



Hertford County Public Schools

Employee Handbook

2023-2024

Dr. Jesse Pratt
Superintendent

701 North Martin Street · P.O. Box 158 · Winton, North Carolina 27986
Phone (252)358-1761 · FAX (252) 358-4745



Welcome, Hertford County Public Schools Family!

With great pleasure and excitement, I welcome you to our school district. As we embark on this journey together, I want to express my appreciation for your commitment to shaping young minds and creating a positive learning environment.

At Hertford County Public Schools, we aim to provide a safe and caring environment that empowers and graduates globally competitive students through diverse opportunities. Each one of you plays a vital role in achieving this mission. Your dedication, expertise, and passion are the cornerstone of our school's success.

This employee handbook serves as a guide to our collective values, policies, and expectations. It outlines the principles that will guide us in maintaining a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment for students and staff members. Please familiarize yourself with its contents, reflecting our shared commitment to professionalism, collaboration, and continuous improvement.

As members of the Hertford County family, let us work together to create an atmosphere where everyone feels valued, respected, and empowered. Our collective efforts will shape the experiences of our students and leave a lasting impact on their lives.

Thank you for being an integral part of the educational journey of all the students of Hertford County. Here is to a year filled with growth, success, and meaningful connections.

Warm regards,

Dr. Jesse J. Pratt
Superintendent
Hertford County Public Schools



This Employee Handbook is made available electronically to all employees of Hertford County Public Schools to provide information and notification about laws and policies affecting their employment. As outlined in Board Policy 7300, Staff Responsibilities, include but are not limited to, being familiar with and complying with all Board policies.

Many items contain a reference to Board of Education policy, North Carolina General Statute, or the [Employee Salary and Benefits Manual](#). [The Hertford County Public Schools Board of Education Policies](#) may be found on the district website under the District tab. Click on the School Board tab and select Policies labeled School Board.

Questions regarding the information contained in this handbook should be addressed to the Hertford County Public Schools Human Resources Department.

Hertford County Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex or disability.

DISCLAIMER

Information provided in the Hertford County Public Schools Employee Information Handbook is subject to change based upon the North Carolina General Assembly, State Board of Education, and Hertford County Public Schools Board of Education policies, laws, and amendments enacted during the current session and school year. Those changes will supersede the information currently in the Employee Information Handbook.

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Hertford County Public Schools

HCPS, serving as a cornerstone of our community, will prepare graduates who are ready to meet the global challenges of education, career, and life.

SCHOOL BOARD

Sheila J. Porter, Chair
Eddie Hall, Vice-Chair
Dennis M. Deloatch
David Shields
Wendell Hall

Dr. Jesse J. Pratt, Superintendent



INTRODUCTION TO THE HCPS EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

The Employee Handbook is designed to provide information and address questions regarding required Board of Education policies and procedures so that all Hertford County Public School employees are able to perform his or her job more effectively. Each employee shall take time to review the Employee Handbook and acknowledge, in writing, his or her familiarity with its contents.

The Employee Handbook is located under the Employees Resources section of the website. It is important to note that the handbook is both selective and general of school system policies and procedures. In accordance with Board Policy, each employee is responsible for knowing and complying with the policies of the Hertford County Board of Education. Board Policies and Regulations are available to employees on the web page at <http://www.hertford.k12.nc.us> Nothing in this handbook is intended to create or imply any contract rights. It is our policy to comply with the benefits and employment policies promulgated by the State Board of Education and the Department of Public Instruction in the most current edition of the North Carolina Public Schools Benefits and Employment Policy Manual. As supplemented by local board policy, you will find these policies in their most current version:

<https://www.dpi.nc.gov/documents/district-humanresources/benefits-and-employment-policy-manual/open>



BELIEFS

We Believe...

All students can learn when given a safe, supportive, and caring environment that develops character.

The success of our students depends on the commitment to high quality standards, expectations, performance, and continuous improvement.

Communication and collaboration are essential for developing literacy, enhanced student use of technology, and effective delivery of instruction.

Students will develop essential knowledge, apply their learning, and utilize technology as a tool to become career and college ready for an ever-changing global society.

Partnerships with parents, community, and institutions of higher education are vital to the success of our students.

VISION

Hertford County Public Schools, serving as a cornerstone of our community, will prepare graduates who are ready to meet the global challenges of education, career, and life.

MISSION

Hertford County Public Schools, the choice for all families, provides a safe and caring environment, which empowers and graduates globally competitive students through diverse opportunities.

MOTTO

TEACHING CHILDREN ~ TOUCHING THE FUTURE

“All In For Learning”

School Directory

Elementary Schools

BEARFIELD PRIMARY 145 Hertford County High Rd Ahoskie, NC 27910 (O) 252/209-6140 (F) 252/209-6148 Julie Shields Principal Cynthia Riddick Asst. Principal Judy Mizelle Administrative Assistant Andrea Gatling Administrative Assistant	AHOSKIE ELEMENTARY 200 N. Talmadge Avenue Ahoskie, NC 27910 (O) 252/332-2588 (F) 252/332-2017 Elenia Riddick Principal Dee Dee Beverly Asst. Principal Lorena Simons Administrative Assistant	RIVERVIEW ELEMENTARY 236 U 158 Business Murfreesboro, NC 27855 (O) 252/398-4862 (F) 252/398-3600 Deborah Brown Principal Lucille Anthony Asst. Principal Deborah Parker Administrative Assistant
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Middle School

HERTFORD COUNTY MIDDLE 1850 HWY 11 NORTH Murfreesboro, NC 27855 (O) 252/398-4091 (F) 252/398-5570	Terrell Deloatch, Principal Beshelya Smith, Assistant Principal OPEN , Assistant Principal Connie Holloway, Admin. Assistant
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High Schools

EARLY COLLEGE HIGH 109 Community College Rd. Ahoskie, NC 27910 (O) 252/332-7788 (F) 252/332-5289 Lyndsay Britt Principal Judy Boone Administrative Assistant	HERTFORD COUNTY HIGH 1500 W. First Street Ahoskie, NC 27910 (O) 252/332-4096 (F) 252/332-1689 Wesley Dudley, Principal Larry Murray, Assistant Principal Patrice Watford, Assistant Principal Jeffrey Wilson, Assistant Principal Carol Whitt Administrative Assistant	C.S. BROWN HIGH (STEM PROGRAM) 102 CS Brown Drive Winton, NC 27986 (O) 252/358-2852 (F) 252/358-0121 Ronica Watford Principal VACANT Administrative Assistant
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Central Office Directory

Name	Title	Ext
Dr. Jesse Pratt	Superintendent	18420
Chanel Sidbury	Assistant Superintendent	18422
Dr. Jacqueline Perry-Higgs	Chief Human Resource Officer	18485
Nicole Balance	Student Information Coordinator	18432
Christopher Beneck	Director of Technology	18424
Vacant	Director of Student Services	
Rita Boone	Accounting Technician	18426
Sabria Britt	Admin Asst. to Assistant Superintendent	18532
Ernest Cooley	Director of Secondary Curriculum & CTE/Safety	18434
Alexandria Evans	Director of Federal Programs	18437
Tonya Freeman	Chief Public Information Officer	18548
Crystal Hoggard	Accounting Technician, Accounts Payable	18483
Stacey Hoggard	Payroll Technician	18481
Judith Hoggard	Director of Child Nutrition	18486
Erica Holley	Administrative Assistant to Human Resources	18484
Woodson Hunter	Facilities Supervisor	18541
Dedria Manley	Transportation Coordinator	18545
Lori Merritt	Interim Director of Finance	18482
Natasha Norman	Director of Human Resources	18495
Brenda Pate	Director of Curriculum & Instruction	18493
Carla Pesce	Beginning Teacher Coordinator	C.S. Brown
Lillian Pugh	Accounting Technician	18431
Kimberly Quinn	Director of Transportation	18546

Denise Trotter	Administrative Assistant	18546
Leah Weaver	Executive Asst. to Superintendent/BOE	18420
Jorgette Williams	Director of Exceptional Children	18532
Vacant	Director of Student Services	18480
Vacant	Annex	18443
Robin Knight	Receptionist	11761

Annex Conference Room	18427 / 358-8427
Boardroom	18425/358-8425
Technology	18530/358-8530
Transportation	(252) 358-8111

CODE OF ETHICS FOR NORTH CAROLINA EDUCATORS

Preamble: The purpose of this Code of Ethics is to define standards of professional conduct.

The responsibility to teach and the freedom to learn, and the guarantee of equal opportunity for all are essential to the achievement of these principles. The professional educator acknowledges the worth and dignity of every person and demonstrates the pursuit of truth and devotion to excellence, acquires knowledge, and nurtures democratic citizenship. The educator exemplifies a commitment to the teaching and learning processes with accountability to the students, maintains professional growth, exercises professional judgment, and personifies integrity. The educator strives to maintain the respect and confidence of colleagues, students, parents and legal guardians, and the community, and to serve as an appropriate role model.

To uphold these commitments, the educator:

I. Commitment to the Student.

- A. Protects students from conditions within the educator's control that circumvent learning or are detrimental to the health and safety of students.
- A. Maintains an appropriate relationship with students in all settings; does not encourage, solicit, or engage in a sexual or romantic relationship with students, nor touch a student in an inappropriate way for personal gratification, with intent to harm, or out of anger.
- B. Evaluates students and assigns grades based upon the students' demonstrated competencies and performance.
- C. Disciplines students justly and fairly and does not deliberately embarrass or humiliate them.
- D. Holds in confidence information learned in professional practice except for professional reasons or in compliance with pertinent regulations or statutes.
- E. Refuses to accept significant gifts, favors, or additional compensation that might influence or appear to influence professional decisions or actions.

II. Commitment to the School and School System

- A. Utilizes available resources to provide a classroom climate conducive to learning and to promote learning to the maximum possible extent.
- A. Acknowledges the diverse views of students, parents and legal guardians, and colleagues as they work collaboratively to shape educational goals, policies, and decisions; does not proselytize for personal viewpoints that are outside the scope of professional practice.
- B. Signs a contract in good faith and does not abandon contracted professional duties without a substantive reason.

- D. Participates actively in professional decision-making processes and supports the expression of professional opinions and judgments by colleagues in decision-making processes or due process proceedings.
- E. When acting in an administrative capacity:
 - 1. Acts fairly, consistently, and prudently in the exercise of authority with colleagues, subordinates, students, and parents and legal guardians.
 - 2. Evaluates the work of other educators using appropriate procedures and established statutes and regulations.
 - 3. Protects the rights of others in the educational setting, and does not retaliate, coerce, or intentionally intimidate others in the exercise of rights protected by law.
 - 4. Recommend persons for employment, promotion, or transfer according to their professional qualifications, the needs and policies of the LEA, and according to the law.

III. Commitment to the Profession

- A. Provides accurate credentials and information regarding licensure or employment and does not knowingly assist others in providing untruthful information.
- A. Takes action to remedy an observed violation of the Code of Ethics for North Carolina Educators and promotes understanding of the principles of professional ethics.
- B. Pursues growth and development in the practice of the profession and uses that knowledge in improving the educational opportunities, experiences, and performance of students and colleagues.

Adopted by the State Board of Education June 5, 1997.

SECTION .0600 - CODE OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE AND CONDUCT FOR NORTH CAROLINA EDUCATORS

16 NCAC 6C.0601 – THE PURPOSE AND APPLICABILITY OF THE RULES OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT FOR EDUCATORS

The purpose of these rules is to establish and uphold uniform standards of professional conduct for licensed professional educators throughout the State. These rules shall be binding on every person licensed by the SBE, hereinafter referred to as "educator" or "professional educator," and the possible consequences of any willful breach shall include license suspension or revocation. The prohibition of certain conduct in these rules shall not be interpreted as approval of conduct not specifically cited.

History Note: Authority G.S. 115C-295.3;

Eff. April 1, 1998.

16 NCAC 6C.0602 – THE STANDARDS OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT FOR NC EDUCATORS

a. The standards listed in this Section shall be generally accepted for the education profession and shall be the basis for State Board review of performance of professional educators. These standards shall establish mandatory prohibitions and requirements for educators. Violation of these standards shall subject an educator to investigation and disciplinary action by the SBE or LEA

a. Professional educators shall adhere to the standards of professional conduct contained in this Rule. Any intentional act or omission that violates these standards is prohibited.

1. Generally recognized professional standards. The educator shall practice the professional standards of federal, state, and local governing bodies.
2. Personal conduct. The educator shall serve as a positive role model for students, parents, and the community. Because the educator is entrusted with the care and education of small children and adolescents, the educator shall demonstrate a high standard of personal character and conduct.
3. Honesty. The educator shall not engage in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation in the performance of professional duties including the following:
 1. statement of professional qualifications;
 2. application or recommendation for professional employment, promotion, or licensure;
 3. application or recommendation for college or university admission, scholarship, grant, academic award, or similar benefit;
 4. representation of completion of college or staff development credit;
 5. evaluation or grading of students or personnel;
 6. submission of financial or program compliance reports submitted to state, federal, or other governmental agencies;
 7. submission of information in the course of an official inquiry by the employing LEA or the SBE related to facts of unprofessional conduct, provided, however, that an educator shall be given adequate notice of the allegations and may be represented by legal counsel; and
 8. submission of information in the course of an investigation by a law enforcement agency, child protective services, or any other agency with the right to investigate, regarding school-related criminal activity; provided, however, that an educator shall be entitled to decline to give evidence to law enforcement if such evidence may tend to incriminate the educator as that term is defined by the Fifth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

2. Proper remunerative conduct. The educator shall not solicit current students or parents of students to purchase equipment, supplies, or services from the educator in a private remunerative capacity. An educator shall not tutor for remuneration students currently assigned to the educator's classes, unless approved by the local superintendent. An educator shall not accept any compensation, benefit, or thing of value other than the educator's regular compensation for the performance of any service that the educator is required to render in the course and scope of the educator's employment. This Rule shall not restrict performance of any overtime or supplemental services at the request of the LEA; nor shall it apply to or restrict the acceptance of gifts or tokens of minimal value offered and accepted openly from students, parents, or other persons in recognition or appreciation of service.
3. Conduct with students. The educator shall treat all students with respect. The educator shall not commit any abusive act or sexual exploitation with, to, or in the presence of a student, whether or not that student is or has been under the care or supervision of that educator, as defined below:
 - A. any use of language that is considered profane, vulgar, or demeaning
 - B. any sexual act;
 - C. any solicitation of a sexual act, whether written, verbal, or physical;
 - D. any act of child abuse, as defined by law;
 - E. any act of sexual harassment, as defined by law; and
 - F. any intentional solicitation, encouragement, or consummation of a romantic or physical relationship with a student, or any sexual contact with a student. The term "romantic relationship" shall include dating any student.
1. Confidential information. The educator shall keep in confidence personally identifiable information regarding students or their family members that has been obtained in the course of professional service, unless disclosure is required or permitted by law or professional standards, or is necessary for the personal safety of the student or others.
2. Rights of others. The educator shall not willfully or maliciously violate the constitutional or civil rights of a student, parent/legal guardian, or colleague.
3. Required reports. The educator shall make all reports required by Chapter 115C of the North Carolina General Statutes.
4. Alcohol or controlled substance abuse. The educator shall not:
 - a) be under the influence of, possess, use, or consume on school premises or at a school-sponsored activity a controlled substance as defined by N.C. Gen. Stat. § 90-95, the Controlled Substances Act, without a prescription authorizing such use;

- i. be under the influence of, possess, use, or consume an alcoholic beverage or a controlled substance on school premises or at a school-sponsored activity involving students; or
 - ii. furnish alcohol or a controlled substance to any student except as indicated in the professional duties of administering legally prescribed medications.
- b) Compliance with criminal laws. The educator shall not commit any act referred to in G.S. 115C-332 and any felony under the laws of the United States or of any state.
- c) Public funds and property. The educator shall not misuse public funds or property, funds of a school-related organization, or colleague's funds. The educator shall account for funds collected from students, colleagues, or parents/legal guardians. The educator shall not submit fraudulent requests for reimbursement, expenses, or pay.
- d) Scope of professional practice. The educator shall not perform any act as an employee in a position for which licensure is required by the rules of the SBE or by Chapter 115C or the North Carolina General Statutes during any period in which the educator's license has been suspended or revoked.
- e) Conduct related to ethical violations. The educator shall not directly or indirectly use or threaten to use any official authority or influence in any manner that tends to discourage, restrain, interfere with, coerce, or discriminate against any subordinate or any licensee who in good faith reports, discloses, divulges, or otherwise brings to the attention of an LEA, the SBE, or any other public agency authorized to take remedial action, any facts or information relative to actual or suspected violation of any law regulating the duties of persons serving in the public school system, including but not limited to these Rules.

History Note: Authority G.S. 115C-295.3;
Eff. May 1, 1998.

NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

Hertford County Public Schools does not discriminate nor make any decision concerning employment, promotion, discharge, pay, providing of fringe benefits, or any other aspect of employment based on an individual's race, religion, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. A conscientious effort will be made by all supervisory personnel to prohibit discrimination against any individual in employment practices/procedures, including sexual harassment, and to reasonably accommodate employees and applicants with disabilities. The school system's administration will take appropriate action to ensure that all personnel transactions are implemented in a fair and impartial manner.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Hertford County Public Schools is an Equal Opportunity Employer that does not discriminate on the basis of actual or perceived race, creed, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, citizenship status, age, disability or handicap, gender, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic protected by applicable federal, state or local laws. Our administration is dedicated to this policy with respect to recruitment, hiring, placement, promotion, transfer, training, compensation, benefits, employee activities and general treatment during employment.

Hertford County Public Schools hires only United States Citizens and lawfully authorized aliens who are in compliance with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986.

Hertford County Public Schools will endeavor to make a reasonable accommodation to the known physical or mental limitations of qualified employees with disabilities unless the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the operation of our mission. If you need assistance to perform your job duties because of a physical or mental condition, please contact your principal/supervisor or the Chief Human Resources Officer.

Hertford County Public Schools will endeavor to accommodate the sincere religious beliefs of its employees to the extent such accommodation does not pose an undue hardship on the Hertford County Public Schools' mission. If you wish to request such an accommodation, please speak to your principal/supervisor or the Chief Human Resources Officer.

Any employees with questions or concerns about equal employment opportunities in the workplace are encouraged to bring these issues to the attention of your principal/supervisor or the Chief Human Resources Officer. Hertford County Public Schools will not allow any form of retaliation against individuals who raise issues of equal employment opportunity. To ensure our workplace is free of artificial barriers, violation of this policy will lead to discipline, up to and including discharge.

HANDBOOK GOAL AND CONFIRMATION OF RECEIPT

Our goal is for this handbook to answer your questions concerning employment related matters, benefits and procedures. Please read it carefully. It is important to note that the handbook is general in its coverage of Hertford County Public Schools' policies and procedures. Employees are expected to review the published policies of the Board of Education and to comply with regulations developed by the school system to support these policies. All Board Policies are accessible to employees at [Board Policy Manual](#). Additional materials, including individual school plans, school improvement plans, safe school plans, and school-based procedures are available at your work site. Although this handbook summarizes many detailed provisions about employment, benefits, and other related matters, Board Policies, and regulations will always be the governing reference. Pertinent Board Policy numbers are listed for ease of reference. Most of the forms referred to in this handbook can be secured from either our web site or the school principal or school clerk. The contents of this handbook are not intended to create or imply any contract rights. This handbook offers information about state pay schedules, leave regulations and other benefits but is not meant to confer benefits in addition to those provided by state law and regulation. Hertford County Public Schools confirms employee receipt through the acknowledgment that each employee has access to the Personnel Handbook on the Hertford

County Public Schools Website and the prescribed duty of each employee to become familiar with school system policies, procedures and this handbook.

ABSENCES

All employees must submit a request for absences through the Records system. Employees who need a substitute teacher for the classroom, must also document the request in the Frontline Absence Management (formerly AESOP) system to request a substitute. It is the individual's responsibility to submit a request for a substitute and NOT the responsibility of school clerical staff.

CONTINUOUS LEAVE OF MORE THAN 10 DAYS

It is the responsibility of the employee to contact the Chief Human Resource Officer if it is necessary for them to be absent for 10 or more consecutive days. An employee must comply with the notice and verification requirements provided in policy 7520, Family and Medical Leave, for any continuous leave of more than 10 days if: (1) the leave also is eligible for leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), defined in policy 7520, and (2) the leave is designated as FMLA-eligible at the time it is taken or as soon as is feasible thereafter. See policy 7520, Family and Medical Leave.

SICK LEAVE

The Superintendent or designee may require a statement from a medical doctor or other acceptable proof that the employee was unable to work due to illness or injury. Employees who anticipate using sick leave should inform their immediate supervisor in advance so that arrangements may be made to reassign the employee's duties during the period of absence.

PERSONAL LEAVE

Personal leave must be used in half or whole day units. Personal leave must be requested two weeks in advance of the leave date. It may be used only upon the authorization of the teacher's immediate supervisor and in accordance with legal requirements and procedures established by the superintendent.

VACATION/ANNUAL LEAVE

Vacation/annual leave may be taken only upon the authorization of the employee's immediate supervisor and in accordance with legal requirements and procedures established by the superintendent. Teachers are unable to take vacation/annual leave when students are present at school.

To promote the efficient operation of the schools, the superintendent may designate certain periods during the non academic year as preferred vacation periods for 12-month employees.

ACCESSING EMPLOYEE INFORMATION

POWERSCHOOL RECORDS system is used to access the following employee info

- Absence request
- Address or phone number change
- Leave balance
- Contracts—certified only
- FMLA Forms
- Worker's Comp Forms

BEGINNING TEACHER SUPPORT PROGRAM

Teachers, who did not receive a continuing license prior to January 1, 1998, and have fewer than three years of appropriate service (normally considered to be public school service) in their area of initial licensure are required to participate in the BTSP with an Initial License. Out-of-state applicants are not subject to BTSP requirements if their North Carolina Licensure is based on reciprocity or completion of a National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) approved education program (not all out-of-state colleges/universities are NCATE-approved) and they have three or more years of appropriate experience. Out-of-state applicants, with less than three years' experience, will participate in BTSP.

BENEFITS

In addition to good working conditions, it is Hertford County Public Schools' policy to provide a combination of supplemental benefits to all eligible employees. These benefits include time-off benefits, such as vacations and holidays, and insurance and other plan benefits. We are constantly studying and evaluating our benefits programs and policies to meet your present and future requirements.

The next few pages contain a brief outline of the benefits Hertford County Public Schools provides for you and your family. Of course, the information presented here is intended to serve only as guidelines.

Hertford County Public Schools intend to maintain these employee benefits, and it reserves the absolute right to modify, amend or terminate these benefits at any time and for any reason.

It is the policy of the Hertford County Board of Education to comply with the benefits and employment policies promulgated by the State Board of Education in the most current edition of the [Public Schools of North Carolina Benefits and Employment Policy Manual](#) which is linked.

Recognizing that the State Board updates and revises its policies from time to time, it is the intent of the Hertford County Board of Education to include as a part of its policy all such future modifications by the State Board and the Department of Public Instruction. Accordingly, when the reader is referring to a printed handbook, the reader is advised to confirm that the copy in the handbook tracks the current online version. In the event that changes to State or Federal law or regulation conflict with current State Board or local board policies, the Hertford County Board of Education intends that its benefits and employment policies shall be modified to the extent necessary to comply with current law until such time as conforming changes to State Board and/or local board policies are made.

If you have any questions regarding your benefits, please contact our Benefits Specialist, Erica Holley.

HEALTH INSURANCE

All permanent full-time employees of Hertford County Public Schools are eligible for group health insurance. Employees may elect to have their spouse and/or children covered by the same plan by paying a set monthly premium. Unmarried children up to age 19, or up to age 26 if enrolled as a full-time student (12 or more hours per semester) at a state accredited school or college, are eligible for coverage. The additional premium is collected by payroll deduction one month in advance and is handled as a "pre-tax" salary reduction. For employees who are paid in ten (10) installments, a monthly escrow is also deducted to cover the cost of health insurance premiums during the summer months. Permanent part-time employees working a minimum of twenty (20) hours per week may purchase health insurance if they pay the total premium (employee and employer costs).

Health Insurance is provided free to all permanent, full-time employees by the state of North Carolina and is currently administered by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina. The insurance provides coverage for hospital and medical expenses. Plans available are Comprehensive Major Medical and Preferred Provider Organization (PPO). For comprehensive information visit the State Health Plan Website (see below).

The annual enrollment period for health insurance is determined by the State Benefits Office. Claims under the State Health Plan should be filed as soon as possible after services are received. It is the employee's responsibility to file claims. Claims may be filed by the medical professionals. Claim forms are available on the State Health Plan website listed below. Changing from one health plan to another can be done only during the annual enrollment period. Changes in coverage options may be made during the annual enrollment period or other times, with a documented "qualifying event" if done within thirty (30) days of the event. "Qualifying events" include but are not limited to: birth of a child, change in marital status, etc. Contact our Benefits Specialist, Erica Holley with questions concerning insurance or contact the State Health Plan's customer service section at 1-800-422-4658 or Blue Cross Blue Shield of NC at 1-888-234-2416. Reference: The State of North Carolina Comprehensive Health Benefit Plan; Website: <http://statehealthplan.state.nc.us>

Pierce group also offers a variety of supplemental benefits for Hertford County Public Schools Employees. Please access our [Hertford County Public Schools website](#) for details of the available options.

HIPAA – Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act

The HIPAA Act is a Federal Law that was passed in 1996. Additional guidelines were issued December 4, 2002. A portion of this federal law is called the Privacy Rule. Through the Privacy Rule, the federal government is seeking to protect, and keep private, individual's personal health information (PHI). All of our insurance and plans that are required to be HIPAA compliant have done so.

LIABILITY INSURANCE

All employees of Hertford County Public Schools are covered by the Board of Education's School Professional Legal Liability Insurance Policy. Each claim has a limit of liability of \$1,000,000 and an aggregate limit of \$1,000,000. The program covers legal liability for an act, error, or omission in services rendered in the discharge of school district duties. The school system also carries general liability insurance coverage.

LONGEVITY

All qualified permanent full-time and part-time employees (20 hours or more a week) are eligible for yearly longevity payments after completing ten years of State of North Carolina service. Longevity payment is calculated according to a scale based upon annual state salary and years of qualifying service: 10 but less than 15 1.50% 15 but less than 20 2.25% 20 but less than 25 3.25% 25 or more years 4.50% Longevity payment is made the last working day of the employee's anniversary month. Teachers paid on the state salary schedule have longevity payments built into their salary.

RETIREMENT SYSTEM PENSION

All permanent full-time employees are required to join the Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System. Eligible employees contribute 6% of their gross salary (pre-taxed) to the Retirement System. Hertford County Schools makes a contribution as established by the North Carolina General Assembly for each permanent full-time employee. Monthly benefits at retirement are based upon the employee's four (4) highest consecutive years of salary, years of state service, and/or age at retirement. After five (5) years of creditable service an employee is considered "vested" and may be eligible for benefits from the retirement system. Full, unreduced retirement benefits may be received at age 65 with 5 years of service; age 60 with 25 years of service, or at any age with 30 years of service. Early, reduced benefits may be received at age 50 with 20 years of service or age 60 with 5 years of service. If an employee meets the age and service requirements for full or reduced retirement, the employee will be eligible for free health insurance. All retirements are effective the first day of the month. Licensed employees are asked to sign a resignation form and give a 30 calendar day notice, so as to provide a smooth transition. Principals and administrators are asked to sign a resignation form and give a 60 calendar day notice.

Change of retirement beneficiaries is possible at any time prior to retirement and under certain option provisions after retirement. If an employee terminates employment with the State, the employee may request a refund of contributions (penalty assessed) or a rollover of contributions into an IRA (no penalty assessed) as an alternative to a monthly pension if vested in the State Retirement System.

The refund normally takes a minimum of sixty to ninety (60 to 90) days. Interim employees may not withdraw their funds during the months of June, July, August, or September. Interim employees may apply for withdrawal of funds after October 1.

For more detailed information; refer to the Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System's website: www.treasurer.state.nc.us.

DEATH BENEFIT

A death benefit between \$25,000 and \$50,000 is payable to a designated beneficiary after an employee has completed one year (365 days) as a contributing member of the Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System. The amount paid is determined by the employee's annual salary. Employee retirement contributions are also paid to the designated beneficiary. The death benefit remains in place for 180 days following an employee's resignation.

EMPLOYEE DISABILITY

A comprehensive short-term and long-term disability income plan is provided at the employer's expense for permanent full-time employees who are members of the Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System and meet certain state service requirements. Please note: donated leave may not be used beyond 60 days of disability. The short-term disability plan is available to disabled employees with at least one year (365 days) of contributory retirement service within the last 36 months. It begins on the 61st day of disability and provides monthly income equal to 50% of one-twelfth of the annual base salary, local supplement and longevity (if applicable), for up to 365 calendar days, with a maximum of \$3,000 per month. The State Disability Income Plan does not allow outside earnings during the sixty (60) days waiting period. Short-term disability benefits may be extended for as many as 365 days beyond the original short-term period if approved by the State Medical Board. The long-term disability income plan begins after the short-term plan ends for the totally and permanently disabled permanent full-time employee with five years of contributory retirement service. The five years of service must be within the previous eight years. The long-term disability plan provides monthly income equal to 65% of one twelfth of the annual base salary, local supplement and longevity, (if applicable) up to \$3,900 per month until the employee qualifies for unreduced retirement benefits. Long-term benefits, however, are coordinated with Social Security disability payments and Workers' Compensation benefits. A permanently disabled employee may choose to apply for additional benefits, if eligibility requirements are met. Contact our Benefits Specialist, Erica Holley, for details.

For more detailed information refer; to the Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System's website: www.treasurer.state.nc.us. Select Retirement System, Benefits Handbook and finally Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System Booklet. (Reference: Disability Income Plan of the State of North Carolina, www.treasurer.state.nc.us)

SOCIAL SECURITY

All employees participate in the social security system. Contributions are made by both the employee and employer. Benefits may include retirement, pensions, disability payments, and survivor's insurance. The tax rate for contributions is determined annually.

STATE EMPLOYEE CREDIT UNION

All employees, except individuals employed through contracted services, may join the North Carolina State Employees' Credit Union. Upon obtaining membership, the employee's spouse, children, and parents may become members.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION INSURANCE

Provisions of the Workers' Compensation Act are applicable to all paid school employees. Workers' Compensation provides medical benefits and a weekly compensation benefit equal to 66 2/3% of the employee's average weekly earnings for the year prior to the injury, up to a maximum established by the Industrial Commission each year.

When an employee is injured on the job, he/she must ensure that the principal or supervisor has knowledge of the injury immediately following the accident. Also, please report all injuries to Tammie Smith who will provide guidance on the process of filing a Workers' Compensation claim for the medical attention or doctor's visit, if necessary.

All treatment, tests, equipment, or prescriptions must have prior authorization before the appropriate carrier can pay them. Failure to follow Industrial Commission guidelines could jeopardize eligibility for workers' compensation benefits. (Reference: The Provisions of the Workers' Compensation Act (North Carolina General Statute 115c-337)

401(k) PROGRAM

All full-time employees participating in the State Retirement System are eligible to participate in the 401(k) program administered by the State of North Carolina through Prudential Retirement. Contact the Benefits Office for information and enrollment forms. Information may also be obtained from the Prudential Retirement website at www.prudential.com/ncplans or call 1-866-627-5267.

403(b) PROGRAM A 403(b) plan is a tax-deferred retirement program. All part-time and full-time employees are eligible to participate in the 403(b) plans. For more information, please contact the Benefits Department.

BUSINESS EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

Employees may be reimbursed for reasonable approved expenses incurred in the course of business. These expenses must be approved by your principal/supervisor, and may include conference fees, air travel, hotels, motels, meals, cab fare, rental vehicles, or gas and car mileage for personal vehicles. All expenses incurred should be submitted to your principal/supervisor along with the required receipts in a timely manner. The link to the travel reimbursement form can be found from the district webpage under staff resources.

Employees are expected to exercise restraint and good judgment when incurring expenses. You should contact your principal/supervisor in advance if you have any question about whether an expense will be reimbursed.

CLOCK IN/CLOCK OUT

All classified employees (except bus drivers) must use the *TACS (Time and Attendance Capture System)* to sign-in and sign-out at the beginning and end of the workday. Employees should also sign-out for their lunch break

COMMUNICATIONS AND COMPUTER SYSTEMS

Hertford County Public Schools' communication and computer systems are intended for business purposes; however, limited personal usage is permitted if it does not hinder performance of job duties or violate any other Hertford County Public Schools' policy. This includes the use of laptop computers, voicemail, e-mail and Internet systems. Users have no legitimate expectation of privacy in regard to their use of the systems.

Hertford County Public Schools may access the voicemail and e-mail systems and obtain all communications within the systems, including past voicemail and e-mail messages, without notice to users of the system. The reasons for which Hertford County Public Schools may obtain such access include, but are not limited to: maintaining the system; preventing or investigating allegations of system abuse or misuse; assuring compliance with software copyright laws; complying with legal and regulatory requests for information; and ensuring that Hertford County Public Schools' operations continue appropriately during an employee's absence.

Further, Hertford County Public Schools may review computer and internet usage to ensure that such use is appropriate. The reasons for which Hertford County Public Schools may review employees' use of the internet include, but are not limited to: maintaining the system; preventing or investigating allegations of system abuse or misuse; assuring compliance with software copyright laws; complying with legal and regulatory requests for information; and ensuring that Hertford County Public Schools' operations continue appropriately during an employee's absence. The school system may access any school system computer and all resident data contained within that computer at any time without notice to the user.

Hertford County Public Schools may store electronic communications for a period of time after the communication is created. From time to time, copies of communications may be deleted.

Hertford County Public Schools' policies prohibiting harassment, in their entirety, also apply to the use of Washington County Schools' communication and computer systems. No one may use any communication or computer system in a manner that may be construed by others as harassing or offensive based on race, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, religious beliefs or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local law. Since Hertford County Public Schools' communication and computer systems are intended for business use, these systems may not be used to solicit for religious or political causes or outside organizations.

Further, since Hertford County Public Schools' communication and computer systems are intended for business use, all employees, upon request, must inform their principal/supervisor of any private access codes or passwords.

Unauthorized duplication of copyrighted computer software violates the law and is strictly prohibited. No employee may access, or attempt to obtain access to, another employee's

computer systems without appropriate authorization. Violators of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT – BACKGROUND CHECKS

Hertford County Public Schools requires a criminal records check on all newly hired employees including substitutes and rehires with more than one year break in service. Applicants for employment will be rejected if the criminal records check reveals a violation of the law that is more severe than a minor traffic violation or indicates a pattern of behavior that is determined unacceptable by the Chief Human Resource Officer. An employee will not be offered employment or will be dismissed if it is determined that he/she did not report a criminal infraction greater than a minor traffic violation or misrepresented their background information on an employment application.

All employees must report to the Human Resources Department or their immediate supervisor any criminal arrests, misdemeanor or felony charges, convictions, guilty pleas, pleas of no contest, prayers for judgment continued, or deferred prosecutions, except for traffic offenses other than felony traffic offenses and DWI charges. Notice must be in writing, must include all pertinent facts and must be delivered to the Chief Human Resource Officer no later than the next scheduled business day following the arrest, charge or conviction, unless the employee is hospitalized or incarcerated, in which case the employee must report the alleged violation within 24 hours after his or her release. Upon judicial action in the matter, the employee must report the disposition and pertinent facts in writing to the Chief Human Resource Officer no later than the next business day following adjudication. Failure by an employee to provide timely notice as described above may lead to disciplinary action up to, and including, dismissal. If a verified criminal history check or another source shows that an employee has failed to disclose a criminal charge or disposition, then the employee's employment may be terminated.

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION (Policy 7315)

Employees and board members have an absolute duty to maintain the confidentiality of records as required by law. Employees and board members, by the nature of their positions, are exposed to confidential information that should not be repeated or discussed except with those recognized by law as having a right to the information. Any employee or board member who is not sure whether particular information may be protected by state or federal confidentiality laws should seek clarification from his or her immediate supervisor or the Chief Human Resource Officer (for employees) or from the superintendent or board attorney (for board members). When violations occur, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

It is a criminal violation for an employee or board member to do either of the following:

- knowingly, willfully and with malice permit any unauthorized person to have access to information contained in a personnel file, or
- knowingly and willfully examine, remove or copy a personnel file that he or she is not specifically authorized to access pursuant to [G.S. 115C-321](#).

CONFLICT OF INTEREST (Policy 7730)

Employees are expected to avoid engaging in any conduct that creates or gives the appearance to the public of creating a conflict of interest with their job responsibilities with the school system. Although there may be other conflicts of interests, employees must follow board directives in the following areas.

A. FINANCIAL INTERESTS

An employee shall not engage in or have a financial interest, directly or indirectly, in any activity that conflicts with duties and responsibilities in the school system.

1. Contracts with the Board

An employee shall not do any of the following:

- a. obtain a direct benefit from a contract that he or she is involved in making or administering on behalf of the board, unless an exception is allowed pursuant to [G.S. 14-234](#) or other law;
- b. influence or attempt to influence anyone who is involved in making or administering a contract on behalf of the board; or
- c. solicit or receive any gift, favor, reward, service, or promise of reward, including a promise of future employment, in exchange for recommending, influencing, or attempting to influence the award of a contract by the board.

An employee is involved in administering a contract if he or she oversees the performance of the contract or has authority to interpret or make decisions regarding the contract. An employee is involved in making a contract if he or she participates in the development of specifications or terms of the contract or participates in the preparation or award of the contract. An employee derives a direct benefit from a contract if the employee or his or her spouse does any of the following: (1) has more than a 10 percent ownership or other interest in an entity that is a party to the contract; (2) derives any income or commission directly from the contract; or (3) acquires property under the contract.

2. Non-School Employment

The board recognizes that some employees may pursue additional compensation on their own time. Any such employee shall not engage in the following:

- a. non-school employment that adversely affects the employee's availability or effectiveness in fulfilling job responsibilities;
- b. work of any type in which the sources of information concerning customer, client, or employer originate from any information obtained through the school system;
- c. work of any type that materially and negatively affects the educational program of the school system;
- d. any type of private business using system facilities, equipment, or materials, unless prior approval is provided by the superintendent; or
- e. any type of private business during school time or on school property.

The superintendent may grant prior approval for work performed under subsections d and e above if such work enhances the employee's professional ability or professional growth for school-related work. The superintendent may establish reporting procedures that require employees to notify the school system of any non-school employment.

B. RECEIPT OF GIFTS

No school employee may accept gifts from any person or group desiring to do or doing business with the school system, unless such gifts are instructional products or advertising items of nominal value that are widely distributed. No school employee may solicit or accept any gifts from any potential provider of E-rate services or products in violation of federal gifting rules.

DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT AND BULLYING COMPLAINT PROCEDURES (Policy 7225)

Discrimination means any act or failure to act that unreasonably and unfavorably differentiates treatment of others based solely on their membership in a socially distinct group or category such as race, ethnicity, gender, pregnancy, religion, age or disability. Discrimination may be intentional or unintentional.

Harassment and Bullying

a. Harassment or bullying behavior is any pattern of gestures or written, electronic, or verbal communications, or any physical act or any threatening communication that:

- 1) places a student or school employee in actual and reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property; or
- 2) creates or is certain to create a hostile environment by substantially interfering with or impairing a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits.

“Hostile environment” means that the victim subjectively views the conduct as harassment or bullying and that the conduct is objectively severe or pervasive enough that a reasonable person would agree that it is harassment or bullying. A hostile environment may be created through pervasive or persistent misbehavior or a single incident, if sufficiently severe.

Harassment and bullying include, but are not limited to, behavior described above that is reasonably perceived as being motivated by any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic or motivated by an individual's association with a person who has or is perceived to have a differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, socioeconomic status, academic status, gender identity, physical appearance, sexual orientation, or mental, physical, developmental, or sensory disability. Examples of behavior that may constitute bullying or harassment include, but are not limited to, verbal taunts, name-calling and put-downs, epithets, derogatory comments or slurs, lewd propositions, exclusion from peer groups, extortion of money or possessions, implied or stated threats, assault, impeding or blocking movement, offensive touching, or any physical interference with normal work or movement, and visual insults, such as derogatory posters or cartoons. Legitimate age-appropriate pedagogical techniques are not considered harassment or bullying.

Harassment, including sexual or gender-based harassment, is not limited to specific situations or relationships. It may occur between fellow students or co-workers, between supervisors and

subordinates, between employees and students, or between non-employees, including visitors, and employees or students. Harassment may occur between members of the opposite sex or the same sex.

b. Sexual harassment is one type of harassment. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

- 1) submission to the conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of an individual's employment, academic progress, or completion of a school-related activity;
- 2) submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting the individual, or in the case of a student, submission to or rejection of such conduct is used in evaluating the student's performance within a course of study or other school-related activity; or
- 3) such conduct is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an employee's work or performance or a student's educational performance, limiting a student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or environment, or creating an abusive, intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or educational environment.

Sexually harassing conduct includes, but is not limited to, deliberate, unwelcome touching that has sexual connotations or is of a sexual nature, suggestions or demands for sexual involvement accompanied by implied or overt promises of preferential treatment or threats, pressure for sexual activity, continued or repeated offensive sexual flirtations, advances or propositions, continued or repeated verbal remarks about an individual's body, sexually degrading words used toward an individual or to describe an individual, sexual assault, sexual violence, or the display of sexually suggestive drawings, objects, pictures or written materials. Acts of verbal, nonverbal, or physical aggression, intimidation, or hostility based on sex, but not involving sexual activity or language, may be combined with incidents of sexually harassing conduct to determine if the incidents of sexually harassing conduct are sufficiently serious to create a sexually hostile environment.

c. Gender-based harassment is also a type of harassment. Gender-based harassment may include acts of verbal, nonverbal, or physical aggression, intimidation, or hostility based on sex or sex-stereotyping but not involving conduct of a sexual nature.

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

DRUG FREE AND ALCOHOL FREE WORKPLACE (Policy 7240)

The board of education recognizes that reducing drug and alcohol abuse in the workplace improves the safety, health and productivity of employees. It is the policy of the board that a drug-free and alcohol-free workplace must be maintained.

A. PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

The board prohibits employees from engaging in the unlawful manufacture, sale, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, anabolic steroid, alcohol, stimulants, synthetic cannabinoids, counterfeit substance, or any other controlled substance as defined in (1) Schedules I through VI of the North Carolina Controlled Substances Act or in (2) Schedules I through V of section 202 of the Controlled Substances Act ([21 U.S.C. 812](#)) and further defined by regulation at [21 C.F.R. 1300.01 through 1300.04](#) and [21 C.F.R. 1308.11 through 1308.15](#). Employees must not be under the influence of alcohol or be impaired by the excessive use of prescription or nonprescription drugs at any time this policy is applicable. This policy is not violated by an individual's proper use of a drug lawfully prescribed for that individual by a licensed health-care provider.

B. APPLICABILITY

This policy governs each employee before, during, and after school hours while the employee is on any property owned or leased by the board; at any time during which the employee is acting in the course and scope of his or her employment with the board; and at any time that the employee's violation of this policy has a direct and adverse effect upon his or her job performance. This policy does not apply to an employee's consumption of alcoholic beverages that are served at a reception or other similar function that occurs outside the regular workday and that the employee is authorized or required to attend as a part of his or her employment duties.

Independent contractors, volunteers, and visitors are subject to all requirements of this policy while on school property or at a school-sponsored event.

C. REASONABLE SUSPICION TO SEARCH

An employee may be subjected to a search of his or her person or belongings or of school property under the employee's control if there is reasonable suspicion that the employee has violated this policy. An employee also may be required to submit to a drug or alcohol test when there is reasonable suspicion of drug or alcohol use by the employee in violation of this policy. Reasonable suspicion shall be based on specific, contemporaneous observations concerning the physical, behavioral, speech, and/or performance indicators of drug or alcohol use. The observations must be made by a supervisor or other school system official with training or experience in such indicators.

All drug and alcohol testing will be done with procedures that ensure the confidentiality and privacy interests of the employee and in accordance with law. Employees who refuse to submit to a search or a test to detect alcohol or drug use after reasonable suspicion is established may be suspended immediately pending consideration of a decision to terminate employment.

In addition, any employee, volunteer, or independent contractor who operates a commercial motor vehicle or performs other safety-sensitive functions in the course of duties for the board may be subject to drug and alcohol testing in accordance with policy 7241, Drug and Alcohol Testing of Commercial Motor Vehicle Operators.

The board will cover the cost of any required employee testing.

D. DUTY TO REPORT

An employee must notify his or her supervisor and the Chief Human Resources Officer in writing of any conviction under any criminal drug statute for a violation occurring within the scope of Section B of this policy. Notification must be given no later than the next scheduled business day after such conviction and before reporting to work, in accordance with policy 7300, Staff Responsibilities. Within 10 days of receiving a notice of conviction by an employee whose position is funded in any part by a federal grant, the Chief Human Resource Officer or designee shall notify the funding agency of the conviction. "Conviction" as used in this policy includes the entry in a court of law or military tribunal of: (1) a plea of guilty, *nolo contendere*, no contest or the equivalent; (2) a verdict or finding of guilty; or (3) a prayer for judgment continued ("PJC") or a deferred prosecution.

E. CONSEQUENCES

Violation of this policy will subject an individual to disciplinary action by the board that could result in non-renewal or termination of employment with the school system or the requirement that the employee participate satisfactorily in a drug or alcohol abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved by the board or federal, state or local health, law enforcement, or other appropriate agency. Information concerning available counseling, rehabilitation, and re-entry programs will be provided to employees. Any illegal drug activity will be reported to law enforcement authorities

All employees shall receive a copy of this policy.

EMPLOYEE CLASSIFICATIONS

PERMANENT EMPLOYEE

A permanent employee is defined as an individual employed with the expectation of permanent employment if present needs and funds continue, or employed for at least six full consecutive monthly pay periods to replace one or more employees who are on leave of absence without pay; and may be full-time or part-time.

FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES

Full-time employees are employed to work at least 30 hours per week and are eligible For full benefits.

Full benefits include:

1. all insurance plans offered by the school system
2. all financial plans offered by the school system
3. leave days (sick, annual, etc.) earned at the full rate for years worked
4. State Teachers' and Employees' Retirement System
5. longevity payments (if applicable)
6. leave of absence
7. NC State Employees' Credit Union
8. general liability insurance

PART-TIME EMPLOYEES

Part-time employees are employed to work at least 20 hours per week, but less than 30 and are eligible for pro-rated (partial) benefits.

Pro-Rated (partial) benefits include:

1. health insurance may be purchased by paying the employee and employers' cost
2. leave days (sick, annual, etc.) earned on a pro-rated (partial) basis for years worked
3. longevity payments (if applicable)
4. leave of absence
5. NC State Employees' Credit Union
6. tax deferred annuities 403 (b) programs
7. general liability insurance

CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEES

Classified employees are at-will employees employed in positions within Hertford County Public Schools typically referred to as "support" positions. Classified employees may be designated exempt or non-exempt consistent with the Fair Labor Standards Act and may be paid on either an hourly or yearly wage. Classified support positions include but are not limited to: office support, maintenance support, bus drivers and transportation support, child nutrition support, and paraprofessionals.

Classified employees generally work an eight-hour day and a forty hour week. Child Nutrition employees generally work less than eight hours per day. Hours are specified by the Director of Child Nutrition at the time of employment with the daily schedule set by the school-based manager.

School Bus Drivers are generally employed for less than eight hours per day. They are employed for the length of time that is required to run the bus route they are assigned and work only on student attendance days.

LICENSED EMPLOYEES

TEACHER CONTRACTS

A year consists of a minimum of one hundred and twenty (120) working days during a fiscal year (actual days at work excluding sick leave, annual leave and holidays) for teachers. If a teacher does not work 120 workdays as a full time, permanent teacher during the fiscal year, that year shall not be deemed to constitute a consecutive year of service for the teacher.

All teachers eligible to hold clear North Carolina licenses initial or continuing are given one year contracts for three years. After three years, a teacher is eligible for either a 2 or 4 year contract.

CAREER CONTRACTS

Career contracts and career status (tenure) will remain in effect if the teacher obtained the status prior to the 2013/2014 school year.

INTERIM CONTRACTS:

1. must be in temporarily vacant positions;
2. are short-term for a specific period of time, not to exceed one school year;
3. are less than full-time and do not exceed one school year.

Interim employees are not eligible to be placed in the tenure track until they hold a valid and clear license in at least one subject area.

ADMINISTRATIVE CONTRACTS

Principals and assistant principals, and certain directors and supervisors who have not attained career status under the provisions of North Carolina General Statute 115C-325 will be issued initial two-year contracts and are eligible for extensions of four (4) years according to the provisions of North Carolina General Statute 115C-287.1.

If any licensed employee believes that he/she has not been issued the correct contract or the correct number of years of probationary status, it is the employee's responsibility to advise the Chief Personnel Officer, so that any discrepancy can be reviewed and appropriately resolved.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

Substitute teachers are not considered to be full-time permanent employees and are only employed on an as needed basis. Substitute teachers are considered at-will employees. This means that either the substitute teacher or Hertford County Public Schools has the right to terminate the employment relationship at any time, with or without reason.

Pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 96-8(10) e, substitute teachers shall not be considered unemployed for days or weeks, including summer months or when school is not in session, when not called to work unless the substitute teacher is notified they are no longer employed as a substitute teacher.

Employee Volunteers

Employees may volunteer to work at school events, provided the work is clearly at the employee's option, is in a different capacity from the employee's regularly-assigned duties and is performed on an occasional or sporadic basis. Employees may not volunteer to provide the same type of service they are employed to perform for the school system. If approved by the Superintendent and Board of Education, classified employees may volunteer to provide coaching services and be paid a stipend based on the coaching supplement schedule if they are coaching in a designated paid position.

EMPLOYEE DRESS AND PERSONAL APPEARANCE

The board believes that the appearance and the conduct of its faculty are of supreme importance in establishing a positive image for education in the community and for presenting a good

example for students. Therefore, the board affirms its expectation that all personnel will be professionally, neatly, and appropriately attired for the work to be done. An employee's dress must not disrupt or distract from the educational process and must be in accordance with health and safety standards. The superintendent shall develop and communicate to employees guidelines for appropriate dress and appearance. Such guidelines (1) must be gender-neutral; (2) may authorize the principal or department supervisors to develop specific dress or appearance requirements for each school or department; (3) may authorize exemptions from the guidelines for employees performing specialized duties that require a different form of dress; and (4) must provide a process for offering reasonable accommodations when required by law. Administrative and supervisory personnel shall set a good example in personal appearance and good manners and shall encourage and expect employees to dress in accordance with the board's expectations. An employee's supervisor will make an initial determination of whether an employee's dress or appearance is inappropriate. In making this determination, the supervisor will consider the following factors:

1. the nature of the work;
2. whether the dress is consistent with a professional environment;
3. health and safety factors;
4. the nature of the employee's public contact and the normal expectations of outside parties with whom the employee will work;
5. the employee's interaction with students;
6. the prevailing practices of other workers in similar jobs; and
7. any properly established guidelines for dress or appearance.

If the supervisor determines that the employee's dress or appearance violates the established guidelines or is hazardous to the health or safety of the employee, fellow employees or students, the supervisor shall counsel the employee regarding attire that is consistent with this policy and shall determine whether the employee is allowed to remain at work or must leave work to change his or her dress. Any failure to follow the supervisor's directive and/or blatant or repeated violations of this policy will subject the employee to disciplinary action up to, and including, dismissal.

Upon request, an employee may be exempted from provisions of this policy for religious or medical reasons.

The superintendent shall develop regulations to implement this policy. The superintendent shall review such regulations annually and, as appropriate, provide the board with recommendations regarding revisions to the policy.

Grievance Procedure for Employees

It is the policy of the board, in keeping with the ultimate goal of serving the educational welfare of children, to develop and practice reasonable and effective methods of resolving difficulties that may arise among employees. The intent is to reduce potential areas of grievances and to establish and maintain recognized channels of communications between staff and

administration. The purpose of this procedure is to secure, at the lowest possible level, equitable solutions to the problems that arise from time to time and affect employees.

A. Informal Resolution

It is desirable for an employee and his or her immediate supervisor to resolve problems through free and informal communication. When informal procedures fail or are inappropriate or when the employee requests formal procedures, a grievance will be processed pursuant to the steps set forth in this policy.

B. Definitions

1. Days

Days are the working days, exclusive of Saturdays, Sundays, vacation days or holidays, as set forth in the aggrieved employee's employment calendar. In counting days, the first day will be the first full working day following receipt of the grievance. When a grievance is submitted on or after May 1, time limits will consist of all weekdays (Monday – Friday) so that the matter may be resolved before the close of the school term or as soon thereafter as possible.

2. Final Administrative Decision

A final administrative decision is a decision of a school employee from which no further appeal to a school administrator is available.

3. Grievance

A grievance is a formal written claim by an employee regarding specific decision(s) made by another employee and alleging that such decision(s) have adversely affected the person making the claim. A grievance may include, but is not limited to, the following allegations:

- a. that there has been a violation, misapplication or misinterpretation of state or federal law or regulations, school board policy or administrative procedure;
- b. that an employee's employment status or the terms or conditions of his or her employment have been adversely affected; or
- c. that there exists a physical condition that jeopardizes an employee's health or safety or that interferes with an employee's ability to discharge his or her responsibilities properly and effectively.

The term "grievance" does not apply to any matter for which the method of review is prescribed by law, for which there is a more specific board policy providing a process for addressing the concern, or upon which the board of education is without authority to act.

4. Grievant

The grievant is the employee(s) making the claim.

5. Parties in Interest

“Parties in interest” refers to the grievant and the person against whom the grievance is filed.

C. Timeliness of Process

Failure by a school system official at any step to communicate a decision within the specified time limit will permit the grievant to appeal the grievance to the next step unless the official has notified the grievant of the delay and the reason for the delay, such as the complexity of the investigation or report. The official shall make reasonable efforts to keep the grievant apprised of progress being made during any period of delay. Delays may not impermissibly interfere with the exercise of the grievant’s legal rights.

Failure by the grievant at any step to appeal a grievance to the next step within the specified time limit will be considered acceptance of the decision at that step, unless the grievant has notified the appropriate school system official of a delay and the reason for the delay and the official has consented in writing to the delay.

D. General Requirements

1. At all times during the grievance process, all parties in interest and their representatives must conduct themselves in a professional manner, including respecting the confidentiality of personnel matters.
2. The board or an employee of the school system will take no reprisals of any kind against any party in interest or other employee on account of his or her participation in a grievance filed and decided pursuant to this policy.
3. Each decision will be in writing, setting forth the decision and reasons therefore, and will be transmitted promptly to all parties in interest.
4. All meetings and hearings conducted pursuant to this policy will be private.
5. The board and administration will consider requests to hear grievances from a group of grievants but have the discretion to hear and respond to grievants individually.
6. The board and administration will cooperate with the grievant and representative in the investigation of any grievance and will furnish the grievant or representative information pertinent to the grievance without cost to the grievant or the employee against whom the grievance is filed.

7. The grievant may have a representative, including an attorney, at any stage of the grievance. However, if the grievant intends to be represented by legal counsel, he or she must notify the appropriate school official in advance so that school personnel also will have the opportunity to be represented by legal counsel.

8. Should, in the judgment of the superintendent or designee, the investigation or processing of any grievance require the absence of the grievant and/or representative from regular work assignments, such absences will be excused without loss of pay or benefits.

E. Process for Grievance

1. Filing a Grievance

a. A grievance must be filed as soon as possible but no longer than 30 days after disclosure or discovery of the facts giving rise to the grievance. For a grievance submitted after 30 days that claims a violation, misapplication or misinterpretation of state or federal law, the superintendent or designee shall determine whether the grievance will be investigated after considering factors such as the reason for the delay; the extent of the delay; the effect of the delay on the ability of the school system to investigate and respond to the complaint; and whether the investigation of the complaint is necessary to meet any legal obligations. However, employees should recognize that delays in filing a grievance may significantly impair the ability of the school system to investigate and respond effectively to such complaints.

b. All grievances must be in writing, and the written statement of grievance must remain the same throughout all steps of the grievance procedure. The written grievance must include the following information: (1) the name of the school system employee or other individual whose decision or action is at issue; (2) the specific decision(s), action(s) or physical condition at issue; (3) any local board policy, state or federal law, state or federal regulation or State Board of Education policy or procedure that the grievant believes has been misapplied, misinterpreted or violated; and (4) the specific resolution desired. If there is not a specific decision, action or physical condition at issue or no concern that federal or state law, federal or state regulation, State Board of Education policy or procedure, or board policy or procedure has been misapplied, misinterpreted or violated, then the procedure established in policy [1742/5060](#), Responding to Complaints, is appropriate, and the principal or immediate supervisor shall address the concern following that policy.

c. The employee(s) shall present the grievance in writing to his or her immediate supervisor or the supervisor's designee, unless the grievance alleges that a state or federal law has been misapplied, misinterpreted or violated, in which case the grievance may be presented instead to the assistant superintendent of human resources (or to the superintendent if the employee's supervisor is the assistant superintendent of human resources). The person

receiving the grievance hereinafter will be referred to as “official.” Any grievance against the superintendent should be filed directly with the board in accordance with subsection E.4, below.

2. Response by Official

- a. The official shall arrange for a grievance file number to be assigned by the human resources office.
- b. In the event the official determines at the outset that review by the official is inappropriate, the official shall forward the formal grievance to the superintendent who will investigate and respond as provided below in subsection E.3.
- c. The official shall meet with the grievant at a mutually agreed-upon time within five days after receipt of the grievance.
- d. The official shall conduct any investigation of the facts necessary before rendering a decision.
- e. The official shall provide the grievant with a written response to the grievance within 10 days after the meeting.

3. Response by Superintendent

- a. If the grievant is dissatisfied with the official’s response, the grievant may appeal in writing the decision to the superintendent for review by the superintendent or designee within five days of receipt of the official’s response.
- b. The superintendent or designee shall arrange for a meeting with the grievant to take place within five days of the receipt of the appeal.
- c. The superintendent or designee shall conduct any investigation necessary before arriving at a decision. The superintendent or designee shall provide the grievant with a written decision within 10 days after the meeting with the grievant.

4. Appeal to the Board

If the grievant has alleged a violation of a specified federal or state law, federal or state regulation, State Board of Education policy or procedure, or board policy or procedure or has alleged that a specific decision of a school official adversely affects the grievant’s employment status or the terms or conditions of his or her employment, the grievant shall have a right to appeal a final administrative decision to the board of education (see subsection E.4.a, Mandatory Appeals, below). If the grievant has not alleged such specific violations, he or she may request a board

hearing, which the board may grant at its discretion (see subsection E.4.b, Discretionary Appeals, below).

a. Mandatory Appeals

- 1) If the grievant is not satisfied with the superintendent's response and has alleged a violation of a specified federal or state law, federal or state regulation, State Board of Education policy or procedure, or local board policy or procedure or has alleged that a specific decision of a school official adversely affects the grievant's employment status or the terms or conditions of his or her employment, the grievant may appeal in writing the decision to the board within 10 days of receiving the superintendent's response.
- 2) A hearing will be conducted pursuant to policy [2500](#), Hearings Before the Board.
- 3) The board will provide a final written decision within 30 days of receiving the appeal unless further investigation is necessary or the hearing necessitates that more time be taken to respond.

b. Discretionary Appeals

- 1) If the grievant is not satisfied with the superintendent's response but has not alleged a violation of a specified federal or state law, federal or state regulation, State Board of Education policy or procedure, or local board policy or procedure or has not alleged that a specific decision of a school official adversely affects the grievant's employment status or the terms or conditions of his or her employment, the grievant may submit to the superintendent a written request for a hearing before the board of education within 10 days of receiving the superintendent's response.
- 2) If the full board will be meeting within two weeks of the request for a hearing, the board will decide at that time whether to grant a hearing. Otherwise, the board chairperson will appoint a three-person panel to review the request and determine whether to (1) deny the appeal; (2) review the superintendent's decision on the written record only; or (3) grant a hearing. The panel will report the decision to the board. The board may modify the decision of the panel upon majority vote at a board meeting.
- 3) If the board denies the appeal, the decision of the superintendent will be final and the grievant will be notified within five days of the board's decision.
- 4) If the board decides to grant a hearing, the hearing will be conducted pursuant to policy [2500](#).

5) The board will provide a final written decision within 30 days of the decision to grant an appeal, unless further investigation is necessary or the hearing necessitates that more time be taken to respond.

F. Records

Appropriate records will be maintained in accordance with state and federal law.

Employee Use of Social Media

The board recognizes the importance of incorporating current technology tools, including new methods of electronic communication, into the classroom to enhance student learning. It further recognizes the importance of employees, students, and parents engaging, learning, collaborating, and sharing in digital environments as part of 21st Century learning. The board strives to ensure that electronic communication tools incorporated into the school curriculum are used responsibly and safely. As practicable, the board will provide access to secure social media tools and board approved technologies for use during instructional time and for school-sponsored activities in accordance with policies [3220](#), Technology in the Educational Program, and [3225/4312/7320](#), Technology Responsible Use.

The board acknowledges that school employees may engage in the use of social media during their personal time. School employees who use social media for personal purposes must be mindful that they are responsible for their public conduct even when not acting in their capacities as school system employees. All school employees, including student teachers and independent contractors shall comply with the requirements of this policy when using electronic social media for personal purposes. In addition, all school employees must comply with policy [4040/7310](#), Staff-Student Relations, when communicating with individual students through other electronic means, such as through voice, email, text-messaging or video-conferencing platforms.

A. Definitions

1. Social Media

For the purposes of this policy, “social media” refers to the various online technology tools that enable people to communicate easily over the Internet to share information and resources. It includes, but is not limited to: personal websites, blogs, wikis, social networking sites, online forums, virtual worlds, video-sharing websites, and any other Internet-based applications which allow the exchange of user-generated content. For purposes of this policy, it also includes any form of instant or direct messaging available through such applications. Examples of social media include Web 2.0 tools, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Flickr, YouTube, Instagram, Google+ and social media components of learning management systems such as Moodle or Edmodo. The use of video-conferencing platforms such as Zoom, Webex and Google Meet is subject to policy [4040/7310](#), Staff-Student Relations.

2. School-Controlled Social Media

“School-controlled social media” are social media networks, tools or activities that are under the direct control and management of the school system and that create an archived audit trail.

3. Personal Social Media

“Personal social media” means any social media networks, tools or activities that are not school-controlled.

B. Social Media Communications Involving Students

Employees are to maintain professional relationships with students at all times in accordance with policies [4040/7310](#), Staff-Student Relations, and [7300](#), Staff Responsibilities. The use of electronic media for communicating with students and parents is an extension of the employee’s workplace responsibilities. Accordingly, the board expects employees to use professional judgment when using social media or other electronic communications and to comply with the following.

1. All electronic communications with students who are currently enrolled in the school system must be school-related and within the scope of the employees’ professional responsibilities, unless otherwise authorized by this policy or policy [4040/7310](#), Staff-Student Relations.
2. School employees may use only school-controlled social media or approved video-conferencing platforms to communicate directly with current students about school-related matters. (For expectations regarding communication with students through video-conferencing platforms or other forms of electronic communication, e.g., email or texts, see policy [4040/7310](#), Staff-Student Relations.)
3. Employees are prohibited from knowingly communicating with current students through personal social media without parental permission. An Internet posting on a personal social media website intended for a particular student will be considered a form of direct communication with that student in violation of this policy unless the parent has consented to the communication. However, an employee may communicate with a student using personal social media to the extent the employee and student have a family relationship or other type of appropriate relationship which originated outside of the school setting. For example, an employee may have a relationship with a niece or nephew, a student who is the child of an adult friend, a student who is a friend of the employee’s child, or a member or participant in the same civic, social, recreational, sport or religious organization.
4. An employee seeking to utilize and/or establish a non-school-controlled social media website for instructional or other school-related purposes must have prior written approval from the principal and the superintendent or designee and must verify that the social media application’s terms of service meet the requirements of policies [3220](#), Technology in the Educational Program, [3225/4312/7320](#), Technology Responsible Use, and [3227/7322](#), Web Page Development. If the website collects personal information from students under the age of 13, the use will

not be approved unless the applicable requirements of the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) are met. The employee shall ensure that the website does not include or link to the employee's personal social media footprint. The site must be used for school-related purposes only.

C. Employee Personal Use of Social Media

The board respects the right of employees to use social media as a medium of self-expression on their personal time. As role models for the school system's students, however, employees are responsible for their public conduct even when they are not performing their job duties as employees of the school system. Employees will be held to the same professional standards in their public use of social media and other electronic communications as they are for any other public conduct. Further, school employees remain subject to applicable state and federal laws, board policies, administrative regulations, and the Code of Ethics for North Carolina Educators, even if communicating with others concerning personal and private matters. If an employee's use of social media interferes with the employee's ability to effectively perform his or her job duties, the employee is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Employees are responsible for the content on their social media sites, including content added by the employee, the employee's "friends," or members of the public who can access the employee's site, and for Web links on the employee's site. Employees shall take reasonable precautions, such as using available security settings, to manage students' access to the employees' personal information on social media websites and to prevent students from accessing materials that are not age-appropriate.

School employees are prohibited from accessing social networking websites for personal use during instructional time.

D. Posting to Social Media Sites

Employees who use social media for personal purposes must be aware that the content they post may be viewed by anyone, including students, parents, and community members. Employees shall observe the following principles when communicating through social media.

1. Employees shall not post confidential information about students, employees, or school system business.
2. Employees shall not accept current students of Hertford County Public Schools as "friends" or "followers" or otherwise connect with students on personal social media sites without parental permission, unless the employee and student have a family relationship or other type of appropriate relationship which originated outside of the school setting.
3. Employees shall not knowingly allow students access to their personal social media sites that discuss or portray sex, nudity, alcohol, or drug use or other

behaviors associated with the employees' private lives that would be inappropriate to discuss with a student at school.

4. Employees may not knowingly grant students access to any portions of their personal social media sites that are not accessible to the general public without parental permission, unless the employee and student have a family relationship or other type of appropriate relationship which originated outside of the school setting.

5. Employees shall be professional in all Internet postings related to or referencing the school system, students or their parents and other employees.

6. Employees shall not use profane, pornographic, obscene, indecent, lewd, vulgar, or sexually offensive language, pictures or graphics or other communication that could reasonably be anticipated to cause a substantial disruption to the school environment.

7. Employees shall not use the school system's logo or other copyrighted material of the system on a personal social media site without express, written consent from the board.

8. Employees shall not post identifiable images of a student or student's family on a personal social media site without permission from the student and the student's parent or legal guardian. Employees may post such images on a school-controlled social media site only with prior permission of the employee's supervisor and in accordance with the requirements of federal and state privacy laws and policy [4700](#), Student Records.

9. Employees shall not use Internet postings to libel or defame the board, individual board members, students or other school employees.

10. Employees shall not use Internet postings to harass, bully or intimidate students or other employees in violation of policies 1710/4020/7230, Discrimination and Harassment Prohibited by Federal Law, [1725/4035/7236](#), Title IX Sexual Harassment – Prohibited Conduct and Reporting Process, 4329/7311, Bullying and Harassing Behavior Prohibited, and [7232](#), Discrimination and Harassment in the Workplace, or state and federal laws.

11. Employees shall not post content that negatively impacts their ability to perform their jobs.

12. Employees shall not use Internet postings to engage in any other conduct that violates board policy or administrative procedures or state and federal laws.

E. Consequences

School system personnel shall monitor online activities of employees who access the Internet using school technological resources. Additionally, the superintendent or designee may periodically conduct public Internet searches to determine if an employee has

engaged in conduct that violates this policy. Any employee who has been found by the superintendent to have violated this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

The superintendent shall establish and communicate to employees guidelines that are consistent with this policy.

Fiscal Management Standards (8300)

In recognition of the trust and responsibility placed with the board to manage financial resources for the local educational program, the board establishes the following standards.

1. The board and all employees of the school system will manage and use available funds efficiently and effectively to meet the goals of the local board and State.
2. Effective accounting, financial reporting and management control systems will be designed, maintained and periodically reviewed to (a) enable the board and school system to have access to accurate, reliable and relevant data; (b) provide assurance that school system obligations are paid in a timely manner and that accounts are not overspent; (c) provide assurance that funds and records are safeguarded at all times; and (d) permit audits and periodic reports adequate to show that those in charge have handled funds within legal requirements and in accordance with board policy.
3. The superintendent and finance officer shall keep the board sufficiently informed regarding the budget through periodic financial statements showing the financial condition of the school system, other periodic reports and any other appropriate means so that the board can deliberate upon and evaluate the budget.
4. No moneys will be expended, regardless of the source (including moneys derived from federal, state, local or private sources), except in accordance with the board's budget resolution or amendments to the budget resolution. The superintendent is authorized to transfer money from one appropriation to another within the same fund, so long as the transfer does not increase or decrease the amount within a fund and subject to any limitations and procedures as may be prescribed by the board or state or federal law or regulation. Any such transfers must be reported to the board at its next regular meeting and recorded in the minutes.
5. All receipts and disbursements shall be accounted for according to generally accepted accounting principles for governmental entities.
6. Each employee responsible for handling school system funds or funds of individual schools shall comply with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations, board policies, administrative procedures, and any applicable procedures, requirements or guidelines established by the finance officer.

7. Principals and school improvement teams must be familiar with state and local board requirements related to managing and using fiscal resources and must comply with these requirements in developing and implementing school improvement plans

Grants and Funding for Special Projects (Policy 8210)

To fulfill the educational goals of the board, the board will seek as many sources of revenue as possible. Where appropriate, the superintendent is directed to seek public and private grants and funding for special projects as a source of supplemental funding. Employees shall, in advance of pursuing and receiving special funding (grants or donations), notify the principal and superintendent.

All applications for grants or specially funded projects must be consistent with the educational goals of the board. Contracts with non-governmental funding entities must be consistent with [G.S. 147, art. 6E](#) and [art. 6G](#).

When required by the funding agency, the proposals will be presented for board approval. The board must be notified of all funds awarded.

The superintendent shall establish any procedures necessary to develop an efficient and effective process for seeking special funding.

certain school sites as needed based on the employee's role with the district. If a badge is lost, a replacement can be issued at a fee of \$10. The habitual need for a replacement badge could result in an increased price per replacement.

Smoking and Tobacco Products (Policy 7250)

The board of education promotes the health and safety of all students and staff and the cleanliness of all school facilities. The board believes that the use of tobacco products on school grounds, in school buildings and facilities, in or on any other school property owned or operated by the school board, or at school-related or school-sponsored events is detrimental to the health and safety of students, staff and school visitors. To this end, and to comply with state and federal law, the board adopts this tobacco-free policy that prohibits smoking and the use of tobacco products as follows. For the purposes of this policy, the term "tobacco product" means any product that contains or is made or derived from tobacco and is intended for human consumption, including all lighted and smokeless tobacco products, as well as electronic cigarettes, vaporizers and other electronic smoking devices even if they do not contain tobacco or nicotine.

1. All employees and other persons performing services or activities on behalf of the school system, including volunteers and contractors, as well as students and visitors, are prohibited from using any tobacco products at any time in any school building, in any school facility, on school campuses, and in or on any other school property owned or operated by the school board.

2. In addition, persons attending a school-sponsored event at a location not specified in subsection 1 above are prohibited from using tobacco products when (a) in the presence of students or school personnel, or (b) in an area where use of tobacco products is otherwise prohibited by law.
3. Nothing in this policy prohibits the use of tobacco products for an instructional or research activity conducted in a school building, provided that such activity is conducted or supervised by a faculty member and that the activity does not include smoking, chewing or otherwise ingesting tobacco.
4. The administration will consult with the county health department and other appropriate organizations to provide employees with information about support systems and programs to encourage employees to abstain from the use of tobacco products. The school system may, from time to time, provide free non-smoking programs and services to employees of the school system after the regular school day.
5. The principal of each school and other school personnel responsible for school facilities shall post signs in system facilities in a manner and location that adequately notify staff, students and visitors that the use of tobacco products by any person is prohibited at all times in or on school property.
6. The superintendent and designees shall ensure that adequate notice of this policy is provided to students, parents, school personnel and the public.
7. All school personnel are required to adhere to and enforce this policy and other policies, rules or regulations addressing the use of tobacco products.

Staff Responsibilities (Policy 7300)

For students to succeed, all school employees must approach their responsibilities conscientiously, always remembering that the ultimate responsibility of the school system is to provide students with the opportunity to receive a sound basic education.

All school employees shall:

1. be familiar with, support, comply with and, when appropriate, enforce board policies, administrative procedures, school rules and applicable laws;
2. attend to the safety and welfare of students, including the need to provide appropriate supervision of students;
3. demonstrate integrity, respect and commitment to the truth through attitudes, behavior and communications with others;
4. address or appropriately direct any complaints concerning school employees, the school program or school operations; and

5. support and encourage good school-community relations in all interactions with students, parents and members of the community.

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

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

Failure by an employee to provide timely notice as described in this policy may lead to disciplinary action up to, and including, dismissal.

ID BADGES

All Hertford County Public Schools employees will be issued a picture ID badge. This badge is to be visible at all times during the work day. The badge also serves as a key to gain entrance into certain school sites as needed based on the employee's role with the district. If a badge is lost, a replacement can be issued at a fee of \$10. The habitual need for a replacement badge could result in an increased price per replacement.

PAYROLL

All payroll checks will be directly deposited on the last business day of each month.

Ten month certified employees are prepaid on 21.5 days and classified are prepaid on a 20.5 days schedule from August to May. Twelve month employees are paid from the first of the month to the end of the month.

2023-2024 PAY SCHEDULE	
Month	Paydate
August	8/31/2023
September	9/29/2023
October	10/31/2023
November	11/21/2023

December	12/19/2023
January	1/26/2024
February	2/29/2024
March	3/29/2024
April	4/30/2024
May	5/31/2024
June	TBD
<i>**Schedule is subject to changes</i>	

Staff-Student Relations (Policy 4040/7310)

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

The interactions and relationships between staff and students must be based upon cooperation, mutual respect and an understanding of the appropriate boundaries between adults and students inside and outside of the educational setting. Employees are expected to demonstrate good judgment and to avoid the appearance of impropriety in their interactions with students. Employees must consult their supervisor any time they suspect or are unsure whether conduct is inappropriate or otherwise constitutes a violation of this or other board policy. For the purposes of this policy, the terms “staff” and “employees” include independent contractors, school safety officers and volunteers, but do not include student employees or student volunteers.

A. Romantic Relationships and Sexual Contact Prohibited

All employees are prohibited from dating, courting or entering into a romantic relationship or having sexual contact with any student enrolled in the school system regardless of the student’s age. Employees engaging in such inappropriate conduct will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, and may be subject to criminal action as provided in [G.S. 14-202.4](#) and [14-27.32](#). Further, school system personnel shall provide no assistance to an employee in finding another job, beyond the routine transmittal of personnel or administrative files, if the employee engaged in sexual misconduct with a minor or a student in violation of the law.

B. Restrictions on Electronic Communications

1. In accordance with policy 7335, Employee Use of Social Media, employees are prohibited from communicating with current students through non-school-controlled social media without parental permission except to the extent that the employee and student have an appropriate relationship which originated outside of the school setting. Any communication through social media authorized under policy 7335 must meet the professional standards established in this policy and must otherwise be consistent with law and all other board policy.

2. Instant messages will be treated as a form of communication through social media subject to the terms of policy 7335 and subsection B.1 above, regardless of whether the messaging service is actually provided through a social media service or otherwise.

3. Employees are prohibited from engaging in other forms of one-to-one electronic communications (e.g., voice, voice mail, email, texting and photo or video transmission) with students without written prior approval of the employee's supervisor and the student's parent. This rule shall not apply, however, if one or more of the following circumstances exist:

- a. the communication (1) is for an educational purpose, (2) is conducted through a school system-provided platform which archives all such communications for a period of at least three years (this requirement does not apply to telephone or voice mail communications), or is conducted via an electronic video-conferencing platform (e.g., Zoom, Webex, Google Meet) that has been approved by the superintendent or designee for instructional use and (3) occurs after the employee has given prior notice to his or her supervisor or designee that such communications will occur and when they will occur;
- b. the communication serves an educational purpose and is simultaneously copied or transmitted to the employee's supervisor or designee and, upon request, to the parent or guardian;
- c. the communication is necessary in a bona fide emergency, provided the communication is disclosed to the supervisor and parent or guardian as soon as reasonably possible; or
- d. the communication derives from a relationship or association outside of the school setting and occurs with the consent of the parent or guardian, provided such communication does not otherwise violate this or other board policy.

Any one-to-one electronic communication permitted by this subsection must meet the professional standards established in this policy and must otherwise be consistent with law and all other board policies.

4. It is the duty of every employee to notify his or her supervisor of any unsolicited one-to-one communication, in any form, electronic or otherwise, received from a

student when the communication lacks a clear educational purpose. School counselors are excluded from this requirement only to the extent that it conflicts with their professional duties.

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

- a. the content, frequency, subject and timing of the communication(s);
- b. whether the communication(s) was appropriate to the student's age and maturity level;
- c. whether the communication(s) could reasonably be viewed as a solicitation of sexual contact or the courting of a romantic relationship, including sexual grooming;
- d. whether there was an attempt to conceal the communication(s) from the employee's supervisor and/or the student's parent or guardian;
- e. whether the communication(s) created a disruption of the educational environment; and
- f. whether the communication(s) harmed the student in any manner.

C. Reporting Inappropriate Conduct

1. Reporting by Employees

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

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

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

2. Reporting by Students

Any student who believes that he or she or another student has been subject to misconduct that violates this policy should immediately report the situation to the principal, school counselor or the Title IX coordinator designated in policy 1720/4030/7235, Title IX Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex.

3. Report of Criminal Misconduct

Any principal who has reason to believe that a student has been the victim of criminal conduct shall immediately report the incident in accordance with policy [4335](#), Criminal Behavior.

4. Report to State Superintendent of Public Instruction

Any administrator, including the superintendent, a deputy/associate/assistant superintendent, a personnel administrator or a principal, who knows or has reason to believe that a licensed employee has engaged in conduct that would justify automatic revocation of the employee's license pursuant to [G.S. 115C-270.35\(b\)](#) or involves physical or sexual abuse of a child shall report that information to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction within five working days of any disciplinary action, dismissal or resignation based on the conduct. For purposes of this subsection, physical abuse is the infliction of physical injury other than by accidental means or in self-defense, and sexual abuse is the commission of any sexual act upon a student or causing a student to commit a sexual act, regardless of consent and the age of the student. Failure to report such conduct may result in the suspension or revocation of an administrator's license by the State Board of Education.

This reporting requirement applies in addition to any duty to report suspected child abuse in accordance with state law and policy [4240/7312](#), Child Abuse and Related Threats to Child Safety, as applicable.

Legal References: Elementary and Secondary Education Act, [20 U.S.C. 7926](#); Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, [20 U.S.C. 1681](#) *et seq.*, [34 C.F.R. pt. 106](#); [G.S. 14-27.32](#), [-202.4](#); [115C-47\(18\)](#), [-270.35\(b\)](#); [16 N.C.A.C. 6C .0372](#), [.0373](#), [.0601](#), [.0602](#); State Board of Education Policy [EVAL-014](#)

Technology Responsible Use (Policy 7320)

The board provides its students and staff access to a variety of technological resources. These resources provide opportunities to enhance learning, appeal to different learning styles, improve communication within the school community and with the larger global community, and achieve the educational goals established by the board. Through the school system's technological resources, users can observe events as they occur around the world, interact with others on a variety of subjects, and acquire access to current and in-depth information.

The board intends that students and employees benefit from these resources while remaining within the bounds of safe, legal, and responsible use. Accordingly, the board establishes this policy to govern student and employee use of school system technological resources. This policy applies regardless of whether such use occurs on or off school system property, and it applies to all school system technological resources, including but not limited to computer networks and connections, the resources, tools, and learning environments made available by or on the networks, and all devices that connect to those networks.

A. Expectations for Use of School Technological Resources

The use of school system technological resources, including access to the Internet, is expected to be exercised in an appropriate and responsible manner. Individual users of the school system's technological resources are responsible for their behavior and communications when using those resources. Responsible use of school system technological resources is use that is ethical, respectful, academically honest, and supportive of student learning. Each user has the responsibility to respect others in the

school community and on the Internet. Users are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette.

General student and employee behavior standards, including those prescribed in applicable board policies, the Code of Student Conduct, and other regulations and school rules, apply to use of school technological resources, including access to the Internet.

In addition, anyone who uses school system computers or electronic devices, or the school's electronic storage or network, or connects to the Internet using school system resources must comply with the additional rules for responsible use listed in Section B, below. These rules are intended to clarify expectations for conduct but should not be construed as all-inclusive.

All students must be trained about appropriate online behavior as provided in policy [3226/4205](#), Internet Safety.

Failure to adhere to the requirements of this policy will result in disciplinary action, including revocation of user privileges. Willful misuse may result in criminal prosecution under applicable state and federal law, disciplinary action for students, and/or adverse personnel action for employees.

B. Rules for Use of School Technological Resources

1. School system technological resources are provided for school-related purposes only. Acceptable uses of such technological resources are limited to responsible, efficient, and legal activities that support learning and teaching. Use of school system technological resources for commercial gain or profit is prohibited. Student personal use of school system technological resources for amusement or entertainment is also prohibited unless approved for special situations by the teacher or school administrator. Because some incidental and occasional personal use by employees is inevitable, the board permits infrequent and brief personal use by employees so long as it occurs on personal time, does not interfere with school system business, and is not otherwise prohibited by board policy or procedure.
2. Unless authorized by law to do so, users may not make copies of software purchased by the school system. Under no circumstance may software purchased by the school system be copied for personal use.
3. Users must comply with all applicable laws, board policies, administrative regulations, and school standards and rules, including those relating to copyrights and trademarks, confidential information, and public records. Plagiarism of Internet resources will be treated in the same manner as any other incidents of plagiarism, as stated in the Code of Student Conduct.
4. Users must follow any software, application, or subscription services terms and conditions of use.

5. No user of technological resources, including a person sending or receiving electronic communications, may engage in creating, intentionally viewing, accessing, downloading, storing, printing, or transmitting images, graphics (including still or moving pictures), sound files, text files, documents, messages, or other material that is obscene, defamatory, profane, pornographic, harassing (including any form of cyber bullying), abusive or considered to be harmful to minors.

6. Users must not circumvent firewalls. The use of anonymous proxies to circumvent content filtering is prohibited.

7. Users may not install or use any Internet-based file sharing program designed to facilitate sharing of copyrighted material.

8. Users of technological resources may not send electronic communications fraudulently (i.e., by misrepresenting the identity of the sender).

9. Users must respect the privacy of others.

a. Students must not reveal any personally identifying, private, or confidential information about themselves or fellow students when using email, chat rooms, blogs, or other forms of electronic communication. Such information includes, for example, a person's home address or telephone number, credit or checking account information, or social security number. For further information regarding what constitutes personal identifying information, see policy [4705/7825](#), Confidentiality of Personal Identifying Information.

b. School employees must not disclose on school system websites or web pages or elsewhere on the Internet any personally identifiable, private, or confidential information concerning students (including names, addresses, or pictures) without the written permission of a parent or guardian or an eligible student, except as otherwise permitted by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) or policy [4700](#), Student Records.

c. Users may not forward or post personal communications without the author's prior consent.

d. Students may not use school system technological resources to capture audio, video, or still pictures of other students and/or employees in which such individuals can be personally identified, nor share such media in any way, without consent of the students and/or employees and the principal or designee. An exception will be made for settings where students and staff cannot be identified beyond the context of a sports performance or other public event or when otherwise approved by the principal.

10. Users may not intentionally or negligently damage computers, computer systems, electronic devices, software, computer networks, or data of any user connected to school system technological resources. Users may not knowingly or

negligently transmit computer viruses or self-replicating messages or deliberately try to degrade or disrupt system performance, including by streaming audio or video for non-instructional purposes. Users may not disable antivirus programs installed on school system-owned or issued devices.

11. Users may not create or introduce games, network communications programs, or any foreign program or software onto any school system computer, electronic device, or network without the express permission of the technology director or designee.

12. Users are prohibited from engaging in unauthorized or unlawful activities, such as “hacking” or using the computer network to gain or attempt to gain unauthorized or unlawful access to other computers, computer systems or accounts.

13. Users are prohibited from using another individual’s ID or password for any technological resource or account without permission from the individual. Sharing of an individual’s ID or password is strongly discouraged. If an ID or password must be shared for a unique classroom situation, students must have permission from the teacher or other school official.

14. Users may not read, alter, change, block, execute, or delete files or communications belonging to another user without the owner’s express prior permission.

15. Employees shall not use passwords or user IDs for any data system (e.g., the state student information and instructional improvement system applications, time-keeping software, etc.) for an unauthorized or improper purpose.

16. If a user identifies or encounters an instance of unauthorized access or another security concern, he or she must immediately notify a teacher, school system administrator, or the technology director or designee. Users must not share the problem with other users. Any user identified as a security risk will be denied access.

17. It is the user’s responsibility to back up data and other important files.

18. Employees shall make reasonable efforts to supervise students’ use of the Internet during instructional time.

19. Views may be expressed on the Internet or other technological resources as representing the view of the school system or part of the school system only with prior approval by the superintendent or designee.

20. Users who are issued school system-owned and -maintained devices for home use (such as laptops, Chromebooks, etc.) must adhere to any other reasonable rules

or guidelines issued by the superintendent or technology director for the use of such devices.

HCPS HelpDesk Tickets



Please use the information in the following table when submitting a HelpDesk Ticket for Technology moving forward. To submit a ticket simply click on the icon on Classlink and follow the instructions.

Ticket Level	Actual Expectation for resolution	What qualifies as this level of urgency
CRITICAL	Within the day	Internet down, Service unavailable, unable to complete work (no workaround available),
HIGH	Within 2-3 days	Degraded service or intermittent issues, there is a temporary workaround or alternative available.
MEDIUM	Within the week (5 DAYS)	Partial non-critical loss of functionality, overall things are working just not as well as we'd like them to.
LOW	ASAP/When we can get to it	Product questions, feature requests, updates, etc.

C. Restricted Material on the Internet

The Internet and electronic communications offer fluid environments in which students may access or be exposed to materials and information from diverse and rapidly changing sources, including some that may be harmful to students. The board recognizes that it is impossible to predict with certainty what information on the Internet students may access or obtain. Nevertheless, school system personnel shall take reasonable precautions to prevent students from accessing material and information that is obscene, pornographic, or otherwise harmful to minors, including violence, nudity, or graphic language that does not serve a legitimate pedagogical purpose. The superintendent shall ensure that technology protection measures are used as provided in policy [3226/4205](#), Internet Safety, and are disabled or minimized only when permitted by law and board policy. The board is not responsible for the content accessed by using a cellular network to connect a personal device to the Internet.

D. Privacy

Students, employees, visitors, and other users have no expectation of privacy in anything they create, store, send, delete, receive, or display when using the school system's network, devices, Internet access, email system, or other technological resources owned or issued by the school system, whether the resources are used at school or elsewhere, and even if the use is for personal purposes. Users should not assume that files or communications created, transmitted or displayed using school system technological resources or stored on servers, the storage mediums of individual devices, or on school-managed cloud services will be private. Under certain circumstances, school officials may be required to disclose such electronic information to law enforcement or

other third parties, for example, as a response to a document production request in a lawsuit against the board, in response to a public records request, or as evidence of illegal activity in a criminal investigation.

The school system may, without notice, (1) monitor, track and/or log network access, communications, and use; (2) monitor and allocate file server space; and (3) access, review, copy, store, delete, or disclose the content of all user files, regardless of medium, the content of electronic mailboxes issued by the school system, and system outputs, such as printouts, at any time, for any lawful purpose. Such purposes may include, but are not limited to, maintaining system integrity, security, or functionality, ensuring compliance with board policy and applicable laws and regulations, protecting the school system from liability, and complying with public records requests. School system personnel shall monitor online activities of individuals who access the Internet via a school-owned device.

By using the school system's network, Internet access, electronic devices, email system, devices, or other technological resources, individuals consent to have that use monitored by authorized school system personnel as described in this policy.

E. Use of Personal Technology on School System Property

Users may not use private WiFi hotspots or other personal technology on campus to access the Internet outside the school system's wireless network. Each principal may establish rules for his or her school site as to whether and how other personal technology devices (including, but not limited to smart phones, tablets, laptops, etc.) may be used on campus. Students' devices are governed also by policy [4318](#), Use of Wireless Communication Devices. Use of personal technology devices is also subject to any rules established by the superintendent under a bring your own device plan authorized by Section C of policy [3220](#), Technology in the Educational Program, and for employees, policy [3228/7323](#), Use of Personal Technology to Conduct School Business. The school system assumes no responsibility for personal technology devices brought to school.

F. Personal Websites

The superintendent may use any means available to request the removal of personal websites that substantially disrupt the school environment or that utilize the school system or individual school names, logos or trademarks without permission.

1. Students

Though school personnel generally do not monitor students' Internet activity conducted on non-school system devices during non-school hours, when the student's online behavior has a direct and immediate effect on school safety or maintaining order and discipline in the schools, the student may be disciplined in accordance with board policy to the extent consistent with law (see the student behavior policies in the [4300](#) series).

2. Employees

Employees' personal websites are subject to policy [7335](#), Employee Use of Social Media. Employees may not use their personal websites to communicate with

students, as prohibited by policy [7335](#) and policy [4040/7310](#), Staff-Student Relations.

3. Volunteers

Volunteers are to maintain appropriate relationships with students at all times. Volunteers are encouraged to block students from viewing personal information on volunteer personal websites or online networking profiles in order to prevent the possibility that students could view materials that are not age-appropriate. An individual volunteer's relationship with the school system may be terminated if the volunteer engages in inappropriate online interaction with students.

G. Use Agreements

All students, parents, and employees will be informed annually of the information in this policy. Prior to using school system technological resources, students and employees must agree to comply with the requirements of this policy and consent to the school system's use of monitoring systems to monitor and detect inappropriate use of technological resources. In addition, the student's parent must consent to the student accessing the Internet and to the school system monitoring the student's Internet activity and electronic mailbox issued by the school system.

Employee Travel and Other Expense Reimbursement (Policy 7650)

The board may reimburse employees for reasonable and necessary travel and other expenses incurred while performing school system business. All employee requests for reimbursement for travel or other expenses are subject to this policy. The superintendent and finance officer are responsible for developing and disseminating forms for requesting travel and other expense reimbursement, for maintaining and disseminating current information concerning applicable reimbursement rates, and for establishing any procedures or regulations necessary to implement this policy.

A. Employee Responsibility for Controlling Travel Expenses

The board intends that its employees who are required to travel do so in reasonable comfort. All employees traveling on school system business are expected to exercise good judgment in distinguishing between reasonable comfort and extravagance and to exercise the same care in incurring expenses that a prudent person would exercise if traveling on personal business and expending personal funds. Reimbursement will not be approved for excess costs or additional expenses that are for the convenience or personal preference of the employee. Unless specifically approved by the board in advance, unauthorized expenses include, but are not limited to, alcohol or tobacco, entertainment activities (e.g., sporting events, pay TV, movies), personal services (e.g., spa, laundry), personal items (e.g., toiletries, magazines, souvenirs), supplemental insurance on rental cars, fines for traffic violations, and meals, lodging, or other expenses for spouses, children, guests or pets. Employees are responsible for being aware of applicable reimbursement rates and any other limitations established by the superintendent or finance officer prior to travel.

B. Approval for Travel

Out-of-county travel by any employee except the superintendent must receive prior written approvals on the designated travel authorization form. Out-of-state travel also requires the superintendent's prior written approval. The superintendent's travel, whether out-of-county or out-of-state, must receive prior approval from the board chair on the designated travel authorization form. The request for approval must include an estimate of the anticipated cost of the travel and related expenses. Travel requests that exceed the amount budgeted for such purposes may be denied.

C. Reimbursement for Travel Expenses

Employees may request reimbursement of actual expenses for mileage, meals, lodging and other business-related expenses, such as conference registration fees and parking fees, incurred on approved trips for official school system business. Travel that does not directly benefit the school system is not reimbursable.

The reimbursement rates for mileage, meals, lodging and other travel expenses will be in accordance with those established for state employees. Reimbursements will not exceed the annual budget allocated to the respective employee or department. All reimbursements are contingent upon funds available.

All claims for reimbursement of travel expenses must (1) include a copy of the approved travel request form; (2) be in writing, itemized, and supported with original receipts, except that no receipt is required for meals that will be reimbursed at the state-approved flat rates; (3) document the official school business purpose for which the expenses were incurred; (4) include a copy of the agenda if the travel was to a conference, meeting, or similar event; (5) be signed by the employee; and (6) be approved by the employee's supervisor, or in the case of the superintendent, by the board chair. If reimbursement is to be paid from federal funds, documentation of the business purpose must include the reason the claimant's travel is necessary to the federal program. All claims must be submitted in accordance with any additional requirements, procedures or deadlines established by the superintendent or finance officer.

In extenuating circumstances, such as when lodging is not reasonably available at the state-approved rate, authorization for reasonable costs in excess of the state-approved rates may be approved by the employee's supervisor and the superintendent or designee, or in the case of the superintendent, by the board chair.

D. Canceled Trips

If an employee cancels a trip for which (1) a travel advance has been extended, (2) trip-related expenses have been prepaid by the school system, or (3) a penalty or charge resulting from the cancellation is incurred, the employee is responsible for reimbursing the school system for all funds advanced or expended by the school system as a result of the cancellation unless otherwise approved by the superintendent or designee. Failure to reimburse the school system as required may result in disciplinary action and/or actions to recover the amounts owed.

E. Mileage Reimbursement for Use of Personal Vehicle

Employees who use their personal vehicle to travel in the performance of their official job duties will be reimbursed at the rate for state employees for mileage incurred when traveling for job-related activities, subject to budgetary limitations. The superintendent may establish criteria for determining which employees are eligible for this mileage reimbursement.

Mileage reimbursement requests for all employees except the superintendent must be approved by the employee's immediate supervisor and submitted as directed by the finance officer or superintendent. The superintendent's mileage reimbursement requests must be approved by the board chair and submitted to the finance officer at least quarterly.

F. Responsibility for Monitoring Compliance with this Policy

The superintendent is responsible for monitoring employee compliance with this policy. The superintendent's expenditures for travel and other expenses will be reviewed at least quarterly by the board chair.

For the most updated travel reimbursement forms, please download it from the employee resources section of our district website (www.hertford.k12.nc.us).

Workday and Overtime (Policy 7500)

A. Work Schedules

The length of the school day for licensed and professional staff will be a minimum of seven hours and thirty minutes and will continue until professional responsibilities to the student and school are completed. Teachers shall report to their daily work assignments no later than 7:45 a.m., or earlier if required by special duty assignments. The workday may be altered at the discretion of the Board or Superintendent. Administrative meetings, curriculum development, pupil supervision, assigned duties, parent conferences, group or individual planning, and extracurricular activities may require hours beyond the stated minimum. Work schedules for other employees will be defined by the superintendent or designee, consistent with the Fair Labor Standards Act and the provisions of this policy.

On workdays when students are not present, teachers normally will work a seven and a half hour day (8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.) with one hour reserved for lunch.

In order to protect student safety and to provide for the proper supervision of students, teachers' minimum workday shall extend from one-half hour before the students' instructional day begins until the student for which they are responsible have departed and the teachers have completed their professional development responsibilities to the students and to the school.

B. Workweek Defined

Working hours for all employees not exempted under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), including secretarial, cafeteria, janitorial and maintenance personnel, will conform to federal and state regulations. The superintendent shall ensure that job positions are classified as exempt or non-exempt and that employees are made aware of such classifications. Supervisors shall make every effort to avoid circumstances that require non-exempt employees to work more than 40 hours each week. For purposes of FLSA Compliance, the workweek for school system

employees will be 12:00 a.m. Saturday until 11:59 p.m. Friday. A copy of the FLSA and any administrative procedures established by the superintendent will be available to employees in the human resources office.

C. Overtime and Compensatory Time

The board of education discourages overtime work by non-exempt employees. A non-exempt employee may not work overtime without the express approval of his or her supervisor. All overtime work must be approved by the superintendent or designee. All supervisory personnel shall monitor overtime use on a weekly basis and report such use to the superintendent or designee. Principals and supervisors shall monitor employees' work, shall ensure that overtime provisions of this policy and the FLSA are followed, and shall ensure that all employees are compensated for any overtime worked. However, employees who intentionally work unauthorized overtime may be subject to disciplinary action. Principals or supervisors may need to adjust daily schedules to prevent non-exempt employees from working more than 40 hours in a workweek. Accurate and complete timesheets of actual hours worked during the workweek must be signed by each employee and submitted to the finance officer. The finance officer shall review work records of employees on a regular basis to make an assessment of overtime use. In lieu of overtime compensation, non-exempt employees may receive compensatory time off at a rate of not less than one and one-half hours for each one hour of overtime worked, if such compensatory time (1) is agreed to by the employee before the overtime work is performed and (2) is authorized by the immediate supervisor. Employees must be allowed to use compensatory time within a reasonable period after requesting such use (see policy [7510](#), Leave). Employees may accrue a maximum of 240 compensatory time hours before they must be provided overtime pay at the appropriate rate. In addition, upon leaving the school system, an employee must be paid for any unused compensatory time at the rate of not less than the higher of (1) the average regular rate received by the employee during his or her last three years of employment or (2) the final regular rate received by the employee.

Non-exempt employees whose workweek is less than 40 hours will be paid at the regular rate of pay for time worked up to 40 hours. Such employees will be provided overtime pay or compensatory time as provided above for working more than 40 hours in a workweek. Employees will be provided a copy of this policy and will be required to sign this policy to acknowledge their understanding of overtime and compensatory time provisions. Such signed policy will constitute the agreement required in this section.

D. Volunteer Work

Non-exempt employees may volunteer to work at school-related activities, provided the work is clearly at the employee's option, without coercion, and is in a different capacity from the employee's regularly assigned duties. Employees may not volunteer to perform the same type of services that they are employed to perform for the school system. Such work will be treated as regular work and subject to hourly compensation and overtime rules.

Supervisors are expected to exercise care in allowing non-exempt staff to volunteer in school-related activities.

E. Attendance Expectations

All employees are expected to be present during all working hours. Absence without prior approval, chronic absences, habitual tardiness or abuses of designated working hours are all considered neglect of duty and will result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Any leave taken beyond the amount to which the employee is entitled under state and federal laws and regulations will be considered in assessing the employee's performance. Absences in excess of the entitled legal leave (which does not include donated leave) may result in dismissal from service.

To the extent permitted by law the school system may consider chronic absences which do not exceed an employee's legal leave amount in assessing the employee's job performance. The superintendent may develop regulations to further implement this provision.

Legal References: The Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, as amended, [29 U.S.C. 201](#), *et seq.*; [G.S. 115C-47](#)(18), [-288](#), [-307](#); *North Carolina Public School Personnel Employee Salary and Benefits Manual* (most current version), North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, Division of School Business, available at <https://www.dpi.nc.gov/districts-schools/district-operations/financial-and-business-services/compensation-public-school-employees>

Cross References: Leave (policy [7510](#))

N.C. Gen. Stat. § 126-8.6 Section 126-8.6 - Paid parental leave

(a) Definitions. - The following definitions apply in this section:

(1) Child. - A newborn biological child or a newly placed adopted, foster, or otherwise legally placed child under the age of 18 whose parent is a State employee eligible for leave under subsection

(b) of this section.

(2) Parent. - Includes a parent by adoption, foster care, or another legal placement.

(3) Qualifying event. - When a State employee becomes a parent to a child.

(b) Paid Parental Leave. –

The State Human Resources Commission shall adopt rules and policies to provide that a permanent, probationary, or time-limited full-time State employee may take the following paid parental leave:

(1) Up to eight weeks of paid leave after giving birth to a child; or

(2) Up to four weeks of paid leave after any other qualifying event.

(c) Part-Time Employees. - The State Human Resources Commission shall adopt rules and policies to provide that a permanent, probationary, or time-limited part-time State employee may take a prorated amount of paid leave after giving birth, not to exceed eight weeks, or paid leave after any other qualifying event, not to exceed four weeks, in addition to any other leave available to the employee.

(c1) The State Human Resources Commission shall adopt rules and policies providing for a period of minimum service before an employee becomes eligible for parental leave, the maximum number of uses of paid parental leave within a 12-month period, and how much leave is to be provided in the event of miscarriage or the death of a child during birth.

(d) Requirements. - The paid parental leave authorized by this section:

(1) Is available without exhaustion of the employee's sick and vacation leave and is awarded in addition to shared leave under G.S. 126-8.3, or other leave authorized by State or federal law.

(2) Has no cash value upon termination from employment.

(3) May not be used for calculating an employee's retirement benefits.

(e) The provisions of this section shall apply to employees of State agencies, departments, and institutions, including The University of North Carolina; to public school employees; and to community college employees. The appropriate governing board, officer, or entity shall adopt rules and policies to award paid parental leave to employees that are substantially equivalent to those adopted by the State Human Resources Commission.

N.C. Gen. Stat. § 126-8.6 1 Amended by 2023 N.C. Sess. Laws 65,s. 13A.1-a, eff. 7/1/2023, applicable to requests for paid parental leave related to births occurring on or after that date. Added by 2023 N.C. Sess. Laws 14, s. 5.1-a, eff. 7/1/2023, and applicable to requests for paid parental leave related to births occurring on or after that date.

Hertford County Public Schools Policies

Our Board voted to accept and approve the Board Policy Revisions below as revised by NCSBA at their board retreat held on Tuesday, August 8, 2023. Review the updated policies for your knowledge.

Updated Policy	Policy Title
2121	Board Member Conflict of Interest
2210	Duties of Officers
2400	Board Policies
2410	Policy Development
2420	Adoption of Policies
2430	Dissemination and Preservation of Policies
2440	Policy Review and Evaluation
2450	Suspension of Board Policies
2600	Consultants to the Board
3430	School Improvement Plan
4260	Student Sex Offenders
4302-R	Rules for Use of Seclusion and Restraint in Schools
6560	Disposal of Surplus Property
7520	Family and Medical Leave
7540	Voluntary Shared Leave
7550	Absences Due to Inclement Weather
7620	Payroll Deductions
7810	Evaluation of Licensed Employees
7815	Evaluation of Non-Licensed Employees
8320	Depositories
9400	Sale, Disposal, and Lease of Board-Owned Real Property
1200	Governing Principle Student Success
1300	Governing Principle Parental Involvement
1400	Governing Principle School Initiatives
1500	Governing Principle Safe, Orderly, and Inviting Environment
1600	Governing Principle Professional Development
1700	Governing Principle Removal of Barriers
1800	Governing Principle Stewardship of Resources
5070/7350	Public Records Retention, Release, and Disposition
5071/7351	Electronically Stored Information Retention
7430	Substitute Teachers
1610/7800	Professional and Staff Development
3101	Dual Enrollment
4023/7233	Education for Pregnant and Parenting Students and Employees
4310	Integrity and Civility
5008	Automated Phone and Text Messaging
Updated Policy	Policy Title
5040	News Media Relations

Updated Policy	Policy Title
6315	Drivers
6330	Insurance for Student Transportation Services
6402	Participation by Historically Underutilized Businesses
6430	Purchasing Requirements for Equipment, Materials, and Supplies
7503	Teleworking
5028/6130/7267	Automated External Defibrillator
6410	Organization of the Purchasing Function
7340	Employee Dress and Appearance
7650	Employee Travel and Other Expense Reimbursement

DISCLAIMER

This handbook is intended to be a guide for employees regarding the policies and procedures used by Hertford County Public Schools. It is not a contract of employment. The Hertford County Board of Education reserves the right to unilaterally change, terminate and/or make exceptions to the policies in this handbook at any time at its sole discretion to the extent permitted by law. Nothing in this handbook grants employment rights beyond that which is granted by state law.

This handbook should not be considered an agreement, a contract of employment, either expressed or implied, or a promise of treatment in any particular manner in any given situation. Nothing in this handbook is intended to create an employment contract.

Hertford County Public Schools' employees, other than employees covered by North Carolina General Statute 115C-325, or employees who have specific employment contracts, are all recognized as employees at will. This means the employee or Hertford County Public Schools has the right to terminate the employment relationship at any time, with or without reason. This school system recognizes the employment at will doctrine thereby enabling the school system to demote, suspend with or without pay, transfer, establish the terms of work, and reduce or increase the pay of all employees deemed to be at will.

This handbook applies to all employees regardless of dates of hire. Each employee is required to sign the *Hertford County Public Schools Personnel Handbook Notification* which will be presented through Records. Your response to the signature link on this form only acknowledges that you have received information concerning access to the handbook and that you have a duty to familiarize yourself with the information contained in the handbook.

Handbook Acknowledgment Form **HCPS EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM**

I acknowledge that I have access to a copy of the 2023-2024 Hertford County Public Schools Employee Handbook. I further acknowledge that I am responsible for understanding and adhering to the contents of this handbook, to include but not be limited to School Board policies. I understand that failure to abide by HCPS Board policies could subject me to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. I understand that this document will be placed in my in-house and/or central office personnel file.

Print Name: _____

Signed: _____

Position: _____

School/Department Assignment: _____

Date: _____