:

(i) Educators who hold Professional level certification or higher shall engage in continuous improvement by developing PLGs and shall engage in professional learning

appropriate for successful completion of these goals, with the following exception:

(I) Educators who are required to develop a PLP as outlined in section (ii) below are not required to develop additional PLGs while the PLP is in effect; (ii) The following educators shall develop PLPs and shall engage in professional learning appropriate for successful completion of the PLPs:

(I) Educators who hold Induction level certification (Induction certificates are only renewable in the specific circumstances outlined in GaPSC Rule 505-2-.04 INDUCTION CERTIFICATE; however, successful completion of professional learning requirements is one of several requirements to move from Induction to Professional certification. Induction is listed here to clarify that Induction is one of several categories of educators who must have PLPs.);

(II) Educators in positions requiring them to hold non-renewable certificates;

(III) Educators who are working in a service or leadership field and have fewer than three (3) years of satisfactory experience in that field;

(IV) Educators who were not employed by a Georgia LUA in a position requiring certification at the time of their most recent certificate renewal and then reenter the profession;

(V) Educators who have less than one (1) year of educator experience in Georgia;

(VI) Educators who have received any unremediated annual summative evaluation ratings of Needs Development, Ineffective, or Unsatisfactory during the previous five (5)-year validity of their certificate. The PLP for these educators shall be included in the remediation plan developed according to procedures outlined in GaPSC Rule 505-2-.43 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION.

(iii) PLPs shall remain in effect for one (1) to three (3) years, as determined by the supervisor, for all educators who do not hold Induction certificates; PLPs for Induction certificate holders shall remain in effect for the validity period of the Induction certificate.

(iv) Written PLGs and PLPs will be developed by individual educators based, at a minimum, on annual performance data. Once the educator develops the PLGs or PLP, they are encouraged, but not required, to engage colleagues in reviewing the PLGs or PLP to provide constructive feedback. Then the educator will meet with the supervisor to review the PLGs or PLP and seek approval before beginning implementation;

(v) During the course of the year, educators are encouraged, but not required, to meet with colleagues to review progress on implementation of the PLGs or PLP prior to periodic reviews with the supervisor. Prior to a designated date set by the school system near the end of the school year, the supervisor will determine whether or not the educator has made sufficient progress on implementation of the PLGs or PLP and will attest that this process has been

implemented as defined by GaPSC Guidelines. Educators who do not make satisfactory progress will be rated accordingly on the state 505-2-.36 Page 3 evaluation instrument;

3. Professional learning is to be primarily job-embedded and done in the context of the school learning community. Other forms of professional learning such as workshops shall be for the purpose of supporting job-embedded learning.

4. With the approval of the educator's supervisor, college course work may be used as professional learning under the following conditions:

(i) Course work that is part of a degree or certification program in the educator's field or in a new field with approval by the educator's supervisor may be used in addition to job-embedded professional learning;

(ii) Final course grades must be "B" or higher; and

(iii) Developmental studies courses and course work that is audited and/or exempted without credit shall not be accepted.

5. The following individuals employed by a Georgia LUA in a position requiring certification may renew their certificates without meeting the professional learning requirements outlined in this section:

(i) Educators who also hold valid National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) certification at the time of renewal in a field comparable to one held on their Georgia educator certificate;

(ii) Educators who also hold valid Georgia Master teacher certification at the time of renewal;

(iii) Educators certified in the service fields of Speech and Language Pathology, Audiology, School Psychology, School Counseling and School Social Work who meet optional requirements associated with GaPSC-accepted state or national credentials as outlined in the appropriate GaPSC field rules as long as this is approved by the supervisor as appropriate for professional learning;

(iv) Non-Instructional Aides who earn required clock hours of job-related training, as determined by the employing LUA (See GaPSC Rule 505-2-.17 NON-INSTRUCTIONAL AIDE LICENSE);

(v) Support Personnel License holders who meet the requirements for renewal outlined in the Individual Development Plan developed by the employing Georgia LUA;

(vi) Educational Interpreters who hold a valid RID Certification or submit official



documentation verifying the EIPA assessment has been completed during the validity period established on the license. If the initial license required completion of a bachelor's degree, all degree requirements must be completed before the applicant may apply for renewal (See GaPSC Rule 505-2-.16 EDUCATIONAL INTERPRETER LICENSE);

(vii) Permit holders who meet renewal requirements outlined in GaPSC Rule 505-2-.10 PERMIT;

(viii) Adjunct License holders who meet renewal requirements determined by the employing Georgia LUA;

(ix) Faculty of Georgia colleges/universities who can document other professional learning as long as there is evidence of continuous engagement in professional learning. Examples include, but are not limited to: special assignment work in P-12 schools that includes teaching, delivery of professional learning to P-12 educators, formal presentations at state/national conferences for P-12 educators, and publication of original work focused on teaching and learning or services in support of teaching and learning. These activities may be verified by a letter, on official letterhead, from the dean of the 505-2-.36 Page 4 employing college or university and submitted by the university's certification officer. The teaching of college-level courses shall not be applied toward certificate renewal. Guidelines accompanying this rule provide additional information regarding certificate renewal for higher education faculty;

(x) Educators employed at Georgia private schools may renew their certificates by completing the requirements outlined in Sections (e)1-4 above or by completing the requirements outlined in Section (g) below.

(f) Educators who are no longer employed by Georgia LUAs in positions that require certification, but are employed in Georgia education agencies or organizations may renew certificates as described in Section (e)5(ix) above . These educators will work with their employers to develop PLGs or PLPs. The supervisor will evaluate PLGs or PLPs to determine if the educator makes continuous professional learning progress. These educators may also choose to renew their certificates as outlined in section (g) below without developing PLGs or a PLP.

(g) Educators who no longer work in schools, agencies, or other education organizations in Georgia must satisfy one of the following requirements:

(i) For educators who have been employed by a Georgia LUA in a position requiring certification for at least one (1) school year during the most recent validity period of their certificate, and within five (5) years of the date of renewal application, submit documentation of completion of the professional learning requirements outlined in Section (e) above during at least one (1) qualifying year of employment.

(ii) Complete any combination of six (6) semester hours of college course work; ten



(10) Georgia Professional Learning Units (PLUs); ten (10) Continuing Education Units (CEUs); or one hundred (100) clock hours of Bright from the Start (BFTS)-approved training:

(I) College course work must be earned at an institution that meets the accreditation standards outlined in GaPSC Rule 505-2-.31 GaPSC-ACCEPTED ACCREDITATION; VALIDATION OF NONACCREDITED DEGREES. Final course grades must be “B” or higher. Developmental studies courses and course work that is audited and/or exempted without credit shall not be accepted.

(II) PLUs must be awarded by a State of Georgia education agency, a Regional Educational Services Agency (RESA), a Georgia LUA or a GaPSC-approved college or university. Only LUAs offering GAPSC-approved programs may offer PLUs for renewal purposes. Agencies, RESAs, and LUAs may contract with vendors provided a process is in place that assures the provider designs and implements professional learning that meets Learning Forward standards. Documentation must be maintained that the agency, RESA, or LUA uses an approval process to assure that all professional learning for certificate renewal is standards-based. Only those PLUs awarded within the timeframe outlined in section (2)(h) below, will be acceptable for certificate renewal.

(III) CEUs must be issued by a GaPSC-accepted accredited college or university or a provider authorized by the International Association for Continuing Education and Training (IACET). Ten (10) contact hours are the equivalent of one (1) CEU. These credits must be reflected on CEU transcripts or “certificates of completion” which include the name of the organization issuing the credits, the name of the educator receiving the credits, the title of the course, the date the course began and date of completion, and the number of CEUs being authorized.

(IV) BFTS-approved trainings may be found on the BFTS website at <http://decals.ga.gov>.

(iii) Hold valid National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) certification at the time of renewal in a field comparable to one held on their Georgia educator certificate;

(iv) Hold valid Georgia Master teacher certification at the time of renewal; 505-2-.36  
Page 5

(v) Have at least one (1) year of successful educator experience, as outlined in GaPSC Rule 505-2-.25 EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS, while working in another state on a valid certificate issued by that state;

(vi) For educators certified in the service fields of Speech and Language Pathology, Audiology, School Psychology, School Counseling and School Social Work, meet optional requirements associated with GaPSC-accepted state or national credentials as outlined in the

appropriate GaPSC field rules; or

(vii) Re-take and pass at the Professional level the content assessment approved by the GaPSC at the time of renewal for the field(s) being renewed. This is not an option to renew fields for which there is no GaPSC-approved content assessment at the time of renewal. Only the field(s) for which the educator passes the appropriate assessment will be renewed.

(h) Renewal requirements for certificates that are currently valid must have been completed during the validity period established on the certificate. Renewal requirements for expired certificates must have been completed within the five (5)-year period preceding the date of renewal application.

(i) Retired Georgia educators, as verified by the Teachers Retirement System (TRS), who do not wish to meet the renewal requirements outlined in this section may apply for a Retired Professional Certificate as outlined in GaPSC Rule 505-2-.44 RETIRED PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATE.

### **(3) Focus of Renewal Credit.**

(a) Certificate holders who are employed by a Georgia LUA in a position requiring certification must have an individual Professional Learning Plan (PLP) or Professional Learning Goals (PLGs) coordinated with their supervisor and employing LUA. These PLPs or PLGs are developed and maintained locally, and must be aligned with individual educator evaluation results as well as with school and school system professional learning plans. To be acceptable for certificate renewal, the PLP or PLGs must be directly associated with the annual personnel evaluation and in addition, may be related to any of the following:

1. Field(s) of certification held;
2. School/District Improvement Plan; and/or
3. State/federal requirements.

(b) The Special Georgia Requirement in Special Education as outlined in GaPSC Rule 505-2-.24 SPECIAL GEORGIA REQUIREMENTS may be required as part of renewal requirements.

(c) The GaPSC and/or GaDOE may periodically conduct an on-site visit to review and verify professional learning and renewal documentation maintained by the LUA.

### **(4) Criminal Record Check.**

(a) A criminal record check shall be required for renewal of all certificates held by educators employed in a Georgia LUA including state chartered special schools and commission

charter schools. This requirement does not apply to employees of state agencies.

(b) If the educator has not had an FBI background check (fingerprint) while employed in the present public school system, the FBI background check (fingerprint) is required for renewal. If the educator has satisfactorily completed an FBI background check (fingerprint) at the present public school system of employment, then a Georgia criminal history check will satisfy the renewal requirement. The Georgia criminal history check will satisfy the renewal requirement for private school, chartered special 505-2-.36 Page 6 school, and commission charter school employees that do not require certification; such schools that do require certification must meet those requirements listed in (1), (2) and (3) as well as the Criminal Record Check.

(c) The employing Georgia LUA is responsible for ensuring that the appropriate criminal record check is completed during the school year in which the certificate expires. The employer may apply for renewal after the criminal record check or FBI background check has been completed.

(d) If the educator is not employed in a Georgia public school, private school, chartered special school, or commission charter school at the time of renewal, the educator is exempt from the background check requirement until such time as Georgia public or private school employment is resumed.

## **(5) Renewal Cycle.**

(a) Georgia certificates usually have a beginning date of July 1 and an ending date of June 30. Valid certificates may be renewed from October 1 of the calendar year preceding the ending validity date to September 30 of the calendar year in which the certificate expires. The grace period between July 1 and September 30 allows completion of professional learning during the summer period. When renewed within this cycle, the validity period continues with no break in dates.

(b) After October 1 of the calendar year in which the validity period ends, the certificate is considered expired.

1. To renew an expired certificate, the educator must meet all applicable renewal requirements outlined in section (2) above, including any remaining Special Georgia Requirements, and submit an application packet with appropriate documentation to the GaPSC. Specific renewal application procedures for educators may be found on the GaPSC web site at [www.gapsc.com](http://www.gapsc.com);

2. At the request of an employing Georgia LUA, an educator who meets the applicable requirements outlined in section (2)(a), (b), (c) and (d) above but has not met applicable professional learning requirements may be issued a one (1)-year Non-Renewable Professional certificate to allow the educator time to complete all remaining renewal

requirements. 3. Educators who hold more than one certificate field and/or type will be eligible to renew all certificate fields/types by completion of the renewal requirements for the field of placement during the renewal period.

#### **(6) Renewal Application Process.**

(a) Renewal of certificates held by educators employed by a Georgia LUA in a position requiring GaPSC certification must be submitted electronically by the employing LUA according to procedures established by the GaPSC. Information about the online procedures is available to authorized school system personnel on the GaPSC web site at [www.gapsc.org](http://www.gapsc.org).

(b) Educators not employed by a Georgia LUA in a position requiring GaPSC certification may apply for renewal according to procedures outlined on [www.gapsc.com](http://www.gapsc.com). (7)

#### **Exceptions.**

(a) An educator who has received any combination of two (2) Unsatisfactory, Ineffective or Needs Development annual performance evaluations during the previous five (5)-year validity cycle that have not been satisfactorily remediated by the employing Georgia LUA shall not be entitled to any 505-2-.36 Page 7 certificate except for a Waiver in any field (See GaPSC Rule 505-2-.43 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION). Waiver certificates must be requested by an employing Georgia LUA and are issued at the discretion of the GaPSC (See GaPSC Rule 505-2-.13 WAIVER CERTIFICATE).

#### **(8) Implementation.**

(a) Educators holding professional certificates expiring after July 1, 2015, must be employed by a Georgia LUA for renewal of their certificates unless meeting (2) (a) 1 above. Educators who meet renewal requirements with the exception of employment will be issued a Certificate of Eligibility.

(b) Educators holding professional certificates expiring prior to July 1, 2017, who apply for renewal prior to October 1, 2017, may renew their certificate by meeting the requirements outlined in sections (2)(a), (b) and (c) and the renewal requirements outlined in section (2)(g), regardless of employment status. These educators will not be required to meet the professional learning requirements outlined in section (2)(e) if they apply for renewal prior to October 1, 2017.

Authority O.C.G.A. 20-2-200

## PROFESSIONAL TRAINING TRAVEL PROCEDURES

The Dodge County School District is required to follow the Georgia Statewide Travel Regulations. A copy of these regulations may be found online at <http://sao.georgia.gov>. It is the employee's responsibility to be knowledgeable of the travel regulations and procedures so that information may be submitted accurately.

When the Georgia Travel Regulations refer to submission on forms, please note the forms below are to be used. All forms must be typed, signed by the employee, and their Principal/Director.

**Note: To use a form, click on a link, select "Save", and save it to your desktop – DO NOT use "Open".**

*Travel Expense Reimbursement Form*

*Travel Expense Reimbursement Form Example*

*State of Georgia Certificate of Exemption for Local Hotel/Motel Excise Tax*

This form is used at Georgia hotels so local county or municipal excise tax ("occupancy tax") will not be charged.

*Travel/Motel Expense Advance Form*

*Travel/Motel Expense Advance Form Example*

This form is used by an employee to request a cash advance for motel expenses when overnight travel is required. Please note: employees will only be advanced the expense of the motel when requested. No mileage or meals will be advanced. It is the responsibility of the employee to make all motel reservations. Upon return, the motel expense **must** be included on the Travel Expense Reimbursement Form and a copy of the paid receipt **must** be attached to the expense report. If you are requesting a cash advance for the motel, the form must be completed and turned in to the Chief Financial Officer at least **one week** prior to the day of departure.

The following are clarification to the Georgia Statewide Travel Regulations.

All reimbursements will be paid within 30 days of Accounts Payable receiving a complete, non-problematic form. If a form is returned for a correction the 30 day reimbursement window will begin again once the corrected form is received by Accounts Payable. Additionally, when shared expenses between employees are used, all employee submissions need to be received before the 30 day window begins. All reimbursements for a fiscal year (June 30th) are required to be submitted by July 31st

### Travel Expense Reimbursement Form Clarifications

Use the Travel Reimbursement Form found on the district website to obtain reimbursement for

travel expenses, including multiple expenses (i.e. registration, mileage, meals, etc.), prepaid or otherwise. Please be sure the form is typed.

Employees are required to submit a separate Travel Expense Reimbursement Form for each trip within 10 business days upon return of the trip. Submission of a Travel Expense Reimbursement Form is not required if the school district has not incurred any expenses and a refund/reimbursement is not being requested.

When filling out a Travel Reimbursement Form certain information is required. Those items (not inclusive) are listed below:

- Itinerary of Attended Event (This will list the daily schedule for the participants) If simultaneous sessions occur, the employee must initial all sessions attended.
- Registration Receipt
- Meal Expenses
- Lodging Receipt
- Mileage, airfare receipt, rental car receipt or a description of the type of transportation used (i.e. bus with students, etc.)
- Explanation of any expenses which exceed the established limits and of any unusual expenses
- Explanation of the purpose of the trip
- Employee Signature
- Approval Signature (from each school/department being charged)

The Travel Reimbursement Form should list expenses the employee is seeking reimbursement for, as well as every expense the school district incurred for the trip, regardless of how it was paid (prepaid by the BOE or the local school). Receipts and/or documentation for each expense should also be attached. All receipts should be itemized and show the method of payment used. Please note which expenses were prepaid or paid by another employee, etc. . If you received a cash advance for motel expenses, include a copy of the signed cash advance form.

If expenses were incurred for more than one employee on a trip, each employee is required to complete a Travel Reimbursement Form.

### **Registration**

Employees should print a registration form, complete it, and turn in to Central Office at least one week in advance of the registration deadline. Central office will mail the registration form(s) with a check. This will enable the school system to receive any eligible discounts for multiple registrations.

## Lodging

Employees who travel more than 50 miles may be reimbursed for lodging expenses associated with approved overnight travel. Per the Georgia Statewide Travel Regulations an employee is allowed lodging expenses when their destination is located more than 50 miles from their home and headquarters. You can use Google Maps to determine the mileage by selecting the “shortest route” option. If you travel on a regular workday, mileage must be computed from your workplace.

The employee is responsible for obtaining the lowest possible rate by avoiding the “deluxe” hotels and motels, such as those with ocean view rooms. It is the employee’s responsibility to avoid occupancy taxes by presenting the Hotel/Motel Tax Exemption Form at the time of registration, if the motel accepts the forms. When more than one employee shares a room, the room expense should be included on the expense report of the employee paying the room fee.

## Meals

Meals are reimbursed at per diem rates set by the Georgia Statewide Travel Policy. Employees traveling overnight are generally eligible for per diem amounts designed to cover three (3) meals per day for all days on travel status *other than* the day of departure and the day of return.

Travelers are eligible for 75 percent (75%) of the total per diem rate on the first and last day of travel. For example, if the per diem rate allows a \$28 total reimbursement, \$21.00 would be allowable on a travel departure or return day ( $\$28 \times .75 = \$21$ .) As a result, the time of departure and the time of return are not considerations for calculating the Meal Per Diem when associated with overnight travel.

For trips involving multiple travel destinations, base the reduction on the per diem rate in effect where the night was spent, as follows:

- Departure Day: Where you spend the night.
- Return Day: Where you spent the night before returning to your Residence or Primary Work Station.

When meals are provided to an employee in conjunction with travel events, the full meals per diem reimbursement rate is reduced by the amount of the provided meal(s) before the 75% proration. For example, if the per diem allows a \$28 total reimbursement, and lunch was provided at no cost on a travel departure or return day, the total allowable reimbursement for that day would be \$15.75 [ $(\$28 - \$7 \text{ lunch}) \times .75 = \$15.75$ ].

Employees are not required to submit meal receipts. Meals furnished by the meeting/conference attended will not be reimbursed.

## Meal Per Diem During NON-OVERNIGHT Travel

Employees on State business who travel more than 50 miles from their Residence and Primary Work Station on a work assignment, AND are away for more than twelve (12) hours, may receive the total eligible per diem allowance must, however, be adjusted for any meals provided to the traveler, as stated in the section above.

**The Standard In-State per diem rates are as follows:**

Eligible Meals	Per Diem Amount
Breakfast	\$6.00
Lunch	\$7.00
Dinner	\$15.00

**The In-State high cost rates are as follows:**

Eligible Meals	Per Diem Amount
Breakfast	\$7.00
Lunch	\$9.00
Dinner	\$20.00

High cost areas in Georgia are limited to the following counties: *Chatham, Cobb, DeKalb, Fulton, Glynn, and Richmond counties.*

*\*\*NOTE: High cost areas, allowable expenses, per diem rates, and all other rules specified above are subject to change if state and/or federal regulations change.*

## ACCEPTABLE USE COMPUTER POLICY

The Dodge County Schools Computer Network is established for the educational and professional use of Dodge County Schools' students, faculty, and staff ("Users"). This Technology and Acceptable Use Policy (the "Policy") is intended to govern Users with respect to Dodge County Schools Network and the Internet. Users are expected to conduct themselves on the Dodge County Schools Network in the same fashion as they do elsewhere in the community. Users who violate this Policy will have their Dodge County Schools Network privileges revoked and may be subject to further disciplinary action, including suspension or dismissal. Dodge County Schools may also report offenders to applicable law enforcement agencies.

The Dodge County Schools Network provides access to the global Internet. Dodge County



Schools have taken available precautions to restrict access to controversial materials on the Internet. However, on a global network, it is impossible to control all materials. Dodge County Schools believe that the valuable information and interaction available on the Internet far outweighs the possibility that Users may find material that is not consistent with our educational goals.

The smooth operation of the Dodge County Schools Network relies upon the proper conduct of all Users. The signature on the Handbook Acknowledgement form is legally binding and indicates the parties who have signed have read the terms and conditions of this Policy carefully and understand their significance.

### **Dodge County Schools Network - Terms and Conditions (Acceptable Use and Illegal Actions)**

Scope and Authority – The Dodge County Schools Network includes all hardware, software, and network services used by the Dodge community. Parents give the school permission to use applications that are educationally beneficial to our students.

#### **Privileges**

The use of the Dodge County Schools Network is a privilege, not a right. The use of an account must be consistent with the educational objectives of Dodge County Schools. The Technology Office and/or School Administration will deem what is inappropriate use and will refer any such conduct to Dodge County Schools Administration. Dodge County Schools, in its sole discretion, reserves the right to determine what conduct constitutes a violation of this Policy, and the discipline for any such violation. Transmission of any material in violation of any U.S. or state regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, material protected by copyright, threatening or obscene material, or material protected by trade practice. Use of the Dodge County Schools Network for commercial activities, product advertisement, or political lobbying is prohibited. Use of the Dodge County Schools Network and the Internet must be consistent with this Policy and all policies and practices of Dodge County Schools, and violations of this Policy and such other policies and practices may result in the suspension or loss of an account, loss of Internet access, or in other forms of disciplinary action.

#### **No Expectation of Privacy**

Dodge County Schools routinely monitor usage of the Dodge County Schools Network and may review any communications on its systems. Dodge County Schools is able to override all passwords. Users do not have a privacy right in the contents of their computer system, including messages sent, received, or stored on the email systems or in their use of the Internet. Passwords to these systems exist for the benefit of Dodge County Schools. Users should have no expectation that the ability to choose a password for a system in any way limits the ability or

right of Dodge County Schools to monitor all activity.

## **Security**

Security on any computer system is a high priority, especially when the system involves many Users. No User may have access to another's files on the Dodge County Schools Network. The following guidelines will help maintain Dodge County Schools Network security:

If you feel you have identified a security problem on the Internet, you must notify the Director of Technology.

Do not allow anyone else to use your account and do not use another individual's account. Inappropriate attempts to access a server as an administrator will result in immediate cancellation of User privileges and/ or discipline.

Any User identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access to the Dodge County Schools Network.

## **Inappropriate Access**

Not all of the information freely available on the Internet is reliable or helpful. Students and employees must evaluate the source of the information, as well as the information itself, to determine its appropriateness and usefulness.

In addition to providing information, the Internet is capable of providing the means to communicate directly with others via "instant or private messaging" programs, video conferencing programs, and other means. Also, there are many places and software technologies that will allow for the free exchange of files between computers over the Internet, such as email. Not all of these methodologies are appropriate for an educational environment as outlined in this document.

Downloading or loading of software on Dodge County Schools' computers is prohibited. There is an enormous quantity and variety of free software available on the Internet. However, widespread downloading of such software on the School's computers has a cumulative negative effect, and can result in the substantial degradation of performance, additional maintenance time, and increased threat of virus infestation. All software purchases must be approved by the technology staff.

Students may not use school computers to access any Internet site or sites that contain information that is inappropriate for educational purposes or sites that teachers, staff or administration deem inappropriate for the instructional program. Examples of inappropriate information and/or content include, but is not limited to, the following:

Students may not access, upload, download, transmit, display or distribute:

- a.) offensive material – content that is in poor taste or could be considered obscene; abusive or sexually explicit language, racist, illegal, harassing or inflammatory.
- b.) distribute dangerous material – content that provides direction in the construction of explosives or similar devices or instruction or practices that could injure the students themselves or others.
- c.) inappropriate contacts – materials that can lead to contact with strangers who could potentially threaten the student’s health or safety.

If a student is uncertain as to whether or not a site’s material might be considered inappropriate, the student should consult his or her teacher or a member of the administrative staff for clarification.

## **Privacy**

School staff and administrators have access to student email for monitoring purposes. Students should have no expectation of privacy on the Google Apps for Education system.

Limited personal use - Students may use Google Apps for Education tools for personal projects but may not use them for:

- Unlawful activities.
- Inappropriate sexual or other offensive content.
- Threatening another person.
- Misrepresentation of Dodge County Schools, staff or students.

## **Safety**

Students will tell their teacher or other school employee about any message they receive that is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable.

Students are responsible for the use of their individual accounts and should take all reasonable precautions to prevent others from being able to use their accounts.

Under no conditions should a user provide his or her password to another person.

## **Access Restriction - Due Process**

Due to the rapidly changing technology environment, Dodge County Schools reserve the right to determine if an action not listed in this document is inappropriate, and the student may be subject to discipline.

## **Hardware**

Student Chromebooks/Devices are managed in order to allow for student use of systems only for educational purposes. Under no circumstances is a student to attempt to modify the existing

hardware configuration. Modification can be considered either opening the case or changing hardware or software settings. Students are responsible for any damage on their computers.

Dodge County Schools Information Technology offers a Guest Network for connection purposes.

## Contact

Each student and employee is responsible for all activity that occurs under his/her user account. Students and employees may not place information on the Internet that is inappropriate or unacceptable.

Students may not give out any personal information (e.g., address, phone number, user name, passwords, etc.) about themselves or about other people. Students may not use school computers for commercial purposes or political lobbying.

## Summary

This is a list of the more common things students, faculty and staff are specifically **NOT** permitted to do.

- Download any files, especially music and videos, from the Internet.
- Use any form of “instant or private messaging” software on student devices.
- Install any applications or software onto Dodge County Schools’ computers.
- Disable or modify any running tasks or services.
- Transfer and/or store music files from any personal devices to Dodge County Schools systems.
- Play games, unless directed to by an instructor or supervisor for educational purposes, at any time on Dodge County Schools computers, including Internet-based games.
- Use proxies or other means to bypass the content filtering systems in place and/or defeat any settings that prevent the access of material deemed and flagged as inappropriate by the blocking devices.
- Use remote accessing software or hardware to take control of any network attached device or workstation.
- Remove License decals or inventory control tags attached to the systems.
- Disrupt its use by other individuals by connecting to other Dodge County Schools networks to perform any illegal or inappropriate act, such as an attempt to gain unauthorized access to other systems on the network.
- Anyone who inadvertently accesses an inappropriate site must immediately leave the site and report it to his/her instructor or supervisor.
- Attempt to log onto the network as a system administrator.
- Any user identified as a security risk may be denied access to the network.

- Damage caused by the intentional misuse or vandalism of equipment will be charged to the person who committed the act.
- Any damage to the student Chromebook/or device is the responsibility of the user.

## **Consequences**

Use of school’s internet is a privilege. Failure to abide by the terms of this policy will result in the following disciplinary actions:

- Willful damage of computer hardware, computer software (including the deletion of programs and/or files) and computer networks will result in the student being responsible for the current repair and replacement cost of the damaged software and/or equipment. Any student violating the terms of this document will receive appropriate disciplinary action as defined by the school administrations.
- Students could lose computer/network privileges, and/or receive detention, suspension or expulsion.
- The Director of Technology or his/her designee may close an account at any time as required. The administration, faculty and staff of Dodge County Schools may make a request to the Director of Technology or his/her designee to deny, revoke or suspend specific user accounts based upon violations of this policy.

## **Improper Use and Content**

Users may not use the Dodge County Schools Network for purposes of harassment, intimidation or bullying of others.

Bullying is the repeated use of a written, verbal or electronic expression, physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at another student that:

- Causes physical or emotional harm to the student or damage to the student’s property;
- Places the student in reasonable fear of physical injury or of damage to property;
- Creates a hostile environment at school for the student;
- Infringes on the rights of the student at school; or,
- Materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.
- A hostile environment is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the student’s education.

Cyber-bullying involves an act of bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including but not limited to electronic mail, internet communications, or instant messages. Cyber-bullying also includes the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person; or, the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the

conditions described in the definition of bullying. Cyber-bullying also includes the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions described in the definition of bullying.

Dodge County Schools shall, in its sole discretion, determine whether such conduct violates this policy and any other policies of Dodge County Schools. Users must remember that material distributed through the Internet is public. On the Internet, there is no central authority, so each site is responsible for its own Users. Complaints received from other sites regarding any of our Users will be fully investigated, and disciplinary action may be taken as a result.

## **Social Networking Sites**

While Dodge County Schools respects the right of employees, students and families to use social media and networking sites, as well as personal websites and blogs, it is important that any such personal use of these sites does not damage Dodge County Schools' reputation, its employees, or its students or their families. Student use of social networking sites is prohibited on Dodge distributed technology devices. All users should exercise care in setting appropriate boundaries between their personal and public online behavior, understanding that what is private in the digital world often has the possibility of becoming public, even without their knowledge or consent.

Dodge County Schools strongly encourages all employees, students and families to carefully review the privacy settings on any social media and networking sites they use (such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Flickr, LinkedIn, etc.), and exercise care and good judgment when posting content and information on such sites. If an employee has a community that extends to persons who are parents, alums, or other members of the Dodge County Schools community, she/he must exercise good judgment about any content that is shared on the site.

Additionally, employees, students and families should adhere to the following guidelines, which are consistent with Dodge County Schools' community standards on harassment, student relationships, conduct, professional communication, and confidentiality:

- Users should not make statements that would violate any of Dodge County Schools' policies, including its policies concerning discrimination or harassment;
- Users must uphold Dodge County Schools' value of respect for the individual and avoid making defamatory or disparaging statements about the school, its employees, its students, or their families;
- Users may not disclose any confidential information of Dodge County Schools or confidential information obtained during the course of his/her employment, about any individuals or organizations, including students and/or their families.

Dodge County Schools has a strong interest in promoting a safe and supportive learning environment, as well as maintaining a positive reputation in the community. If the school

believes that an employee's activity on a social networking site, blog, or personal website may violate the school's policies or otherwise may have a detrimental impact on the learning environment, the school may request that the employee or student cease such activity. Depending on the severity of the incident, the employee or student may be subject to disciplinary action. Dodge County Schools reserves the right to impose discipline, up to dismissal or termination, for any behavior on or off campus that Dodge determines may impair or negatively impact the reputation of the school.

### **Theft and Vandalism**

Users must acknowledge the use of the intellectual property of others. Users must treat information found electronically in the same way as information found in printed sources. Rules against plagiarism will be enforced. It is the responsibility of each User to comply with the terms and condition for the acquisition and use of software found on the Internet. Dodge County Schools will not allow the copying or storing of illegally acquired software. In this case, vandalism refers to deliberate attempts to damage the hardware, software, or information residing on Dodge County Schools Network or any other computer system attached through the Internet. Attempts to violate the integrity of private accounts, files or programs; the deliberate infecting of a computer with a "virus," attempts at "hacking" computers using any method, or other such actions shall be a violation of this Policy.

### **"Netiquette"**

Users must abide by accepted rules of network etiquette, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Do not reveal personal information – your address or telephone number, or those of students or colleagues.
- Be polite. Do not be abusive in your messages to others. Use appropriate language and do not use vulgarities, or any other inappropriate language.
- Do not use the Dodge County Schools Network in such a way that would disrupt its use by others.

### **Waiver of Warranties; Limitation of Liability**

Dodge County Schools makes no warranties of any kind, whether express or implied, concerning this service. Dodge County Schools shall not be held responsible for any damages suffered, including the loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, missed deliveries, service interruptions, or errors and omissions. Dodge County Schools denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through this service. All terms and conditions as stated in this Policy are applicable to the use of computer resources at Dodge County Schools, in addition to internet use.

## **Preservation of Resources**

All resources are limited; computer resources are not an exception. Because space on disk drives and bandwidth across the lines, which connect Dodge County Schools Network both internally and externally, are limited, neither programs nor information may be stored on the system without the permission of the system administrator. Users are not to load software on any school computer. Each User is permitted reasonable space to store e-mail, Web, and personal files, as mandated by system file quotas. Dodge County Schools reserves the right to require the purging of files in order to regain disk space without warning. Users whose need for the resource is more pressing will have priority of space.

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION-TITLE IX**

### **NON-DISCRIMINATION-SECTION 504**

There will be no discrimination on the basis of sex, race, age, creed, color, or disability in the educational programs, activities or employment practices in this school system. The Superintendent or designee has been appointed as the school system Title IX & Section 504 Coordinator. The Title IX/Section 504 Coordinator shall be responsible for supervising the Dodge County Board of Education's efforts to comply with all aspects of the legislation regarding discrimination including Title IX of the Educational Amendments Act of 1972 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, for investigating both employee and student complaints and for establishing and monitoring grievance procedures that provide for prompt and equitable resolution of such complaints.

### **COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES**

Please see Dodge County Board of Education Policy GAE for details.

### **GRIEVANCES -- TITLE IX**

The following procedures shall be utilized by employees and students in filing Title IX complaints against the school district:

1. The employee or student shall submit a written statement describing the practice or action believed to be prohibited by the provisions of Title IX
2. Upon receipt of a written complaint, the superintendent shall investigate the allegation to determine if the district is in noncompliance with Title IX.



3. When violations are found to exist, the superintendent shall confer with the appropriate school personnel to determine the appropriate course of action to correct the situation.
4. Upon agreement and approval, the superintendent shall supervise the administration of the new procedures and communicate the response to the employee or student who initiated the complaint.
5. Should the complainant fail to agree with the decision, the complainant has the right to appeal to the Dodge County Board of Education. Should the Board of Education fail to agree, the complainant may appeal to the Office for Civil Rights, Department of Education, and Welfare.

Point of contact for Title IX Grievances is: Tonya Brown  
Title IX Coordinators  
720 College Street  
Eastman, GA 31023  
(478) 374-3783 Ext. 129  
Email: [tbrown@dodge.k12.ga.us](mailto:tbrown@dodge.k12.ga.us)

## **COMPLAINT PROCEDURES for Title I, Part A**

Dodge County Schools are committed to open communications between staff and parents at the county's Title I, Part A schools in order to reach the goal of educating all students. We are aware that disagreements may arise periodically. These disagreements need to be resolved in a timely manner. The following procedures have been developed to handle complaints dealing with Title I, Part A programs, services, and staff members. All Title I, Part A complaints are to be directed to the Title I Director as described below.

### **Filing a Complaint (person with complaint does the following)**

1. Gather all information related to the complaint.
2. Fill out the complaint form. Remember being as specific as possible will help us to resolve the issue.
3. Send the complaint form to the Title I office at the address listed on the form.

### **Response to Complaint (central office staff does the following)**

4. Investigate and prepare a response to the complaint.
5. Set an appointment with the originators of the complaint in order to resolve the complaint. The director of Title I usually arranges this meeting within five (5) working days after the receipt of the complaint.

### **Additional Steps (if required)**

6. If the complaint cannot be resolved by the Title I Director, a meeting will be set up with the superintendent, the Director of Title I, and the concerned parties.
7. The superintendent will work with the Title I Director to resolve the complaint.
8. If the issue is still unresolved, the Title I Director will contact the State Department of Education's Title I, Part A office for guidance.
9. Meetings with officials from the district may be scheduled in order to resolve the complaint.
10. If additional steps beyond the State Department of Education are required in the resolution of the complaint, these steps will occur in accordance with the federal *No Child Left Behind* legislation.

### **Contact for Complaints**

Dr. Denise Brown, Title I Director  
Dodge County Board of Education  
720 College Street  
Eastman, GA 31023  
Phone: (478) 374-3783  
Fax: (478) 374-6697  
Email: [dbrown@dodge.k12.ga.us](mailto:dbrown@dodge.k12.ga.us)

## REPORTING SUSPICION OF FRAUDULENT ACTIVITIES

To ensure the reporting of suspicion of fraudulent activity the Dodge County Board of Education ensure employees, clients, and providers confidential channels to report suspicious activities. *Fraud* is defined as a false representation of a matter of fact, whether by words or by conduct, or by concealment of that which should have been disclosed, that is used for the purpose of misappropriating property and/or monetary funds from federal grants.

Dodge County Board of Education thoroughly and expeditiously investigates any reported cases of suspected fraud to determine if disciplinary, financial recovery, and/or criminal action should be taken. All reports of suspect fraud must be handled under the strictest confidentiality. Only those directly involved in the investigation should be given information. Informants may remain anonymous but should be encouraged to cooperate with the investigators and should provide as much detail and evidence of alleged fraudulent act as possible.

Procedures and Responsibilities for reporting suspected fraudulent activity are:

1. Anyone suspecting fraud concerning federal programs should report their concerns to Mr. Mike Hilliard, Dodge County Superintendent at (478) 374-3783.
2. Any employee with the Dodge County Board of Education (temporary staff, full-time staff and contractors) who receives a report of suspected fraudulent activity must report this information within the next business day. You are to contact Internal Investigations by contacting Mr. Mike Hilliard, Superintendent at (478) 374-3783. Employees have the responsibility to report suspected fraud. All reports can be made in confidence.
3. The Dodge County Board of Education shall conduct investigations of employees, providers, contractors, or vendors.
4. If necessary you will be contacted for additional information.
5. Periodic communication through meetings should emphasize the responsibilities and channels to report suspected fraud.

## PUBLIC RELATIONS

The establishment of good will toward the schools is the mutual responsibility of every employee of the Dodge County Board of Education. Dodge County taxpayers support the schools and have a right to know what is being done. If they understand why certain things are done, they will help solve many problems. Every person should be generous in explaining the additional principles behind what he is doing. "Good teaching is good public relations." A majority of the public forms its judgment of schools from what it hears from the children attending them. The teacher's attitude toward children and their parents helps to determine the attitude of the stakeholders toward the schools and toward the teachers. Here are eight things everyone can do to help with public relations:

1. Be proud and loyal to the profession and its members; give criticisms only to those people who can improve faulty conditions.

2. Participate in the life of the community and its worthwhile organizations.
3. Use community people as resource persons in class.
4. Summarize the day's work with students just before they go home.
5. Make use of community resources to help educate students.
6. Become active in civic clubs, parents' groups, churches, and other organizations.
7. Speak positively about what is going on at school publicly and privately.
8. Become a member of a professional organization and participate in its events.

It can be said that part of a teacher's duty is to do a good job of teaching students, and the other part is to do a good job of letting people know what a good job he or she is doing.

The Dodge County Board of Education believes that "a school cannot lie apart from its community." Good community relations are dependent upon good public relations. Staff members can help by informing the local school principal of any ideas or suggestions for community relations, by telling of any unique or interesting programs going on in the district, and by remembering that public relations are a function of EACH person within the school system.

## **PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL WORKING CONDITIONS & LENGTH OF SCHOOL DAY**

The Dodge County Board of Education shall strive to provide safe and appropriate working conditions for the professional staff.

The minimum work day for teachers shall be eight (8) hours, and the minimum work week shall be forty (40) hours. The minimum work day shall entail the duties for which the teacher's base salary is paid, such as teaching and teacher preparation, staff meetings, conferences with students and parents, planning conferences, related school activities in the community, and extra-class responsibilities.

Personnel may be assigned additional duties requiring daily and calendar schedules exceeding the schedules for regular assignments. These assignments may include supervision of extracurricular activities, on-the-job training, counseling, bus duty, and activities which are essential for the school system's programs.

## **MINUTE OF REFLECTION**

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

Teachers and administrators shall not suggest or imply that students should or should not use the moment of reflection for prayer, nor shall they deny to any student the right to use it for a moment of quiet prayer. Students and/or staff may not under any circumstances use the moment of quiet reflection to audibly pray, singly or in unison.

## **PRE-PLANNING AND POST-PLANNING WEEKS**

A schedule of work is arranged for pre-planning days including, but not limited to in-service, county-wide teacher meetings, and meetings of building faculties and departmental groups. For post-planning, a schedule of work is arranged for completion of records, reports, inventories, requisition of supplies for next year, and evaluation of the year's work as well as meetings and/or professional development. The work on pre-planning and post-planning days is a part of your contract for the year's work, and all teachers are required to participate. Employees are not to bring their children to school during pre-planning, post-planning, or in-service days. Pre-planning, post-planning, and in-service days are the only times sales people approved by the Superintendent's Office are allowed to solicit.

## **ATTENDANCE AND RECORDS**

Daily reports of attendance are required. Teachers are expected to keep accurate records in the following areas:

1. Teacher personal record book
2. Attendance records
3. Textbook records
4. Permanent Records
5. F.T.E. accounting
6. Others as assigned by the school principal.

## **HANDLING OF STUDENT OR SCHOOL FUNDS**

Every teacher, from time to time, will have in his or her possession funds belonging to the children or school. These funds may be for the lunchroom, field trips, or consumable supplies.

Teachers should not leave such money in a desk drawer or in any place where theft or loss may occur.

These funds are the teacher's responsibility. For the teacher's protection, as well as good business practice, it is important that receipts be given for money collected. There is a state law requiring principals to keep detailed records of all monies collected and spent in the schools. Teachers are required to deliver to the principal all funds collected by them; a receipt will be given. All payment of bills will be made through the principal's office.

## **ADDITIONAL DUTIES**

Various additional duties are required in each school and will be assigned by the principal. Some of these duties include: early morning or late afternoon building duties, supervision of bus loading, restrooms, halls, drinking fountains, and lunchrooms.

Other responsibilities may relate to assembly programs, clubs, student activities, or for any other school need that may develop during the year.

## **REPORTING TO PARENTS**

Report cards for all students are sent home each nine weeks. The school should make every effort to keep parents and guardians informed about their children's progress in scholarship, attitudes, and behavior. Grades of students should never be discussed with or made available to anyone other than the student and the student's parents or guardians. Posting grades or allowing a student to see the teacher's grade book is not an approved policy of the Board of Education. Each teacher is responsible for the grading of all students' work and the recording of grades appropriately.

## **STUDENT DISCIPLINE/CORPORAL PUNISHMENT**

Students and parents expect every teacher to administer firm, impartial, and courteous discipline. Redirection is needed for students who violate expectations. Corporal punishment may be administered after exhausting all other means, but only by the principal or his/her designee. It should never be resorted to except in cases of direct disobedience or other gross misconduct. For additional information regarding corporal punishment, see Dodge County Local Board Policy Manual, JDA. Always be knowledgeable of your school's discipline policy.

## **STUDENT BEHAVIOR**

When a teacher identifies a student as a chronic disciplinary problem student, the principal shall notify the parents and invite them to observe the student in a classroom situation. At least one parent shall be invited to a conference to devise a disciplinary and behavioral intervention plan (BIP).

Parents must be invited to a conference to devise a behavioral plan before students suspended or expelled return to school. Failure of the parent to attend such conference does not preclude the student from being readmitted.

## **OFF-CAMPUS CONDUCT**

The Board has a responsibility to provide protection for students and employees and to provide and maintain a safe and orderly environment for education to take place. Therefore, it is the duty of the Board of Education to make necessary rules and policies to regulate student conduct for the purpose of maintaining good order and discipline in the schools.

Administrators are authorized to take disciplinary action for conduct which occurs: (1) on the school grounds at any time; (2) off the school grounds at a school activity, function or event; or (3) en route to and from school or a school activity.

Authority to take disciplinary action also extends to any off-campus non-school related actions by students, at any time of the year, which have a direct and immediate impact on school discipline, the educational function of the school, or the welfare of the student and staff. A student who has committed a criminal act while off campus is subject to disciplinary action and may be excluded from school. Such act could include, but would not be limited to, a felony or an offense which would be considered to be a felony if the student were an adult, or an assault upon another student, a violation of the drug laws or sexual misconduct of a serious nature. Such student whose presence on school property may endanger the welfare and/or safety of other students or staff, or whose presence may cause substantial disruption at school, would also be subject to other appropriate disciplinary action including but not limited to in-school suspension, and assignment to an alternative educational program or site may be made.

School officials shall contact the proper authorities to verify any and all allegations that a student has been arrested or charged. The Superintendent and staff shall cooperate with the probation office or courts in order to allow for that office to conduct a proper investigation. If the matter involves a juvenile, the Superintendent and staff shall cooperate with the Juvenile Court concerning the student's conduct and record in school.

Any suspension, expulsion, or exclusion from enrollment under this policy shall be handled in accordance with due process as set out in Board policy relating to suspension or expulsion.

## **CARE OF CLASSROOM**

It should be remembered that children respond to attractive surroundings, and an effort should be made by teachers to keep classrooms clean and attractive. The custodian(s) assigned to the building will do most of the work; however, much can be done by the teacher and students by keeping paper off of the floor and giving proper care to window shades, walls, desks, and other equipment in the room. Teaching children to be neat and to have proper respect for public property is one of the duties of the teacher.

## **FIELD TRIPS AND EXCURSIONS**

Teachers need to be aware of the processes and procedures for field trips and excursions prior to requesting permission to take a group on a field trip.

1. A request for an educational field trip involving the use of any carrier shall originate with the teacher and shall be submitted for approval to the local school principal on the field trip request form. If this form is approved by the local school principal, the form should be submitted for approval to the Superintendent. This information will then be forwarded to the person responsible for scheduling trips at the Transportation Department. Any field trip which involves overnight travel by students must be approved by the Superintendent. Field trips which involve only walking excursions of students from the school campus to a community location require the approval of the local school principal only. All excursions and/or field trips require parent letters and standard release forms for student participation.
2. Requests must be received in the central office fifteen (15) school days prior to the date of the trip. Requests must be forwarded to the transportation department ten (10) days prior to the date of the trip. Athletic directors or coaches are requested to submit schedules of upcoming sports activities whenever possible.
3. A change of destination of an approved field trip will require new approval. A new form should be submitted and the previously requested field trip canceled in the appropriate manner (3 days prior to the scheduled date).
4. Only students who are regularly enrolled in school and who are involved in instructional activity will be eligible for transportation. Chaperones are not to bring preschool children with them.
5. Teachers and/or adults approved by the principal will be permitted to accompany transported groups for supervisory purposes.
6. It shall be the responsibility of the local school principal and teacher in charge of field trips to secure written parent/guardian permission for every student involved in a field trip. In cases involving a series of field trips related to one particular area of study or activity, a blanket permission form may be obtained, provided that parents are made



aware of all field trips to be included in the series.

7. Rules relative to pupil safety and behavior will be adhered to with the students. The bus driver will review the rules and regulations that the student riders are to obey.
8. Requests, authorizations, and other approved forms will be furnished to all schools by the Transportation Department.
9. January 12, 2012 is the last day to request 2012 field trips. Grades and/or grade teams are limited to one in-county and one out-of-county field trip. Length of out-of-county field trips is limited to a 75-mile radius for grades K – 5 and 170 mile radius for grades 6 – 12. This does not include competition.
10. The expense of the fuel and bus driver for all non-competition field trips must be covered by the participants or sponsors acquired by the participants. The Transportation Department will provide a cost estimate upon request.
11. Field trip policies are established annually by the Board of Education based on availability of funds.
12. In all cases, appropriate chaperones shall be provided and approved by the principal.
13. In the event of cancellation of a field trip, notification must be given at least three (3) days prior to the scheduled date.
14. Additional requirements/regulations pertaining to field trips can be obtained from the school principals.

## **SOLICITING FUNDS**

School children in the Dodge County School System are not permitted to solicit any subscriptions or sell any article or articles without approval of the Board of Education.

The Board of Education makes the following exceptions to the general rule in the last paragraph:

1. The sale of advertisements in the school annuals, after school hours only.
2. The sale of advertisements for printed programs of special events such as concerts, plays, etc. Sales should be done outside class hours only.

Each school shall submit in writing to the Board of Education any proposed project that it or any organization within it would like to have approved at least fourteen (14) days prior to the first annual board meeting upon which the request is to be considered. Each organization is limited to one fundraiser per year.

## **GRADING**

A student's grade will not be lowered as a means of punishment except as follows:

1. Students giving or receiving assistance during an exam period will be sufficient grounds for some appropriate reduction on the grade for that particular exam.
2. Disturbance during a class may result in a student's removal from the class. The student must make up work missed during his absence at the convenience of the teacher. If the work is not made up, the student will receive a zero for the work missed.

## **DODGE COUNTY SCHOOL POLICIES**

The Dodge County Board of Education Policy Manual contains rules and guidelines that relate to all aspects of school operation. As policies are changed or new policies added, copies are forwarded to schools for placement in the manuals. One is kept in the principal's office and one is kept at the Board of Education Office. Teachers are encouraged to study policies and to be aware of all implications or changes of policy. When such seems needed, it is suggested that the principal or immediate supervisor be informed.

Dodge County Board of Education Policies are also available through eBoard on the district website ([www.dodge.k12.ga.us](http://www.dodge.k12.ga.us)).

## **ELIGIBILITY FOR EMPLOYMENT**

The Illegal Immigration Reform and Enforcement Act of 2011 is a state law which became effective July 1, 2011.

Each individual employee is responsible for the correct implementation of this law. The I-9 form is the official document for use in this program.

This form must be completed within the first three work days and is retained on file in the central office.

## **CONTRACT PAY PERIODS**

A twelve-month contract work year begins July 1 and ends June 30 of the succeeding year. The first pay period will be at the end of July and the last pay period will be at the end of June of the succeeding year.

A 210 day contract work year begins approximately August 1 and ends approximately June 30 of the succeeding year. The first pay period will be at the end of August and the last pay period

will be at the end of July of the succeeding year.

An 190 day contract work year (typical teacher contract) begins with the first day of pre-planning for teachers and ends 190 work days later. The length of the teacher work year is subject to change based on receipt of funds from the state. The first pay period is at the end of September and the last pay period is at the end of August of the succeeding year. Employees moving from one contract type to another will experience either the receipt of an additional check(s) (as moving from a 190 day to a 210 day contract) or a month when no check will be received (as moving from a 210 day to a 190 day contract). Employees are advised to plan appropriately when these changes occur, especially the latter type change.

Contracts may be issued for 190, 200, 210, 220, or 230 workdays or for twelve months dependent upon the assignment.

## **CONTRACT PAY STEP**

All Dodge County Board of Education teacher contracts reflect the current pay step as shown on the state salary schedule. Experience is often used to determine the correct placement on the current schedule. Actual years of experience may or may not correspond with placement on the salary schedule. Placement on the local supplement schedule is determined by degree level (See p. 33). One hundred twenty days or more equals one year as relates to movement on the salary schedule.

## **DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE**

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

An administrator who reasonably suspects that an employee reported to work under the influence of drugs/alcohol or that an employee suffered a work-related injury as a result of the use of drugs/alcohol shall request that the employee take a drug/alcohol test. Refusal to take such a drug/alcohol test shall be viewed as a positive drug/alcohol test and may result in disciplinary actions up to and including termination of employment. Refusal to take a drug/alcohol test may also result in the denial of benefits, including but not limited to, workers' compensation benefits.

Entities contracting with the Board shall, as a condition of the contract, assure a drug and alcohol-free workplace. For contracts, a drug and alcohol-free workplace means a geographic location at which individuals are directly engaged in the performance of work pursuant to a contract with the Board.

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

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

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

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

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

No certified employee or employee with a contract for a definite term shall be subject to suspension or termination pursuant to this policy except in compliance with the provisions of the Fair Dismissal Act of Georgia, Official Code of Georgia Annotated §§ 20-2-940 through 947. This policy is not intended and shall not be interpreted as prohibiting the school system from taking appropriate disciplinary action against any employee where there exists evidence that an employee uses, distributes or sells illegal drugs even though the employee has not been convicted of any criminal offense or where there exists evidence that an employee is under the influence of alcohol while on duty, except that the school system may not use the statement of any employee to the Superintendent requesting treatment as described in this policy.

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

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

## **100% Tobacco-Free School District Policy**

The Dodge County School Board of Education recognizes that the use of tobacco products is a health, safety, and environmental hazard for students, employees, visitors, and school facilities. The Board acknowledges that adult employees and visitors serve as role models for students and that the Board's acceptance of any use of tobacco products implies school approval, if not endorsement, of such use. In addition, the Board recognizes that it has an obligation to promote positive role models in schools and promote a healthy learning and working environment, free from unwanted smoke, for the students, employees, and visitors to the school campus. Finally, the board recognizes that it has a legal authority and obligation pursuant to the Georgia Smoke-free Air Act of 2005 (O.C.G.A. § 31-12A-1 et seq.), the federal Pro-Children's Act (Title X of Public Law 103-227), the Georgia Youth Access Law ( O.C.G.A. § 16.12.171) and the No Child Left Behind Act.

### **Tobacco Use Prohibited**

No student, staff member or school visitor is permitted to use any tobacco product at any time, including non-school hours 24 hours per day, seven days per week:

- In any building, facility, or vehicle owned, leased, rented or chartered by the Dodge County Schools.
- On any school grounds and property – including athletic fields and parking lots – owned leased, rented or chartered by Dodge County Schools; or
- At any school-sponsored or school-related event on-campus or off-campus.

In addition, no student is permitted to possess a tobacco product. The policy may permit tobacco products to be included in instructional or research activities in public school buildings if the activity is conducted or supervised by the faculty member overseeing the instruction or research and the activity does not include smoking, chewing, or otherwise ingesting the tobacco product.

### **Tobacco Products and Tobacco Use**

Tobacco products are defined to include cigarettes, candy cigarettes, chewing tobacco, blunts, blunt wraps, pre wrapped blunt cones and tubes, cigars, cigarillos, bidis, pipes, cigarette packages or smokeless tobacco containers, lighters, ash trays, key chains, t-shirts, coffee mugs, and any other items containing or reasonably resembling tobacco or tobacco products. Tobacco use includes smoking, chewing, dipping, or any other use of tobacco products.

### **School Grounds and Property**

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

### **Time of Day**

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

### **Signage**

Signs declaring all school grounds and property as tobacco-free will be posted in all school buildings and vehicles. Signs will be posted at all vehicular entrances to school grounds and building entrances, and in all indoor and outdoor athletic facilities.

### **Enforcement for Students**

Consequences for students engaging in the prohibited behavior will be provided in accordance with the school’s student code of conduct. Students who violate the school districts tobacco use policy will be referred to the guidance counselor, school nurse, or other health or counseling services for all offenses for screening, information, counseling and referral. All student violators will have access to an Alternative to Suspension (ATS) program. The ATS program will provide up-to-date information on the many consequences of tobacco use, offer techniques that students can use to stop tobacco use at school, and provide referrals to local youth tobacco cessation programs. Parents/guardians will be notified of all violations and actions taken by the school. School may also use community service as part of the consequences. Suspension will only be used after a student has several prior violations or refused to participate in other outlined measures.

### **Enforcement for Staff and Visitors**

Consequences for employees who violate the tobacco use policy will be in accordance with

personnel policies and may include verbal warning, written reprimand, or termination. Visitors using tobacco products will be asked to refrain while on school property or leave the premises. If they refuse, law enforcement officers will be contacted to escort the person off the premises or cite the person for trespassing in case the person refuses to leave the school property. In the case of a violation within the building of a school, the person is in violation of the Georgia Smoke free Air Act of 2005 and the federal Pro-Children's Act (Title X of Public Law 103-227) and subject to a fine. Signage will be prominently posted in all visitors' areas and school staff and officials will communicate policy to visitors upon arrival and infractions.

### **Enforcement at Outdoor School Sponsored Events on Campus Grounds**

All outdoor school sponsored events on campus (ex. athletic events, meetings or functions by community groups renting school property) must be tobacco free. This policy must be clearly stated in all contracts, correspondence and verbal and written announcements to all attendees and contractors.

### **Enforcement at School Sponsored Events Off Campus**

All indoor and outdoor school sponsored events off campus in venues (ex: rented arenas, stadiums, halls, theaters) must be tobacco free. This policy must be clearly stated in all contracts, correspondence and verbal and written announcements to all attendees and contractors.

### **Opportunities for Cessation**

The administration will identify and offer programs and services for students who are ready to quit tobacco use. The administration will identify and offer programs and services for school staff who use tobacco products to support them in complying with the policy that prohibits tobacco use on school grounds and during school-related events and assisting those staff who are ready to quit smoking or other tobacco use.

### **Prevention Education**

The administration will identify programs or opportunities for students (inside and or outside of the classroom) to gain a greater understanding of the health hazards of tobacco use and the impact of tobacco use as it relates to providing a safe, orderly, clean and inviting school environment.

### **Procedures for Implementation**

The policy will become effective on January 1, 2011 or upon adoption by the Board. The administration will develop a plan for communicating the policy that will include information in student and employee handbooks, announcements at school-sponsored or school-related events, and appropriate signage (as mentioned above) in buildings and around campus. Other methods will be identified for notifying students, employees and parents about this policy. An enforcement plan, which identifies consequences for students, staff and visitors who violate the policy, will be created and communicated to all students, staff and parents.

### **Model Enforcement Policy**

Enforcement for students:



1st Offense: Tobacco education/alternative to suspension course or a one-day suspension; parent notification

2nd Offense: Tobacco education/Alternative To Suspension course is mandatory; parent notification

3rd Offense: Three-day suspension; parent notification

4th Offense: Administrator's discretion

Enforcement for staff: Should follow the school's personnel regulations as with any other personnel policy.

Enforcement policies for visitors: Communicate, Communicate, And Communicate!

## **DRUG-FREE SCHOOLS POLICY COMPLIANCE**

Information for you to know:

- \* The use of illicit drugs and the unlawful possession and use of alcohol is wrong and harmful.
- \* Disciplinary sanctions, up to and including expulsion and referral for prosecution, will be imposed if the standards of conduct are violated. The sanctions to be imposed for violations may include conferences, suspension, and expulsion.
- \* Information concerning drug and alcohol counseling, rehabilitation, and re-entry programs can be obtained from the school counselor or administrative staff.
- \* Compliance with the standards of conduct is mandatory.
- \* Parents or students wishing to receive or review the entire board policy on student or employee drug use and/or possession may receive a copy of this policy upon request.
- \* The sharing of prescription medication is unlawful.

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

It is the policy of the Dodge County School District that racial, sexual, or other forms of harassment or discrimination are strictly forbidden. Any student or employee who believes he or she has been subjected to harassment or discrimination by other students or employees of the school district based upon his or her race, color, religion, national origin, age, or sex should promptly report the same to the principal of this school or the appropriate coordinator, who will



implement the board's discriminatory complaints or harassment procedures. Students may also report harassment or discrimination to their school counselor. Students and employees shall not be subjected to retaliation for reporting such harassment or discrimination.

## **DESCRIPTION OF BENEFITS**

### **GENERAL INFORMATION FOR NEW EMPLOYEES**

**Below is a brief description of benefits provided by the Dodge County Board of Education. Information on each of these plans is included in this package. Please read over all the information carefully.**

**Cafeteria Benefit Plan (Section 125)** - Effective July 1, 2000, the Dodge County School system updated their Cafeteria Plan. Deductions included are health, dental, cancer, intensive care, accident, hospital indemnity, and vision.

**Teacher Retirement System** - Teacher's Retirement is a required deduction all employees employed one-half time or more. Covered positions are teachers, administrators, supervisors, clerk, paraprofessionals and secretaries. All members contribute 6.00% of their gross salary to the system. The employer contribution rate is 12.28%. As of July 1, 1989, payroll deductions are federal and state tax exempt.

**Public School Employees Retirement System** - Public Retirement is a supplemental retirement plan provided for bus drivers, maintenance workers, custodians and food service workers. Each member contributes \$10.00 per month (September - May).

**State Health Benefit Plan** – Employees may be eligible for health insurance benefits offered through Georgia State Health Benefit Plan (SHBP). Options and eligibility requirements may be obtained at <http://dch.georgia.gov/documents/summary-plan-description>

**American Family Life** - Group rates on intensive care, life, cancer, hospital indemnity and/or accident insurance. These deductions are under the Cafeteria Plan.

**Guardian Life** - Employer paid Dental, Vision and Group Life, Short Term and/or Long Term Disability. Employees may also insure their dependents and pay through payroll deduction.

**Unum Provident Life Assurance Company** - Group rates for Term and Whole Life insurance.

**Liberty National Life Insurance Company** - All employees are eligible for group rates in life, cancer, and/or intensive care insurance. These deductions are not under our cafeteria plan.

**Mass Mutual** - Tax sheltered Annuities are available to supplement your retirement (fixed and variable accounts) and additional life insurance coverage is available for you and your dependents that can be carried with you when your employment is terminated.

**Valic** - Tax-deferred retirement plan options, ranging from IRA's to a wide array of fixed-account and variable-account investment options.

**LSW** – Same as Valic

**Mid South Federal Credit Union**

**United 1st Federal Credit Union**

**Worker's Compensation Insurance** - The Board of Education is required to provide this insurance for all school employees. An employee must report immediately to their supervisor any accident that occurs while the employee is on duty.

**PAGE and GAE/DAE** - Dues for these organizations are payroll deductible.

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- \*\*Representative for AFLAC/Guardian/Pacific Life/Unum/Mass Mutual - Larry or Shane Hadden (478) 685-6310
  - \*\*Representative for Liberty National - Frankie Daniell (478) 423-4391
  - \*\*Representative for VALIC – John Lamberth 800-448-2542 Ext. 87316
  - \*\*Representative for Valu-Teachers – Gary Johnson (888) 277-8311

### 2017 – 2018 Calendar

		Jul-17							Aug-17								
		S	M	T	W	Th	F	S	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S		
		2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	7-10	Pre-Planning
		9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	11	1st day of school
		16	17	18	19	20	21	22	20	21	22	23	24	25	26		
		23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30	31				
		30	31														
4	Labor Day						1	2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	6	Teacher Planning
		3	4	5	6	7	8	9	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	9	Columbus Day
		10	11	12	13	14	15	16	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	17	End of 1st 9 weeks
		17	18	19	20	21	22	23	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	26	Report Cards
		24	25	26	27	28	29	30	29	30	31					26	Parent Conference 4:00 - 6:00
																27	Early Dismissal
10	Veterans Day				1	2	3	4								15	Early Dismissal
		5	6	7	8	9	10	11	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	18-1	Christmas Holidays
20-24	Thanksgiving	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	10	11	12	13	14	15	16		
		19	20	21	22	23	24	25	17	18	19	20	21	22	23		
2	Teacher Planning																
12	End of 1st Semester																
15	MLK Holiday		1	2	3	4	5	6					1	2	3		
		7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
25	Report Cards	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	16	Teacher Planning
25	Parent Conference 4:00 - 6:00	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	19	President's Day
26	Early Dismissal	28	29	30	31				25	26	27	28					
9	Teacher Planning																
22	End of 3rd 9 weeks																
29	Report Cards																
29	Parent Conference 4:00 - 6:00																
30	Early Dismissal																

School Day	Professional Learning Day	Holiday	End of Quarter/ Semester	Report Cards	Early Dismissal for Students & Teachers	Parent Conferences
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