



Dalton Public Schools



Mission, Vision, Beliefs

OUR VALUES

Dalton Public Schools fosters a culture of curiosity, creativity and perseverance where ...

- **We know, value and inspire every student challenge all students to learn at higher levels**
- We engage students in opportunities to explore interests, aptitudes and passions
- We embrace equity and diversity
- We work together to achieve more
- We believe education is essential to the well-being of every individual
- We understand that education is vital to the democratic way of life

...because it is what our students deserve.

OUR MISSION

The mission of Dalton Public Schools is to develop trusting relationships and provide quality work that engages students in profound learning.

OUR VISION

World-class learning that prepares students for success in college, career and civic life.

Dalton Public Schools Employee Handbook Introduction

This Employee Handbook represents a brief summary of Human Resources policies, practices, benefits, and services at the time of its publication. More specific detail of each policy is available in the Dalton Board of Education (BOE) Policy Manual available for review on the district's board website at <https://tinyurl.com/dpspolicymanual>. Specific benefit plan provisions are described in greater detail in State Health Benefit Plan materials and the district Employee Voluntary Benefits Guide.

The BOE reserves the right to adopt, change, or terminate any policy at any time. The district reserves the right to terminate, suspend, withdraw, amend, or modify the benefit plans in whole or in part at any time. Further, the BOE reserves the right to terminate or modify coverage for any group of employees and their dependents or a class of dependents, at any time.

Information completed on all employment forms must be accurate (forms include, but are not limited to, statements of experience and qualifications, medical history, work permits, criminal history, and application information). Continuation of employment is subject to, among other things, the availability of funds or sufficient work.

Nothing contained in the Dalton Public Schools Employee Handbook shall constitute or imply a contract of employment between the district and any employee. The BOE reserves its right to separate the employment of any employee within the procedures, rules, and laws which govern its operation.

Employees will acknowledge receipt or review of the Employee Handbook at the time of employment and on an annual basis through required training. All continuing employees may refer to amendments or revised versions of the Employee Handbook in the Human Resources section of the district SharePoint website at <https://tinyurl.com/dpssharepoint> (*requires district network login*). An employee may request a printed copy of the handbook at any time by calling 706.876.4070. The online copy of the Employee Handbook is the most up-to-date version and will include highlighted changes/corrections until the next complete revision.

Table of Contents

Mission, Vision, Beliefs	1
Introduction.....	2
Human Resources Information	5
District Governance & Administration	6
District Policies and Procedures Overview	7-13
Equal Employment Opportunity.....	7
Sexual Harassment	7
Drug-Free Work Place.....	7
Acceptable Use Policy – Internet Use	7
Mandated Reporter	8
Conduct Expectations	8
Absence Without Leave	9
Tobacco Use and Display	9
Unauthorized Audio and Video Recording	10
Weapons Prohibited	10
Arrest Report	10
Personnel Records.....	10
Complaints and Grievances	10
Work Breaks.....	11
Staff Meetings.....	11
Emergency Closing of School	11
Substitute Assignment.....	11
Professional Dress	12
Visitation During Work Hours	12
Records and Reports	12
Sale of Materials.....	12
Tips, Gratuities, and Gifts.....	12
Political Campaigning	13
Communications	13
School/Office Telephones	13
Electronic Mail	13
Courier Mail	13
Employment and Compensation	13-18
Hiring	13
Criminal Background Check.....	14
Employee Classifications	14
Verification of Experience for Salary Purposes.....	14
Annual Cost of Living Increases.....	14
Attendance	14
Holidays.....	15
Overtime	15
Compensation Time	15
Pay Frequency and Direct Deposit	15
Pay Adjustment	15
Payroll Deductions	16
Change of Employee Information.....	16
Evaluation of Employees.....	16

Transfers	16
Vacancy Announcements	17
Nepotism	17
Work-related Travel Reimbursement	17
Separation of Employment	17
Reduction-in-Force	18
Employee Benefits	18-26
Benefits Calendar	18
Insurance Benefits	19
Health Insurance	19
Voluntary Benefits	19
Leave (all leave types described)	19-24
Sick Leave	19
Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)	21
Returning from Leave	21
Sick Leave Transfer and Other Use	21
Sick Leave Bank	21
Paid Parental Leave	22
Personal Leave	22
Professional Leave	22
Work-Related Leave	22
Annual Leave	22-23
Jury Duty	23
Subpoena to Testify	23
Military Leave	23
Religious Observances	23
Leave Without Pay	23
Leave of Absence	24
Workers' Compensation	24
Retirement	24
Voluntary Investment Plans	25
Professional Learning Expectations	26
Unemployment Insurance	26
Employee Discipline	27
Safety and Security	27
Identification and Badges	27
Emergency Response	28
Certified Staff Information	28-30
Contracts	28
Tenure	28
Teacher/Staff Work Day	29
Certification	28
Penalty for Failure to Provide Certification	29
Certificate Upgrade Process	29
Federal Loan Deferment/Forgiveness	30
Tutoring Guidelines	30
FAQs	31
Resources	32
Appendix	33-56

Human Resources Information

Human Resources

The Human Resources Department staff is your resource for information regarding your employment, compensation, benefits programs – including leave, health, workers' compensation, and retirement – educator and paraprofessional certification, and policies. You may access many informational resources regarding your employment – including this Employee Handbook – in the Human Resources section of SharePoint <https://tinyurl.com/dpssharepoint>.

Please visit or contact these staff members at any time for responses to your questions.

Mendy Woods	706.876.4073
Chief of Human Resources	

Emma Lopez	706.876.4072
Benefits Specialist, Workers' Comp, Retirement	

Bianca Maldonado	706.876.4035
Employment & Certification Specialist	

Liz Morales	706.876.4070
Human Resources Assistant	

Human Resources Department

Third Floor, Dalton City Hall
PO Box 1408
300 W. Waugh St.
Dalton, GA 30722-1408

706.876.4070 [office] 706.529.6056 [fax]

Board of Education

Dalton Public Schools is directed by an elected five-member Board of Education and administered by an appointed Superintendent. The Administration and Services Building serves as the central office for the district and is located on the third floor of Dalton City Hall at 300 W. Waugh St., Dalton, GA 30720. The mailing address is PO Box 1408, Dalton, GA 30722-1408. The main switchboard may be reached at 706.876.4000. The district website address is www.daltonpublicschools.com.

Board of Education

Matt Evans	Chairperson
Palmer Griffin	Vice Chairperson
Tulley Johnson	Treasurer
Jody McClurg	
Sam Sanders	

Superintendent

Tim Scott, EdD

Department Administration

Don Amonett Deputy Superintendent	706.876.4029	Mendy Woods Chief of Human Resources	706.876.4073
Wiley Dailey Deputy Superintendent	706.876.4490	Pat Holloway Chief of Staff	706.876.4022
Theresa Perry Chief Financial Officer	706.876.4005	Pam Wiles Director of Exceptional Student Services	706.876.4031
Laura Orr Chief Learning Officer	706.876.4026	Debbie Hughes Director of Student Information and Enrollment	706.876.4054
Nick Sun Director of School Support	706.876.4013	Stuart Davis Director of Technology	706.876.4050
Caroline Woodason Director of School Support	706.876.4018	Rusty Lount Director of Operations	706.876.4075
Brandi Moore Director of School Support	706.876.4094	Wimberly Brackett Director of School Nutrition Program	706.876.4076

School Administration Elementary

Blue Ridge School Ali Finley, Principal	706.876.4100	Park Creek School Will Esters, Principal	706.876.4275
Brookwood School Meleia Bridenstine, Principal	706.876.4200	Roan School Anne Fetzer, Principal	706.876.4350
City Park School Kim Rhyne, Principal	706.876-4500	Westwood School Scott Ehlers, Principal	706.876.4425

Middle and Secondary

Hammond Creek Middle School Lauri Johnson, Principal	706.876.4660	Dalton High School Stephanie Hungerpiller, Principal	706.876.4800
Dalton Junior High School Missie McKinney, Principal	706.876.4650	The Dalton Academy Dr. Matt Mederios, Principal	706.876.4700

District Policies and Procedures Overview

Equal Employment Opportunity Policy

The Dalton Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, color, religion, age, national origin, disability, genetic information, or any other legally protected status, in any educational programs, activities or employment policies. The district prohibits retaliation against any individual who files a charge of discrimination, participates in a discrimination proceeding, or otherwise opposes an unlawful employment practice. The director of human resources has been designated as the employee responsible for coordinating the effort to implement this nondiscriminatory policy. Policy GAAA is found in its entirety in the Appendix and in the district's online policy manual.

Sexual Harassment Policy

The Dalton Board of Education is committed to maintaining a work environment that is free from distractions caused by sexual harassment and all other forms of discrimination, or inappropriate or offensive conduct. It is expected that all personnel conduct themselves in a highly professional manner and respect coworkers, students, parents, and others who interact with district personnel. The Board prohibits sexual harassment, all forms of discrimination, and other unprofessional conduct. Sexual harassment in the school environment is unacceptable conduct and will not be tolerated or condoned.

Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to:

- Unwelcome sexual advances
- Requests for sexual favors
- Verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, including subtle pressure for sexual activity, touching, pinching, patting, or brushing against
- Comments regarding physical or personality characteristics of a sexual nature
- Sexually oriented "kidding," "teasing," double-entendres, and jokes
- Demanding sexual favors accompanied by implied or overt threats concerning an individual's employment or educational status.

Harassment Policy GAEB, Regulation GAEB-R, and guidance on reporting sexual abuse and/or sexual harassment are found in their entirety in the Appendix and in the district's online policy manual.

Certified staff under contract must complete state-mandated ethics training regarding sexual harassment each school year. This training, required by HB1321, is delivered online each school year.

Drug-Free Work Place

Dalton Public Schools adheres to the rules in the district's Drug-Free Work Place Policy GAMA. This policy is found in its entirety in the Appendix and in the district's online policy manual.

Employee Computer and Internet Use

Dalton Public Schools adheres to the rules in the district's Employee Computer and Internet Use policy IFBGC. The Board expects all employee to exercise professionalism and good judgement in any social media activities. Employees who post information on social media platforms are

responsible for those postings and must recognize the likelihood that any posting will be viewed by students, parents, other staff members and the community. Policy IFBGC is in the district's online policy manual.

Mandated Reporter

Any person – including teacher, administrator, support personnel and other district and school personnel – who knows, or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child or a student has been abused, abandoned or neglected shall report such knowledge immediately, but in no case later than 24 hours from the time there is reasonable cause to believe a child has been abused. A Dalton Public Schools employee who suspects physical or sexual child abuse shall report this suspicion to her/his principal, supervisor, counselor, or school social worker. Policy JGI is found in its entirety in the Appendix and in the district's online policy manual. All employees are to complete training on mandated reporter requirements each year. This training is made available online or through in-person presentations.

Conduct Expectations

The Dalton Board of Education expects its employees to conduct themselves in a professional manner which reflects the trust and faith of the community for any individual who works near and with its children and families. All employees are required to meet the standards of conduct as identified in the Code of Ethics for Georgia Educators. The Code of Ethics is found in its entirety in the Appendix. In addition, the Code of Ethics and other related information is available online through the Georgia Professional Standards Commission website at <http://www.gapsc.com/Ethics/Home.aspx>.

Conduct which is considered reasonable grounds for termination includes the following:

1. Falsification of any reports (reports pertaining to absence from work, claims pertaining to injuries, claims for any benefits provided by the system, communications or records including personnel and school records)
2. Sabotage or subversive activity
3. Misuse or removal from the premises, without proper authorization, of any school property, or possession of any property removed from school premises without proper authorization
4. Striking or manhandling another person or fighting on school system premises at any time
5. Theft of property, including fraud as defined in Policy DIE (page 41 in Appendix)
6. Willful abuse or deliberate destruction of school system property, e.g., materials, equipment, tools, etc.
7. Insubordination (failure to follow the direction of a supervisor in the performance of work responsibilities)

Violations of any one of the following rules will cause penalties ranging from reprimand (verbal or written) to suspension without pay and/or termination:

1. Reporting to work under the influence of – or when suffering from a hangover from – alcohol, intoxicant, narcotic, barbiturate, amphetamine, or hallucinogen
2. Carrying alcoholic beverages or controlled substances without a doctor's prescription or appropriately labeled pharmacy container on school premises. This includes such items being found on employee's person or in lockers or automobiles

3. Immoral or indecent conduct
4. Threatening, intimidating, coercing or interfering with any person on school system premises at any time
5. Sleeping while on duty
6. Intentionally falsifying time records (either your own or that of another employee)
7. Improper performance of job
8. Low productivity
9. Carelessness or negligence in the use and/or operation of school system tools or equipment
10. Violation or disregard of safety rules and/or safety practices, carelessness endangering your life or that of another
11. Failure to immediately report injury or accident to supervisor
12. Smoking or other use of tobacco products while on school property or during the performance of duties
13. Repeated violations of rules of conduct and/or safety
14. Non-performance of duties; unwarranted failure to report to job; or failure to stay on job assignment during working hours
15. Poor attendance and/or continued tardiness

The above lists are not all inclusive of every possible act of misconduct and are not intended as such. Other actions or behaviors which would be considered by any reasonable person to be inappropriate in the workplace and within the education environment shall be grounds for termination. Any questions regarding employee conduct should be addressed to an employee's supervisor and/or the chief of human resources.

Absence Without Leave

Any employee who is unable to attend work on a scheduled work day must contact his/her supervisor or his/her designee and follow school or department procedures for absence notification. Absence for a day or part of a day without proper notification or approval will be considered an absence without leave. If an employee is absent without leave he/she will not be paid for the time missed and will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. Any employee absent without leave for three consecutive scheduled working days will be considered to have quit without notice.

Tobacco Use and Display Prohibited

Dalton Public Schools' employees are prohibited from using or displaying tobacco products, e-cigarettes or other vaping devices on any school property during their normal working hours or while on duty at any school or system-sponsored function. Use of tobacco, e-cigarettes and any vaping devices is prohibited for all individuals in all school system vehicles, all enclosed school system property, and in outdoor bleacher areas of school system property. Policy GAN may be found in its entirety in the district's online policy manual.

Unauthorized Audio and Video Recording

Dalton Public Schools' employees are prohibited from making unauthorized, secret audio or video recordings of employees, students or guests. An employee, student or guest may only be authorized to make an audio or video recording by permission from the school or district administrator with the highest assigned responsibility who is present.

Weapons Prohibited

Employees are prohibited from carrying or possessing any weapon within a school safety zone or at a school building, school function, or on school property or on a bus or other transportation furnished by the school.

Arrest Report

Any district employee who is arrested for any charge by a law enforcement agency is required to notify his/her immediate supervisor and the chief of human resources no later than the first scheduled work day or within 48 hours after the arrest, whichever comes first. An "arrest" does not include minor traffic offenses in which an individual receives a citation and is allowed to continue driving after the stop.

Personnel Records

Employees are responsible for informing human resources staff when there are changes in their name, home address, phone number, direct deposit account(s), or dependents. It is important to be aware that changes in these records affect the district's ability to appropriately and efficiently process issues related to employment and to communicate with an employee.

Information contained in an employee's personnel file is not made available to others except as may be required or permitted by law, requested by the employee, or to those school officials with a need to know in an official capacity. Otherwise, requests for information not specifically approved by the employee will be referred to the chief administrative officer. Georgia's Open Records law lists certain records that are protected from public disclosure. Among those listed are medical records, home address information, Social Security Number and confidential evaluations.

An employee may review personnel information, except for confidential references, contained in the employee's personnel file. In order to review the file, an appointment must be scheduled with the human resources department.

All permanent personnel records for all employees are kept and maintained under the direct supervision of the chief of human resources at 300 W. Waugh St., Dalton, Georgia 30720.

Complaints and Grievances

The Dalton Board of Education has an established procedure intended to provide resolution to employee complaints and grievances at the supervisory level closest to the employee. The policies and regulations providing guidance in filing and resolving a complaint may be found in the online policy manual. The formal complaints that may be addressed are more specifically defined as those matters affecting the terms and conditions of employment for certified staff members and discrimination complaints for classified and certified employees.

Employees may access the complaints and grievances policies, regulations and exhibits with designator GAE in the district's online policy manual. Questions regarding the submission of a

complaint or grievance should be addressed to the chief of human resources who is the individual designated to handle employment issues.

Work Breaks

Work breaks during the work day are not required under federal or state law. However, employees are provided time during the day for a meal period according to the guidelines determined by an employee's supervisor.

Staff Meetings

Regular staff meetings are a necessary part of school operation. Each site will schedule staff meetings as needed for the purpose of sharing information or for professional learning. All staff members are required as part of their teaching/employment responsibilities to attend all such meetings as determined by the principal or district administration.

Emergency Closing of School

Dalton Public Schools recognizes the need to close schools and offices due to severe weather or other emergencies. The document "Attendance Record Procedure for School Closings" in the Appendix details how employees are to record their attendance for payroll and leave purposes when schools are closed for emergencies.

Substitute Assignment

Dalton Public Schools provides substitute staffing for some classifications of employees. The district contracts with Educational Staffing Solutions (ESS) for all substitute teacher positions. ESS Staffing uses AESOP, an online substitute program [<http://www.aesoponline.com>], to advertise for a substitute to fill a vacancy. Each school site has an AESOP administrator who provides assistance for teachers and paraprofessionals.

Staff Approved for a Substitute

Art, Music & P.E. teachers
Challenge teachers
ELL (self-contained) content teachers at Hammond Creek Middle, Dalton Junior High, The Dalton Academy and Dalton High School
ESS resource teachers without a paraprofessional
Regular classroom teachers
Paraprofessionals
Prekindergarten teachers and paraprofessionals

Staff Not Approved for a Substitute without Specific District Approval

Administrators	Instructional coaches
Counselors	Office staff (including data entry, receptionists, and secretaries)
EIP teachers	Social Workers
ELL resource teachers	ESS speech pathologists
ESS inclusion teachers	

Professional Dress

The Dalton Board of Education expects all staff members to dress in a professional manner. Dress should be appropriate for the position as determined by the employee's immediate supervisor. Piercings, body art, hairstyles, or other adornments that are detrimental to the learning environment are not permitted. The appearance of employees clearly affects the work, attitude, and discipline of students. Educators should ensure that their clothing and appearance choices are supportive of the learning environment and communicate that the employee is deserving of respect.

Employees working with the Maintenance, Operations, School Nutrition Program and Security departments are provided uniforms by the district. All uniforms should be cared for as directed by the employee's supervisor and department guidelines. Uniforms are the property of Dalton Public Schools and must be returned upon separation from employment.

Visitation During Work Hours

Employees may not permit family or friends who by their presence interfere with performance of their duties, or the duties of coworkers, during work hours as determined by the employee's supervisor.

Records and Reports

Employees are expected to maintain those records and reports appropriate for his/her responsibilities. An employee's duties regarding required records and reports will be communicated by the employee's supervisor.

Sale of Materials

District employees may not solicit or sell any goods or services on school property without the approval of the facility administrator and the superintendent or designee. Professional staff members may not sell reference books, school-related supplies, and/or equipment in the attendance area served by the school, nor shall they be permitted to furnish lists of students or parents to any commercial firm. All fund-raising campaigns conducted by school employees in the community or away from school premises to obtain funds for the school, student body, class or club must have prior approval by the superintendent. Such fund raising campaigns shall not be conducted during regular school hours.

Tips, Gratuities and Gifts

Employees should not engage in any activities, transactions or relationships that would interfere with the impartial, objective and effective performance of their duties.

Students: Staff members may accept gifts from students on special occasions, provided the gift is not unduly elaborate or expensive. Staff members should always use good judgment and adhere to the code of professional ethics when accepting gifts from students. In no case shall a staff member accept a gift from a student group, school organization, etc. in excess of a nominal value.

Staff: Staff members may accept gifts from other staff members provided the gifts are not unduly elaborate or expensive and are given on a voluntary basis.

Outside agencies or individuals: Staff members shall not accept individual gifts from outside agencies or individuals that are a result of business transactions between the school district and said agency or individual. Business partners may provide gifts of nominal value to a department or staff as part of an ongoing relationship with the district. District employees may not accept gifts from vendors or those seeking a business relationship with the district, including tickets, vouchers, passes, or gift cards to events, retailers or restaurants.

Political Campaigning

The Dalton Board of Education prohibits the use of school facilities and grounds, including athletic fields and gymnasiums, for the distribution or displaying of political campaign materials during school or school-sponsored events, games, plays or similar activities. The Board does not prohibit the use of school facilities for election sites, nor does it prohibit the display of bumper stickers, etc., on vehicles, buttons or other items attached to clothing as long as the advertising paraphernalia is not distributed at the school or on school grounds during school activities or events. Personal campaigning on school property during scheduled activities or events, even when materials are not distributed or displayed, is also discouraged since it could interfere with the scheduled activity. Policies KIA and GAHB may be accessed in the district's online policy manual.

Communications

School/Office Telephones

Dalton Public Schools' telephones are provided for business communications. Accepting personal phone calls during work is discouraged. Any long distance calls made for personal reasons that result in a cost to the district must be reimbursed.

E-Mail

The district maintains e-mail accounts for the majority of employees to facilitate communication with supervisors, coworkers, district staff, parents of students, and others, to carry out the employee's responsibilities. An e-mail account and its use is a privilege and is subject to the district's Internet Acceptable Use Policy IFBGC which may be found in the online policy manual.

Employees are prohibited from using e-mail to forward or distribute messages for the purpose of soliciting funds or business, marketing, sale of items or distribution of inappropriate material.

With very limited exceptions, all communication using a district e-mail account is a public record and is subject to Open Records requests and must adhere to the district's records retention guidelines.

Courier Mail

The district maintains an interoffice mail service to distribute documents and materials to employees and departments. Interoffice mail should not be used for distribution of non-work related materials.

Employment and Compensation

Hiring

Employees are officially hired upon approval by the Dalton Board of Education based upon the recommendation of the superintendent. An individual may be provisionally employed with

superintendent approval pending board approval at the next meeting of the board at which a personnel report is approved.

Criminal Background Check

All personnel must be fingerprinted and successfully complete a criminal records check at time of hire. All certified staff will also complete a background check each time their certificate is renewed through the Professional Standards Commission's certificate renewal application process. Non-certified staff will be fingerprinted on a periodic basis within the final year of each five-years of employment based on most recent hire date as described in Policy GAK(1).

Employee Classifications

Classified: A classified employee is any person who is hired by the school district and does not hold a certificate issued by the Professional Standards Commission or receive a contract of employment.

Certified: A certified employee is any person who holds a professional educator certificate for a teaching, service or leadership field and receives an annual contract for employment.

Full-Time/Part-Time: Any employee who works at least 40 hours during a regularly scheduled work week is a full-time employee. A School Nutrition Employee is considered full-time if she/he works a minimum of 35 hours during a regularly scheduled work week. An employee who works less than 35 hours is a part-time employee.

Verification of Experience for Salary Purposes

All employees are placed on the appropriate salary schedule according to documented and verified work experience and degree level (*certified staff and paraprofessionals*). Each employee is responsible for providing documentation for salary placement. Certified staff are placed on the state teacher salary schedule according to state Board of Education Rule GBA(5). The superintendent may recommend exceptions to salary schedule placement and/or create a new salary schedule for an employee or class of employees with approval from the Dalton Board of Education.

Annual Cost of Living Increases

The Georgia General Assembly annually sets a state salary schedule for certified educators. The Dalton Board of Education annually sets the local salary schedule and the local supplement schedule for certified staff and approves wage rates for classified staff according to the financial outlook for the district. The fiscal year begins July 1 and ends June 30. Salary adjustments for staff are implemented in July for 12 month employees and in August for 10-11 month employees.

Attendance

The method of recording attendance depends upon the classification and duties of the employee. All hourly employees must record their attendance and time worked using a time clock, electronic device or other means approved by payroll that provides documentation of time and attendance. Administrators and teachers record time and attendance either by signing in on a designated staff sheet, logging into an attendance program or by marking an individual attendance calendar submitted to the human resources department or payroll.

Upon hire or transfer to a new position each employee is informed of his/her work schedule and provided a calendar noting days worked for the fiscal year [*from July 1 to June 30*]. Employees are

expected to be aware of their work days and to schedule attendance accordingly. Work calendars for every classification of employee are provided annually in SharePoint.

Holidays

Twelve-month (248-day) Maintenance and Operations employees shall have the following unpaid holidays and School District offices shall be closed on these same holidays:

New Year's Day	Independence Day
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	Labor Day
Presidents' Day (or Good Friday)	Thanksgiving (Thursday and Friday)
Memorial Day	Christmas (Christmas/Christmas Eve)

Other days may be scheduled by the superintendent or the board.

Overtime

The Board of Education complies with the federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) that establishes a 40-hour work week for non-exempt (hourly pay) employees. The work week is defined as the time period from Monday to Sunday. Time worked beyond 40 hours will be paid at 1½ times the regular hourly rate of pay. Overtime is calculated on actual hours worked. Work weeks in which an employee uses leave or does not work due to a holiday may record more than 40 hours for pay purposes but not be paid overtime because actual time worked was not over 40 hours.

Supervisors strive to maintain a 40-hour work week for each full-time, non-exempt employee, utilizing a typical 8-hour, 5-day work week. Any employee whose time worked for a week may result in overtime hours must notify his/her supervisor for a possible schedule adjustment.

Compensation Time

The district does not allow the accumulation of compensation time for overtime in one week for use during future work weeks.

Pay Frequency and Direct Deposit

All employees are paid monthly and are expected to receive pay through direct deposit into a validated account with a verified banking institution. Pay is typically deposited on the final day of each month unless that day falls on a weekend or federal holiday.

If an employee has a change affecting direct deposit, a new direct deposit form authorizing the change must be submitted electronically to the payroll specialist in the business services department. The form is available in TalentEd and the human resources department or the payroll specialist can assist employees in accessing it.

Pay Adjustment

Employee pay may be adjusted at any time for reclassification or reassignment of job duties, changes in certification level for certified staff, changes in work schedule, absences for which paid leave was not available, disciplinary action while suspended from duties, and changes in the salary schedule approved by the Dalton Board of Education. Pay adjustments will be made during the next available pay period following a change and the employee will be notified in writing. Due to the payroll

processing cycle and adjustment cutoff period, the next available pay period may be the next month following notification of a change in pay.

Pay adjustments to deal with exceptions or to correct errors will be processed two weeks after the regular monthly payroll.

Payroll Deductions

The district complies with state and federal regulations when deducting for income tax, Social Security, Medicare, retirement programs and garnishment of wages with a legal court order. Other deductions require an employee's written permission, including medical and voluntary insurance options, tax-deferred retirement options, professional association dues and charitable donations.

Change of Employee Information

Changes in employee information should be communicated to the human resources department as soon as possible. Typical information changes that affect the district's ability to appropriately follow-up with an employee include address, telephone number, **name***, direct deposit account, and emergency contact(s). Contact human resources for instructions on how to complete an online form to document changes.

**The district must report an employee's name based on the name printed on a Social Security card. A name change will not be made for payroll, e-mail, ID badge, AESOP, or Infinite Campus without verification of the name on a new Social Security card. A marriage license, divorce decree or court order is not an acceptable document (although such documents may be required for benefits changes and processing).*

Evaluation of Employees

Employees are evaluated using the evaluation method and timeline appropriate for their employment classification. Classified staff (*those not holding a professional educator's license and who do not receive a contract for employment*) are evaluated by their direct supervisor using the Classified Evaluation Form. The majority of certified staff are evaluated under the TKES statewide evaluation system, with the exception of staff designated as "contributing professionals." All staff are notified of the evaluation system to be used for their review at the beginning of the school year.

All certified personnel evaluations should be completed annually by May 15. Classified evaluations are expected to be completed by the end of the school year. Evaluations are maintained in each employee's personnel file.

Transfers

The superintendent and his/her designated school and department administrators may assign and reassign personnel as required by the needs of the district within the area(s) of an employee's qualifications in accordance with Policy GBE. The involuntary reassignment of certified personnel will be kept to a minimum and based upon student enrollment and program needs.

An employee may request a transfer to another location or position, as approved by the district, when a vacancy occurs for which the employee is qualified. To help ensure the employee's immediate goals and objectives are documented and considered, an employee must complete and submit a

Transfer Request Form (available online through SharePoint) according to the instructions provided with the form. The supervisor or district administration may deny the opportunity for a transfer due to anticipated disruption in school or department continuity. In general, teachers will not be transferred at their request from one school to another in the system during the school year. Exceptions shall be cleared through the superintendent.

Vacancy Announcements

Open positions are posted on the district's online application system available at www.daltonpublicschools.com. Notification for some positions open only to employees may be posted at school facilities or distributed by email. Specific application instructions for such positions will be included with the notice of vacancy.

The district partners with Educational Staffing Solutions (ESS) for substitute teacher positions. Open positions are posted at www.ess.com.

Nepotism

An immediate family member may not work under the direct supervision of another family member except by permission of the superintendent. The subordinate family member may be reassigned at any time if the superintendent believes the situation is detrimental to the function of the school or department. An immediate family member is a parent, spouse, child or dependent and those related by marriage to one of the aforementioned individuals.

Work-related Travel Reimbursement

Some employees will participate in approved off-site training, seminars, or work-related meetings that require travel in a personal vehicle or public transportation. Employees will be reimbursed for certain expenses related to travel according to district procedures. Reimbursement for meals is determined by the amount allowable for the area of travel as set by state and federal maximums. When traveling by private automobile, mileage reimbursement is paid according to the state-approved rate. The rate is posted on the most up-to-date travel expense report form which is available online through SharePoint in human resources shared documents folder. Once approved travel is complete, the expense form must be accurately filled out and turned in to the employee's supervisor for preapproval to be submitted to business services. All travel must be approved in advance. Non-approved travel will not be reimbursed.

Hourly paid employees on approved travel are paid for travel hours and work time away from the regular assigned work location according to the requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

Separation of Employment

Separation of employment occurs through one of two methods: resignation or termination. An employee resigns when she/he terminates the working relationship with the district. All resignations should be made in writing to the employee's immediate supervisor with a copy sent to the chief of human resources. A two-week notice is requested for classified staff. Special conditions apply to contract staff who wish to be released during the term of the contract and a clause was added for 2017-2018 that allows for liquidated damages of \$850 in some cases. (*Refer to page 31.*)

A termination occurs when the district chooses to end an employee's working relationship with the district. An employee may be terminated for violation of district policy and/or issues related to performance, attendance, behavior, job abandonment or reduction-in-force. Employees who do not have a written contract are "at-will" employees. Either the employee or the employer may terminate employment of "at-will" personnel at any time with or without cause.

Employees with an employment contract may be dismissed from their contract during the term of the contract for cause as specified by Georgia law or non-renewed at the end of the contract with notification. Beginning with the 2017-2018 school year, Dalton Public Schools is accessing its waiver of the Fair Dismissal Act (20-2-942) under the district's Strategic Waiver School System contract with the Georgia Board of Education.

Upon separation of employment an employee will be provided a notice of separation, a letter providing information on final pay and termination of benefits. Final pay will be determined by the number of days/hours worked through the date of separation and any accrued annual leave. Final pay will be provided according to the regular payroll cycle. State law does not require an employer to produce final pay immediately upon separation. Unused sick leave is not paid out at the time of separation, but certified staff may transfer sick leave days to another Georgia public school district upon employment or reinstated if reemployed by Dalton Public Schools.

At the time of separation an employee must return all district property, including but not limited to the photo ID badge, keys, uniforms, instructional materials, and equipment.

Reduction-in-Force

A reduction-in-force could result from changes in the size or nature of the student population, changes in the curriculum, consolidation of positions or budgetary limitations. The determination of employees to be demoted or terminated will be based on approved procedures established by the board and school district administration in accordance to Policy GAKA, which can be found in its entirety in the district's online policy manual.

Employee Benefits

Benefits are a major portion of an employee's total compensation and are provided to assist with the most important needs of employees. Benefits programs and products change over time and the district strives to best meet the needs of employees by reviewing and updating the overall benefits package through the oversight of the chief of human resources.

The Board of Education provides a comprehensive selection of benefits through a combination of district-supported and employee-funded options. The information provided in this section is a brief overview of the current benefits and voluntary options. For more complete benefits summaries the district offers informational resources in the human resources documents section of SharePoint or employees may contact the benefits specialist in the human resources department at 706.876.4072.

Benefits Calendar

Employee benefits operate on a calendar year basis from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31. Open enrollment is typically scheduled annually for a specified period in October. New employees who are eligible for benefits may enroll in any benefits program at the time of hire.

Insurance Benefits

Eligible employees are those employees who work 20 hours or more per week. Insurance benefits become effective on the first day of the month following 30 days of employment and a proper payroll deduction.

Example: If John Doe is hired and begins work on Aug. 6, then his insurance benefits will begin Oct. 1 after he works the full month of September and his premium deductions are made in his September payroll.

Health Insurance

Employees have the opportunity to enroll in group health insurance through the State Health Benefit Plan. Both individual and family coverage options are available. A number of plan options with varying costs are presented each year. Complete packets of information are made available by plan providers and distributed to employees through the human resources department. The plan options are available online through the Department of Community Health (DCH) at <http://dch.georgia.gov> under the link for the State Health Benefit Plan (SHBP).

New employees may enroll at the time of employment regardless of the time of year. Current employees may only elect coverage during the Open Enrollment Period as determined by the state, except under certain circumstances due to change in family status such as marriage, birth of a child or loss of a dependent. Open Enrollment is typically a three-week period during October and November. The dates are announced by the state and shared with all employees by the human resources department.

Employee Assistance Program

The district provides an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for all regular full-time and part-time employees. The EAP is a free, confidential counseling service for eligible DPS employees. The EAP is a contracted service through Hamilton EAP, which is part of Hamilton Medical Center and the counselors are independent of Dalton Public Schools. EAP services can be accessed by calling (706) 272-6558.

Voluntary Benefits

Eligible employees are those employees working 30 or more hours per week. Voluntary benefits are those additional benefits an employee chooses to purchase through payroll deduction to meet specific individual or family needs. The Board of Education provides numerous voluntary benefits options, including coverage for vision, dental, flexible spending accounts (FSA), life insurance, disability, critical illness, auto or homeowner's insurance and additional retirement plans. Each of these benefits is detailed in the Employee Voluntary Benefits Guide provided to all new employees and available online in the human resources documents section of SharePoint (<https://tinyurl.com/dpssharepoint>). The guide also provides information on how to file a claim, who to contact with questions and how to access provider information online.

Leave

Sick Leave

Each person employed full-time is entitled to sick leave with full pay computed on the basis of 1.25 working days for each completed school month of service. By this formula a 10-month employee

earns 12.5 days while a 12-month employee earns 15 days. An employee must be at work or on paid leave at least 13 days within a month to earn sick leave for that month. Sick leave shall be accumulated from one school year to the next up to a maximum of 45 days for classified staff and 75 days for certified staff. Part-time employees working 49 percent or more earn leave prorated in accordance with the percent of time worked rounded to the nearest quarter day. For those employees who are members of the Teachers Retirement System (TRS), all accumulated sick leave over the maximum allowed for use is maintained for possible service credit toward retirement.

The Dalton Board of Education has provided that additional days of sick leave may be accumulated beyond 45 days. The additional days of sick leave may be accumulated by the following process:

The maximum number of sick leave days that may be accumulated (earned and advanced) for any fiscal year shall be 60 days for classified staff and 90 days for certified staff.

The maximum number of sick leave days that may be used in any fiscal year shall be the maximum number of days that may be accumulated by the employee and shall be used concurrently with any appropriate leave period under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA). The maximum extended leave that any employee may use is determined by FMLA. It is possible that an employee may have more earned sick leave than he/she is allowed to use due to the exhaustion of the FMLA period.

Employees using all accumulated days from prior years of service may draw on any advanced sick leave days for the current year. If the employee is not able to return to work, any advanced sick leave days that were paid but not earned shall be deducted from final pay. The number of available days of sick leave – current through the most recent pay period – will be provided to each employee along with their pay information each month.

Sick Leave Uses

Sick leave may be used with the supervisor's approval for the following reasons:

- Personal reasons (*three days per fiscal year*)
 - ✓ These three days are taken from accumulated sick leave. An employee who earns 12.5 days of sick leave and takes three personal days will have only 9.5 days of sick leave remaining for other qualifying absences.
 - ✓ Personal days do not accumulate from one year to the next.
- Personal illness or injury
 - ✓ Absence due to illness for more than five consecutive days must be accompanied by a physician's excuse and completion of FMLA documentation before the employee will be allowed to return to work.
- Absence due to the medical care of a spouse, parent, or child
- Absence necessitated by exposure to contagious disease
- Absence due to death in the employee's immediate family or someone with whom the employee had a close personal relationship
- Absence due to the birth of a child
- Absence due to the adoption of a child
- Absence for the paternal employee due to the birth or adoption of a child for up to two calendar weeks immediately following the birth or placement

Policy GBRH may be found in its entirety in the district's online policy manual.

Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

Dalton Public Schools fully complies with the federal requirements of FMLA. This act grants qualified employees 12 weeks of unpaid leave every 12 months. FMLA may be used for:

- Birth of a child
- Adoption of a child or the placement of a foster child
- Care for a sick spouse, child, or parent
- Employee's own serious health condition
- Call to active military duty (extended leave up to 26 weeks for injury in line of duty)
- In support of a qualifying family member called to military service overseas for active military operations.

Dalton Public Schools uses a "rolling calendar" to determine the 12-month period of use for FMLA. Therefore, the first date of FMLA leave utilized by an employee establishes the first day of the 12-month period.

To be eligible for FMLA an employee must have been employed by the district for at least 12 months and worked for at least 1,250 hours during the prior 12-month period. For any medical qualification for an employee's own condition or that of an immediate family member, the district requires an approved health care provider's statement or military orders. FMLA forms are available online through SharePoint in the shared documents folder of the human resources section or by contacting the benefits specialist in human resources.

Although FMLA provides for unpaid leave, Dalton Public Schools requires that an employee use any accumulated leave during his or her absence. Policy GBRIG may be found in its entirety in the Appendix and in the district's online policy manual.

Returning From Leave

An employee returning from disability leave or any sick leave requiring an absence of five or more days must provide a work release from the primary treating physician stating that the employee is able to perform the essential functions of his/her assigned duties.

Sick Leave Transfer and Other Use

Accumulated sick leave may be transferred or used for another purpose in the following circumstances:

- Certified personnel may transfer up to 45 days from one Georgia school district to another Georgia school district.
- Up to 10 days may be transferred from one spouse to another within the same school district for maternity leave, illness or death of a family member.
- Employee members of the Teachers Retirement System of Georgia may establish service credit for unused sick leave at the time of retirement.

Sick Leave Bank

Dalton Public Schools maintains a Sick Leave Bank for member employees who have exhausted all available leave due to a personal illness or injury and are unable to return to work. Membership qualifications and the rules governing the bank may be reviewed in Regulation GBRIB(1)-R in the

district's online policy manual. Employees working less than full-time are not eligible to join the Sick Leave Bank. Members of the Sick Leave Bank who separate employment and later are re-employed by the district must meet eligibility requirements and rejoin the bank to become a member.

Paid Parental Leave

Eligible employees may take up to 15 days of paid parental leave for the birth of a child or placement of a minor child for adoption or foster care. Paid parental leave under state law shall run concurrently with any leave provided under federal law.

Personal Leave

Personal leave is taken for reasons of personal importance to the employee. Although the reason for a request for leave may involve an activity that is related to a professional interest or goal, unless the leave is approved as a Professional Learning Activity, the leave must be taken as personal leave. Examples of leave for personal reasons that may also be related to professional goals are to: satisfy requirements for a graduate degree or participate in a professional association conference that is not connected to an improvement plan.

Professional Leave

Professional leave is available for the purpose of professional learning directly tied to an individual, department, school or district improvement plan, or coursework specifically required by the district or state. Professional leave must be approved by the employee's supervisor. Professional leave does not affect an employee's leave balance. Professional leave may not be used for absences during scheduled work days related to earning a degree, including presentation or defense of portfolios or dissertations.

Work-Related Leave

Work-related leave is available for the purpose of fulfilling assigned professional responsibilities of one's assigned duties in-district which requires a substitute, or out-of-district which requires an absence of one or more days. Work-related leave must be approved by the employee's supervisor. Work-related leave does not affect an employee's leave balance. Work-related leave may not be used for absences during scheduled work days related to earning a degree, including presentation or defense of portfolios or dissertations.

Annual Leave

Eligible employees shall earn, accumulate, and use their leave at a time convenient to the school district and consistent with the constraints of their position and responsibilities. All leave shall be scheduled in advance and must have the approval of the supervisor. Individuals whose employment begins other than the first of the fiscal year shall have his/her annual leave prorated based on the anticipated months of service remaining in the year. Part-time employees working 49 percent or more earn annual leave in accordance with the percent of time worked rounded to the nearest quarter day.

Only employees who are designated 12-month employees (working 220 or more days per year) earn annual leave. Of those employees who earn annual leave, only those assigned to the Maintenance and Operations departments working 248 days earn **paid** annual leave.

248-Day Employees

Maintenance & Operations: Full-time 248-day hourly employees earn paid annual leave according to their completed years of service.

1-15	years	=	10 days
16-20	years	=	15 days
21+	years	=	20 days

All annual leave is advanced on July 1 and is immediately available for use, except for new employees who may use no more than five days in the first six months of employment.

225/230-Day Employees

Administrative Services: Full-time 225/230-day salary and hourly employees are provided 15 days of unpaid annual leave each year. Unpaid annual leave is advanced on July 1 and is immediately available for use. 225/230-day employees follow the 240-day work calendar.

Annual Leave Carryover

Unpaid annual leave earned in one fiscal year must be used by the first day school staff return to work in the next fiscal year or those days are forfeited.

Paid annual leave days carried over from the previous fiscal year must be used by Dec. 31 of the current fiscal year or those days are forfeited.

Annual Leave Payout

Upon separation of employment, an employee who earns paid annual leave will be paid for earned, but not used, annual leave days. Likewise, an employee who uses advanced annual leave and separates employment before the end of the year shall have all used, but unearned, annual leave deducted from final pay.

Jury Duty

Employees who are subpoenaed for jury duty shall notify their supervisor as soon as possible. An individual called for jury duty must assign to the Board of Education any compensation received for jury duty in lieu of payroll deduction for the absence(s).

Subpoena to Testify

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

Military Leave

Military leave will be provided in accordance with applicable state and federal laws.

Religious Observances

Employees may request leave for observance of religious holidays up to three days per year. An employee must use available personal or annual leave for the absence. If no accumulated leave is available, the days must be taken as unpaid.

Leave Without Pay

Leave without pay may only be granted in extenuating circumstances with approval from the employee's direct supervisor in accordance with Policy GBRH. An employee who has exhausted all available leave may be terminated for failure to report to work to fulfill job responsibilities if he/she is unable to report and has not been granted leave without pay by the supervisor.

Leave of Absence

A leave of absence may only be granted by the Board of Education upon recommendation of the superintendent due to special circumstances. A request for a leave of absence should be made to the employee's direct supervisor and the chief of human resources.

Workers' Compensation

All employees working for Dalton Public Schools are covered by Workers' Compensation. This assures that individuals who are injured on the job will receive medical treatment for their injury and receive partial income if absence from work is necessary for recovery for an extended period.

A First Report of Injury form (*available at the front desk in each facility and from human resources*) must be submitted to the benefits specialist in the human resources department as soon as the employee is aware of a work-related injury. The school or department secretary or designee may submit the form on behalf of the employee and notify the benefits specialist so that approved medical attention may be provided. The injured employee must select a medical provider from the list of physicians and treatment facilities approved for Workers' Compensation. The approved provider list is posted at each school facility, in SharePoint in the shared documents folder of the human resources section, or by contacting human resources.

Retirement

Employees are required to participate in a state retirement plan: either the Teachers Retirement System (TRS) or the Public School Employees Retirement System (PSERS). An employee considering retirement should schedule an appointment with the benefits specialist in the human resources department at least four months before the anticipated date of retirement to discuss the process and to plan for a smooth transition.

Teachers Retirement System (TRS)

Teachers, administrators, clerical employees, paraprofessionals and school nutrition managers participate in TRS. The contribution rate for 2021-2022 for an employee is 6 percent of gross salary, while the district contributes 19.81 percent. The TRS Board of Directors may adjust the contribution rate at any time as deemed necessary. An employee is vested in the retirement system after 10 years of creditable service and may retire with full benefits after 30 years of service. The full benefits plan, retirement options and other information may be accessed at www.trsga.com.

Public School Employees Retirement System (PSERS)

Maintenance, custodial, and food service employees participate in the PSERS. Members hired since July 1, 2012, contribute \$10 per month for nine months of the year and the state makes the employer's contribution. Those hired before July 1, 2012, contribute \$4 per month. An employee is vested in the retirement system after 10 years of creditable service and may retire with full benefits at age 65 and at least 10 years of creditable service. The full benefits plan, retirement options, and other information may be accessed at <https://www.ers.ga.gov/public-school-employees-retirement-system>.

Voluntary Investment Plans

Tax Sheltered Annuities (403b)

As an employee of a public school district and government agency, employees may elect to contribute to one of two additional retirement plans known as a 403(b) or a 457. Either plan is a type of tax-deferred retirement savings program. Because you do not pay taxes on the amount you contribute when you make contributions, investing in a plan can lower your overall tax burden in the present. You can defer the income tax on your contributions until you begin making withdrawals from your account, typically after you retire. The earnings on your account grow tax-free until withdrawal. For a better understanding of a 403(b) plan you can read about this type of investment from information provided by the federal Securities and Exchange Commission at <http://www.sec.gov/investor/pubs/teacheroptions.htm> and from an independent website founded by two educators at <http://403bwise.com>

Dalton Public Schools employees may voluntarily choose to participate in a 403(b) or 457 plan through VALIC and the contributions will be made pre-tax by payroll deduction. For additional information you may refer to the Employee Voluntary Benefits Guide posted in the human resources documents section of SharePoint or contact the human resources department.

Thrift Account (Maintenance, Custodial, and School Nutrition Employees Only)

Maintenance, custodial, and school nutrition employees are eligible to participate in a supplemental retirement program administered through VALIC. To qualify an employee must have six months of service with Dalton Public Schools and have attained 19 years of age. Once an employee enrolls in the supplemental plan the Board of Education contributes 1 percent of base salary regardless whether the employee chooses to make her/his own contribution. However, if the employee does choose to make contributions to the plan from his/her wages, the district will match half of those contributions up to 3 percent.

Employee			Board of Education		Total Savings
Monthly Pay	Percent	Amount	Percent	Amount	
1,000	1%	\$10	½%	\$5	\$15
1,000	2%	\$20	1%	\$10	\$30
1,000	3%	\$30	1 ½ %	\$15	\$45
1,000	4%	\$40	2%	\$20	\$60
1,000	5%	\$50	2 ½ %	\$25	\$75
1,000	6%	\$60	3%	\$30	\$90

1,000	7%	\$70	3%	\$30	\$100
1,000	8%	\$80	3%	\$30	\$110

An employee may contribute up to 25 percent of base salary but must remember that the Board of Education will only make a maximum contribution of 3 percent. For more information contact the benefits specialist in the human resources department or the VALIC representative for Dalton Public Schools.

Professional Learning Expectations

The goal of professional learning is to encourage continuous improvement of instructional practice and support of instruction so that students are engaged in meaningful work to fulfill the district's vision that all students become prepared for success in college, career and civic life. Employees may participate in professional learning through their school or department, the district or an outside provider.

Participants in professional learning activities understand that implementation and evaluation are needed to improve professional learning practices and agree to participate in follow-up surveys, observations and other data collection intended to assess the effectiveness of the professional learning activity.

Course/Activity Approval and Funding

Professional Learning/DPS approval to participate in an activity does not obligate the school district to pay for the activity. The applicant is responsible for ensuring that his/her immediate supervisor is aware of the expected participation in the professional learning activity and to make arrangements for financial considerations such as travel, registration, materials, substitutes, etc., connected with the activity. Course/activity fees and related costs will be paid by the district only for coursework or activities required by the district or otherwise included in the district's budget for the current fiscal year.

Definition of Professional Leave

Professional Leave is taken for the purpose of professional learning directly tied to an individual, department, school or district improvement plan, or coursework specifically required by the district or state. Professional leave may not be used for absences during scheduled work days related to earning a degree, including presentation or defense of portfolios or dissertations.

District Guidelines for Use of Leave for Professional Reasons

The Professional Learning Activity Participation and Leave Request form should be submitted as soon as an employee has knowledge of the need for this request. Professional Leave requests should be submitted before registration fees and/or reservations are made for travel and lodging. Registration and reservation cancellation charges due to denial of leave will be paid by the employee. A leave form submitted too close to the requested date(s) of leave may result in a denial of the request. All absences from work for professional learning must be approved by the employee's immediate supervisor before leave is taken. Professional leave is for staff holding educator certification who are participating in an activity for which professional learning is earned.

Unemployment Insurance

Under some circumstances of separation from employment, an employee may qualify for unemployment benefits through the state Department of Labor. The state is responsible for administration of this program and determines eligibility for benefits. Dalton Public Schools complies with state regulations by providing separating employees with a Notice of Separation (Form DOL-800). For more information contact the Dalton branch office or reference the website at www.dol.state.ga.us.

If the district believes an employee's termination is for cause (violation of board policy, code of ethics or conduct expectations), then human resources representatives will contest any claim for unemployment benefits.

Employee Discipline

Progressive Discipline Plan

The district's supervisors make every attempt to provide feedback and instruction to employees in a manner that allows an opportunity to improve performance to a satisfactory level for continued employment. In some cases, a serious violation of board policy or reasonable expectation of performance occurs that results in immediate termination. However, the majority of employee issues can be resolved through appropriate intervention and correction.

The first level in correcting performance issues is a discussion with the employee. This discussion may be a formal meeting or may be an informal reminder with enough clarity so that the employee is aware that the performance is unacceptable and must be corrected.

The second level is a meeting between the supervisor and the employee. The issue will be documented in writing and maintained in the employee's evaluation file maintained by the supervisor. Directives may be given at this time and consequences outlined. Consequences for failure to correct the issue may range from additional directives, reassignment of duties and/or hours, suspension without pay for up to three days (classified employees), or escalation to the third level.

The third step is a meeting to terminate employment.

This progressive discipline guideline is not required for each separate employee issue. For example, if an employee is consistently tardy and that issue is discussed and corrected, and then the employee has an attendance issue, and then the employee fails to follow directions, then those issues may be addressed in a cumulatively progressive manner that results in termination without moving through each of the three levels individually for each issue.

Additionally, if, in the district administration's view, an employee's action may be considered a gross violation of district policy or conduct expectations, then immediate termination may result.

An employee may not refuse to attend a meeting scheduled by a supervisor.

An employee does not have the right to invite a third-party representative or advocate to a meeting with a supervisor but may request that an advocate be present. The supervisor and/or the chief of human resources may approve an advocate's attendance at his/her discretion.

Safety and Security

Identification and Badges

All employees are provided a district name badge with picture identification. The ID badge is to be worn at all times while fulfilling assigned duties.

The badge also is an access key to assigned facilities during specified times appropriate for the employee's position. The access PIN should never be shared with another person. If the badge is lost or damaged contact the human resources department for a replacement. Damaged badges should be returned to human resources. An employee may be charged \$5 for each replacement badge upon the third request within one calendar year. The employee badge is district property and should be returned upon separation of employment or at the request of the employee's supervisor.

Employees are also issued a crisis alert badge. This badge allows any staff member to request help for a minor need or to place the school in lockdown due to a threat. All employees will receive training on appropriate use of the crises alert badge. If the alert badge is lost, contact the human resources department immediately so that the crisis badge can be deactivated. An employee may be charged \$20 for each replacement crisis badge due to the badge being lost or physically damaged.

Emergency Response

Each school facility maintains a Safety and Security Plan for emergency response to safety threats within the school, neighborhood, and community. The emergency plan and the employee's responsibilities within the plan will be shared by the facility administrator. Each employee must ensure awareness of duties related to emergency response. Please refer to the document "Personal Emergency Preparedness" in the Appendix.

Certified Staff Information

Contracts

Contracts for certified employees and other board-approved personnel are issued for no more than one fiscal/school year. A full-time employee with a full-year contract for the current year must be notified no later than May 15 if he or she will not be renewed for the next school year. Renewal contracts for continuing employees are issued no later than May 15. An employee with a current-year contract for less than full-time or less than the full year may be offered a contract for the next school after May 15.

Any certified employee who wishes to resign a position during the contract period must provide 30 days written notice including an explanation for the request in sufficient detail for the employee's principal/supervisor and the chief of human resources to appropriately consider the request. A contractual employee is not released from the contract until the Dalton Board of Education has accepted and approved the resignation. The board may release on shorter notice in verifiable emergency cases. An employee who has accepted a contract for the year who then requests to be released from the contract may be required to pay \$850 in liquidated damages upon release.

Tenure

Dalton Public Schools is a Strategic Waivers School District with approval from the state Board of Education. The district's approved application includes the authority to waive the Fair Dismissal Act

(20-2-942), which is commonly referred to as “tenure.” Beginning in 2017-2018, the Board of Education waived the Fair Dismissal Act and adopted a new process for non-renewal of certified, contract staff. A presentation regarding this change and the process for non-renewal is available in SharePoint in the documents section for human resources. <https://tinyurl.com/dpssharepoint>)

Teacher/Staff Work Day

The minimum work day for teachers is defined as eight hours and each school principal sets the hours employees are required to be present for the minimum work day. The minimum work day includes such duties as teaching, preparation for teaching, staff meetings, planning and conducting conferences with students and parents, and other responsibilities related to school activities and in the community. Individual work day starting and ending times may vary by employee according to assigned duties.

Certification

Employees who must hold a Georgia educator’s certificate are responsible for obtaining and maintaining a professional educator’s or paraprofessional’s certificate. The human resources department facilitates the initial application, renewal process, and other changes. The Georgia Professional Standards Commission requires all certificated educators and paraprofessionals to create and use an online “myPSC” account to communicate with the GaPSC. All correspondence and documents are available only through myPSC.

Information on certification and educator preparation as well as application documents may be accessed at the Georgia Professional Standards Commission website at www.gapsc.com.

Questions regarding certification should be addressed to the human resources department.

Penalty for Failure to Provide Certification

Employment contracts are issued to certificated staff. Contracts are contingent upon the employee securing and continuing to hold a valid certificate issued by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (PSC). Salary placement will be determined by the certificate level approved by the PSC and the rules of the state Board of Education Policy GBA(5), as well as the employee’s verified years of experience.

Certificated staff must hold a valid Georgia certificate in the field to which she/he is assigned. If a person is unable to be appropriately certified, the daily rate of pay may be adjusted to the substitute teacher rate from the date of employment or the date the certificate became invalid, whichever is most recent.

Certificate Upgrade Process

In order for a teacher to receive an increase in pay based on a higher degree level (master’s {T5}, education specialist {T6}, and doctorate {T7}), the teacher must submit the following documents to the certification specialist in the human resources department.

- Official transcript from college/university showing date of conferment of degree
- Personal Affirmation Form (available in the employee’s MyPSC portal)
- ***If adding a teaching field or endorsement***, an Approved Program Recommendation Form provided by the college/university/RESA at which the program was completed

The forms may be downloaded from the PSC's website at www.gapsc.com.

Specific endorsements and teaching fields may also require an Experience Verification Form which will be completed electronically by the human resources department. Salary upgrades will be processed according to PSC rules, state Board of Education rules, and state law.

All pay increases are processed retroactively based upon the date of validity on the upgraded certificate. Adjustments to salary cannot be made until the upgrade is received from PSC. The adjustment is balanced over the remainder of the year according to the pay period as indicated on the contract. The majority of contract staff are paid August – July.

NOTE: For certified staff who complete a degree in the spring or summer, upgrade documents received by the PSC **after** June 30 will result in no retroactive pay for the previous year because the PSC will not backdate the upgrade to the date of conferment.

Federal Loan Deferment/Forgiveness

Teachers employed by Dalton Public Schools serve in schools that qualify for federal loan deferment/forgiveness programs. More information is available from your federal loan advisor and from the federal student aid website at the following address:

<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/repay-loans/forgiveness-cancellation/teacher>

Tutoring Guidelines

Teachers may not provide tutoring services for pay for any student for whom they provide instruction during the regular school day.

FAQs

If I believe my paycheck is incorrect, who do I contact?

You should contact Payroll Specialist Kelley Lazo in the central office at 706.876.4006.

If I change my address what process do I follow to notify the district?

The district implemented an online form submission process for employee information changes. Contact Liz Morales in human resources at 706.876.4070 for instructions and support.

When will I receive my first paycheck?

Pay begins with the next available payroll after completion of your orientation session with the human resources department AND submission of all documentation necessary to properly initiate your personnel record in the district's payroll system.

When does my health insurance coverage start? Is there a waiting period?

Refer to the Employee Benefits section of this manual for an explanation of health coverage and other benefits timelines.

I just got married/divorced and my name has changed. How do I go about changing my name in my personnel records?

Contact Liz Morales in human resources or call 706.876.4070 for instructions. **NOTE:** Since all personnel records are maintained under your name as it appears on your Social Security card, name changes will only be made after the human resources department has received a copy of the new Social Security card showing your new name. A marriage license or a driver's license is not sufficient documentation to initiate the change.

I lost my badge/my badge broke. Do I have to come to human resources to get a new one made? Does it cost me anything to replace it?

You should notify human resources to obtain a replacement badge by calling 706.876.4070. There is no cost for the first two replacements within a one-year period. The third request and thereafter you will be charged \$5.

What happens to my accrued sick leave when I resign?

Sick leave is NOT paid out to any employee. Certified personnel may transfer sick leave to another Georgia school district, reinstated upon reemployment or used for service credit for retirement under certain conditions.

I'm a 12-month employee. What happens to my accrued annual leave (vacation) when I resign?

Maintenance & Operations staff employees who have earned, unused annual leave are paid for those days upon separation of employment. All other 12-month employees are paid only for days worked and annual leave is unpaid. Human resources staff will provide details about final pay upon separation of employment.

What paid holidays do I have?

No district employees receive paid holidays. Employees are not scheduled to work on most federal holidays but these days are not calculated in salary and are therefore not paid holidays. All employees are provided a work day calendar for their number of days worked which details holiday/non-work days. Additionally, the calendars are available in SharePoint.

Resources

These links may be helpful in accessing additional information regarding employment, certification, and professional learning.

Dalton Board of Education Policy Manual

<https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/index.aspx?S=4050>

Georgia Professional Standards Commission

<http://www.gapsc.com>

Georgia Department of Education

<http://www.doe.k12.ga.us>

Georgia Board of Education Rules

<http://www.gadoe.org/External-Affairs-and-Policy/State-Board-of-Education/Pages/PEABoardRules.aspx>

Georgia Department of Labor

<http://www.dol.state.ga.us/>

Georgia Laws and Regulations

<http://rules.sos.state.ga.us/gac/>

Appendix

The following pages of this Appendix present more detailed information referenced in the body of the Employee Handbook.

Appendix Documents

Policy GAAA – Equal Opportunity Employment -----	34
Policy GAEB – Sexual Harassment -----	36
Administrative Regulation GAEB-R – Sexual Harassment -----	37
Reporting Acts of Sexual Abuse or Misconduct -----	38
Policy GAMA – Drug-Free Workplace -----	39
Policy IFBGC – Employee Computer and Internet Use -----	40
Policy JGI – Child Abuse or Neglect-----	41
Policy DIE – Fraud Prevention -----	41
Policy GBRIG – Federal Family and Medical Leave Act -----	42
Code of Ethics for Educators-----	48
Attendance Record Procedure for School Closings -----	53
Personal Emergency Preparedness -----	55

BOARD POLICY GAAA – EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYMENT

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

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

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

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

1. Any employee, applicant for employment, or other person with a complaint alleging a violation as described above shall promptly notify, in writing or orally, either the principal for his/her school or the appropriate district administrator as identified in the Employee Handbook, which is approved by the Board of Education. If the complaint is oral, either the district administrator or school principal to whom the complaint is made shall promptly prepare a memorandum or written statement of the complaint as made to him or her by the complainant and shall have the complainant read and sign the memorandum or statement if it accurately reflects the complaint made. If the complaint is made to a school principal, he or she shall be responsible for notifying the appropriate district administrator of the complaint.
2. If the alleged offending individual is the district administrator designated by the Board of Education, the complaint shall either be made by the complainant to the Superintendent or, if the complaint is initially made to the school principal, reported by the principal to the Superintendent. If the alleged offending individual is the Superintendent, the complaint shall be made to the designated district administrator, who shall, without further investigation, report the complaint to the Board chairperson.
3. The district administrator or his or her designee shall have fifteen work days to gather all information relevant to the complaint made, review the information, determine the facts relating to the complaint, review the action requested by the complainant, and attempt to resolve the complaint with the complainant and any other persons involved. The district administrator or designee shall prepare a written response to the complaint detailing any action to be taken in response to the complaint and the time frame in which such action will be taken and copies of this response shall be furnished to the complainant, the appropriate district administrator and the Superintendent or his or her designee.
4. If the complaint is not resolved at the conclusion of this fifteen-day period or if the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution of the complaint, the complainant shall have the right, within five work days of receiving a copy of the written response, to have the

complaint referred to the Superintendent of Schools. If the alleged offending individual is the Superintendent, the complainant may have the complaint referred to the Board of Education, rather than the Superintendent.

5. The Superintendent shall have fifteen work days to review the complaint and the response of the district administrator or designee and attempt to resolve the complaint. The Superintendent shall furnish to the complainant a written response setting forth either his or her approval of the action recommended by the district administrator or designee or the action to be taken by the School District in response to the complaint in lieu of that recommended by the district administrator or designee and the time frame in which such action shall be taken.
6. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the response of the Superintendent, then the complainant shall have the right, within fifteen work days of the receipt of the written response of the Superintendent, to have the complaint referred to the Board of Education. In order to have the Board review the Superintendent's decision, the complainant must file with the Superintendent a written statement setting forth the reasons he or she disagrees with the response of the Superintendent and the action the complainant is requesting the School District to take. The complainant shall also include in the written response a request that his or her complaint be referred to the Board of Education.
7. Within thirty work days of receipt of the written request of the complainant, the Superintendent shall present the matter to the Board of Education at its regular meeting or at a special meeting called for that purpose. The Board shall review the original complaint, the response of the district administrator or designee, the response of the Superintendent, and the response of the complainant. In addition, the Board may, but is not required to, hear directly from any individuals with knowledge of any relevant facts relating to the complaint.
8. The Board of Education will either uphold the recommendation of the Superintendent or require the School District to take some other action in response to the complaint. A copy of the action of the Board will be furnished to the complainant, either as a part of the minutes of the Board of Education or as a separate written statement. The Board shall be the final reviewing authority within the School District.
9. This policy is not intended to deprive any employee of any right they may have to file a grievance pursuant to any other policy of the local Board of Education, specifically the policy designed to implement Official Code of Georgia Annotated 20-2-989.5, where appropriate. This policy is not intended to provide an alternative process for resolving evaluation and employment disputes where there already exists a due process procedure mandated by state law or State Department of Education regulations, specifically including, but not limited to, hearings to be conducted pursuant to the Fair Dismissal Act of Georgia. The complainant retains at all times the right to contact the Office of Civil Rights, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission or any other appropriate state or federal agency with regard to any allegations that the School District has violated the statutes described above.
10. The School District shall be responsible for distributing and disseminating information relevant to this policy and procedure to employees through appropriate procedures.

11. No reprisal shall occur as a result of reporting unlawful discrimination or harassment under this policy, and any attempt to retaliate against a complainant shall be disciplined as is appropriate.
12. The confidentiality of any individual making a complaint or report in accordance with this policy, to the extent it is reasonably possible and in compliance with law, shall be protected, although the discovery of the truth and the elimination of unlawful harassment shall be the overriding consideration.

BOARD POLICY GAEB – SEXUAL HARASSMENT

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

Sexual harassment may include conduct or speech which entails unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, taunts, threats, comments of a vulgar or demeaning nature, demands or physical contact which creates a hostile environment. There may be other speech or conduct which employees experience as inappropriate or illegal harassment which should also be reported; harassment can take many forms and it is not possible to itemize every aspect of the harassment forbidden by this policy.

Any employee or applicant for employment who believes he or she has been subjected to harassment or discrimination as prohibited by this policy should promptly report the same to the principal of their school or to the appropriate district administrator designated in policy GAAA, who will implement the board's discriminatory complaints procedures as specified in that policy. Employees will not be subjected to retaliation for reporting such harassment or discrimination.

It is the duty of all employees to promptly report harassment forbidden by this policy. All supervisors will instruct their subordinates as to the content of this policy and, through appropriate professional learning activities, enlighten employees as to the varied forms or expression of prohibited harassment. The principals of all schools shall ensure that employees are informed through handbooks, training materials and verbally that such harassment is strictly forbidden, how it is to be reported and the consequences for violating this policy.

Any employee who believes he or she has been sexually harassed may file a written or oral complaint following the procedures of Regulation GAEB-R with the building administrator, a principal, a counselor, a supervisor, or the administrator or supervisor of the person engaging in sexual harassment or the chief administrative officer, who has been designated as the official responsible for Title IX compliance (706) 876-4070, 300 W. Waugh St., P.O. Box 1408, Dalton, Georgia 30722-1408; or to the Director of the Office of Civil Rights, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Washington, D.C. 20201.

Sexual harassment is a violation of federal laws and regulations.

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION GAEB-R – SEXUAL HARASSMENT**Sexual Harassment**

It shall be a violation of Dalton Board of Education policy to harass another employee sexually, to permit the sexual harassment of an employee by a non-employee or to harass or to permit the sexual harassment of a student. Sexual harassment may take many forms, including, but not limited to:

1. Verbal harassment or abuse including unwelcome sexually oriented communication.
2. Subtle pressure or requests for sexual activity.
3. Unnecessary touching of an individual, e.g., patting, pinching, hugging, repeated brushing against another person's body, or impeding or blocking movement.
4. Requesting or demanding sexual favors accompanied by implied or overt threats concerning an individual's employment or student's status.
5. Requesting or demanding sexual favors accompanied by implied or overt promise of preferential treatment with regard to an individual's employment or student's status.
6. Visual harassment, such as derogatory or offensive posters, cards, cartoons, graffiti, drawings, or gestures.

Any person who thinks that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment should take one or more of the following steps to make such concerns known:

1. Directly inform the person engaging in sexually harassing conduct or communication that such conduct or communication is offensive and must stop.
2. Contact the building administrator, a principal, a counselor, a supervisor, or the administrator or supervisor of the person engaging in sexual harassment, or human resources and tell them of the alleged sexual harassment.
3. Communicate with the chief of human resources who has been designated as the official responsible for Title IX compliance (706) 876-4070, 300 W. Waugh St., P.O. Box 1408, Dalton, Georgia 30722-1408.
4. File a written or oral complaint with the Director of the Office of Civil Rights, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Washington, D.C. 20201.

The initiation of a complaint of sexual harassment will not cause any reflection on an employee or student filing the complaint, nor will it affect employment, compensation, or status as a student.

Building administrators, or supervisors and all other employees must be especially alert to actions which may constitute sexual misconduct or sexual harassment, whether such actions result in the filing of a complaint or not. Such misconduct and allegations of sexual harassment shall be fully investigated and corrective or disciplinary action taken when appropriate, up to and including suspension and or dismissal from employment.

REPORTING ACTS OF SEXUAL ABUSE OR SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

“20-2-751.7.(a) The Professional Standards Commission shall establish a state mandated process for students to follow in reporting instances of alleged inappropriate behavior by a teacher, administrator, or other school employee toward a student which shall not prohibit the ability of a student to report the incident to law enforcement authorities. Each local school system shall be required to implement and follow such state mandated process and shall include the mandated process in student handbooks and in employee handbooks or policies.”

Student Reporting of Acts of Sexual Abuse or Sexual Misconduct

- (a) Any student (*or parent or friend of a student*) who has been the victim of an act of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct by a teacher, administrator or other school system employee is urged to make an oral report of the act to any teacher, counselor or administrator at his/her school.
- (b) Any teacher, counselor or administrator receiving a report of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct of a student by a teacher, administrator or other employee shall make an oral report of the incident immediately by telephone or otherwise to the school principal or principal's designee, and shall submit a written report of the incident to the school principal or principal's designee within 24 hours. *If the principal is the person accused of the sexual abuse or sexual misconduct, the oral and written reports should be made to the superintendent or the superintendent's designee.*
- (c) Any school principal or principal's designee receiving a report of sexual abuse as defined in O.C.G.A. 19-7-5 shall make an oral report immediately, but in no case later than 24 hours from the time there is reasonable cause to believe a child has been abused. The report should be made by telephone and followed by a written report in writing, if requested, to a child welfare agency providing protective services, as designated by the Department of Human Resources, or, in the absence of such agency, to an appropriate police authority or district attorney.

Reports of acts of sexual misconduct against a student by a teacher, administrator or other employee not covered by O.C.G.A. 19-7-5 or 20-2-1184 shall be investigated immediately by school or system personnel. If the investigation of the allegation of sexual misconduct indicates a reasonable cause to believe that the report of sexual misconduct is valid, the school principal or principal's designee shall make an immediate written report to the superintendent and the Professional Standards Commission Ethics Division.

Listed below are definitions for “sexual abuse” and “sexual misconduct.”

“Sexual abuse” means a person's employing, using, persuading, inducing, enticing, or coercing any minor who is not that person's spouse to engage in any sexual act as defined in O.C.G.A. 19-7-5.

“Sexual misconduct” includes behavior by an educator that is directed at a student and intended to sexually arouse or titillate the educator or the child. Educator sexual misconduct by an educator may include, but is not limited to, the following behavior:

1. Made sexual comments, jokes or gestures.
2. Showed or displayed sexual pictures, photographs, illustrations or messages.

3. Wrote sexual messages/graffiti on notes or the internet.
4. Spread sexual rumors (i.e. said a student was gay or a lesbian).
5. Spied on students as they dressed, showered or used the restroom at school.
6. Flashed or “mooned” students.
7. Touched, excessively hugged, or grabbed students in a sexual way.
8. Forced a student to kiss him/her or do something else of a sexual nature.
9. Talked or asked about a student’s developing body, sexuality, dating habits, *etc.*
10. Talked repeatedly about sexual activities or sexual fantasies.
11. Made fun of your body parts.
12. Called students sexual names.

BOARD POLICY GAMA – DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE

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

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

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

this policy shall be available to an employee only once during a five year period and are intended to be and shall be interpreted as being the same as those minimum rights granted pursuant to the Georgia Drug-Free Work Force Act and any subsequent amendments thereof.

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

Information from this policy shall be disseminated to all employees directly, through employee handbooks, or through the required annual employee training.

BOARD POLICY IFBGC – EMPLOYEE COMPUTER AND INTERNET USE

The District recognizes the importance of online social media networks as a communication and e-learning tool. The District may use these tools and other communication technologies in fulfilling its responsibility for education and effectively communicating with the public.

This policy applies to all social media activities by district employees, including but not limited to the use of blogs, forums, social networking sites, and any other web-based communications on publicly available sites.

When participating in social media activities, such activities must not violate any Board policies or otherwise interfere with the employee's or co-workers' job performance. All policies that govern employee behavior, ethics, performance and professionalism apply to social media, just as it would anywhere else. The Board expects all employees to exercise professionalism and good judgment in any social media activities.

Employees who post information on social networking web sites are responsible for those postings and must recognize the likelihood that any posting will be viewed by students, parents, other staff members and the community. Thus, any posting that contains content that reflects unprofessional conduct or unethical conduct may be evidence to support disciplinary or corrective action. Similarly, the educator is responsible if the content of any posting results in a loss of effectiveness in performing the duties of the job.

Any social media activities must comply with all applicable laws including, but not limited to, student and employee privacy, anti-discrimination, anti-harassment, bullying, copyright, trademark, defamation, securities, and any other applicable laws and regulations.

The Superintendent or designee is authorized to establish social media guidelines as needed to implement this policy. Training on the appropriate use of social media shall be included in the Annual Employee Mandated Training. Additionally, principals shall review the social media guidelines with their employees at a staff meeting in the fall of each school year.

Any violation of this policy or the district's social media guidelines or of any Board policies or procedures because of social media activities, may result in corrective and/or disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

BOARD POLICY JGI – CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT

All employees of the Dalton Board of Education, as well as persons who attend to a child pursuant to their duties as a volunteer for the school system, who have reason or cause to believe that suspected child abuse has occurred shall notify the principal, counselor or school social worker, who shall report such abuse immediately, but in no case later than 24 hours from the time there is reasonable cause to believe that suspected child abuse has occurred, in accordance with Georgia law and the protocol for handling child abuse cases for Dalton Public Schools and Whitfield County, GA.

Under no circumstances shall the principal, counselor or school social worker to whom a report of child abuse has been made exercise any control, restraint, modification or make any other change to the information provided by a mandated reporter, although the reporter may be consulted prior to the making of a report and may provide any additional, relevant and necessary information when making the report.

Dalton Public Schools employees will receive training each year on district protocols for recognizing and reporting reasonable cause to believe that suspected child abuse has occurred.

BOARD POLICY DIE – FRAUD PREVENTION

Dalton Board of Education values and expects that integrity and honesty will be upheld in matters involving the district's fiscal resources. Dalton Public Schools employees, board members, consultants, contractors, vendors, and other parties maintaining a business relationship with the district shall act in an ethical manner. Therefore, the district shall not tolerate fraud, waste, abuse, or corruption and have an established system for reporting suspicious activities.

Definitions**Fraud:**

A false representation of a matter of fact, whether by words or by conduct, or by concealment of that which should have been disclosed, that is used for the misappropriating property or monetary funds from federal, state, or local grants and funds.

Waste:

The intentional or unintentional, thoughtless or careless expenditure, mismanagement, use or squandering of district, state, or federal resources that will cause detriment or potential detriment of the district. Waste also includes unnecessary costs as a result of inefficient or ineffective practices, systems, or controls.

Abuse:

Excessive or improper use of a thing or to an employee, something in the manner contrary to the natural or legal rules for its use. It is an intentional destruction, diversion, manipulation, misapplication, maltreatment or misuse of resources. Abuse can occur in financial or non-financial settings.

Corruption:

Illegal or dishonest behavior through one's position or authority. Also, can occur in financial or non-financial settings.

Fraudulent, wasteful, abusive, or corrupt actions include, but are not limited to:

1. Behaving in a dishonest or false manner in relation to the Dalton Board of Education's assets including theft of funds, securities, supplies, or other school district properties. Personal use of district-owned vehicles, equipment, or other resources.
2. Forging or altering financial documents or accounts illegally or without proper authorization e.g. timesheets, leave reports, travel reports, purchase orders, checks, and cash receipts.
3. Improper handling or reporting of financial transactions e.g. contract fraud, embezzlement, and theft.
4. Personally profiting as a result of insider knowledge.
5. Disregarding confidentiality safeguards concerning financial information.
6. Violating Dalton Board of Education conflict of interest policies, district, state, or federal purchasing policies.
7. Mishandling financial records of the Dalton Board of Education's assets, including destroying, removing, or misusing such assets.
8. Excessive, unnecessary, or inappropriate purchases and expenditures.

Staff Responsibilities

Employees who suspect that financial fraud, impropriety or irregularity has occurred, whether it pertains to federal, state, or local programs shall immediately report those suspicions to their immediate supervisor and/or the superintendent/designee, who shall have the primary responsibility for initiating necessary investigations. If fraud, waste, abuse, or corruption is suspected by the superintendent, such allegations should be reported to the Chair of the Dalton Board of Education. All reports of suspected fraud, waste, abuse, or corruption shall be handled under the strictest confidentiality allowed under the law. Informants may remain anonymous as allowed by law but are encouraged to cooperate with investigators and to provide as much detail and evidence of the alleged fraudulent act as possible.

Any and all reports of suspicious activity, suspected fraud, waste, abuse, or corruption will be investigated. Investigations shall be conducted in coordination with legal counsel or other internal or external departments or agencies as appropriate. Results of an investigation shall not be disclosed to or discussed with anyone other than those individuals with a legitimate need to know until the results become subject to public disclosure in accordance with state and/or federal law.

Annual Training

All employees of the Dalton Board of Education will be provided notification of this policy each year.

BOARD POLICY GBRIG – FEDERAL FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

It is the purpose of this policy to set out in summary form the provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Act ("the Act" or "FMLA") and its implementing regulations. The Board of Education ("Board") does not intend by this policy to create any additional rights to leave not provided by the Act; provided, however, the Board does wish to extend the rights of the Act to certain employees who have worked at least 12 months for the Board. The Board does intend to elect certain options as the Act authorizes. Any portion of this policy inconsistent or contrary to the Act is unintentional and

shall not be given effect. As to the interpretation of this policy, the Board's employees should look to the Act itself and its regulations.

A. ELIGIBLE EMPLOYEES

Employees of the Board who have been employed by the Board for at least 12 months and who have worked at least 1250 hours during the 12 month period immediately preceding the commencement of the leave are eligible to take unpaid leave under the FMLA.

B. DEFINITIONS

“Covered Active Duty” means, for members of the regular Armed Forces, duty during deployment to a foreign country; for members of a Reserves component of the Armed Forces, duty during deployment to a foreign country under a call or order to active duty pursuant to federal law.

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

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

"Instructional employee" means an employee whose principal function is to teach and instruct students in a class, a small group, or an individual setting.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"Son or daughter of a covered service member" means a covered service member's biological, adopted, or foster child, stepchild, legal ward, or a child for whom the covered service member acted in the place of a parent, and who is of any age.

"Spouse" means a husband or wife as defined in the FMLA regulations.

C. AMOUNT AND TYPE OF LEAVE TAKEN

An eligible employee may request leave for one or more of the following reasons:

1. Birth of a son or daughter and to care for the newborn child;
2. Adoption or foster placement with the employee of a son or daughter and to care for the newly placed child;
3. To care for the employee's spouse, son, daughter or parent, if that person has a serious health condition;
4. Serious health condition of the employee that prevents the employee from performing his/her job functions;
5. Any qualifying exigency arising from the fact that the employee's family member (the covered service member) is on covered active duty. Qualifying exigencies are defined as short-notice deployment (seven or less calendar days); military events and related activities; child care and school activities; financial and legal arrangements; counseling; rest and recuperation (up to fifteen calendar days per instance); post-deployment activities; parental care; additional activities where the employer and employee agree that the leave is an exigency and agree to both timing and duration of the leave; and

6. Military caregiver leave to care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness if the employee is the spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin of the service member.

In the event of the birth, adoption or foster placement of a son or daughter, all leave must be completed within twelve months after the birth, adoption or foster placement.

Except as provided below, an employee may take up to a total of 12 weeks leave during any twelve-month period. A "rolling year" shall be used to determine the twelve-month period during which the leave entitlement may occur. That is, each time an employee takes FMLA leave, the remaining leave entitlement would be any balance of the number of weeks that has not been used during the immediately preceding 12 months. See 29 C.F.R. § 825.200(b)(4).

If both spouses work for the District and both are eligible for FMLA leave, they are authorized to take only a combined total of 12 weeks leave during any one 12 month period to care for a newborn or adopted child, a child placed with the employee for foster care, or a parent with a serious health condition. Both spouses are authorized to take leave for twelve (12) weeks to care for a spouse or child with a serious health condition.

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

If both spouses work for the District and both are eligible for FMLA leave, they are authorized to take only a combined total of 26 weeks during the "single 12-month period" described above for military caregiver leave or a combination of military caregiver leave and leave taken for other FMLA reasons.

The District will require that any accrued paid leave (sick, personal, vacation, or any other paid leave) be substituted for (run concurrently with) all or a part of the otherwise unpaid FMLA leave under the terms and conditions of the District's normal leave policies. Because leave pursuant to an employee's disability benefit plan or workers' compensation absence is not unpaid, the provision for required substitution of accrued paid leave is not applicable in such cases.

D. INTERMITTENT OR REDUCED LEAVE

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

E. NOTIFICATION OF LEAVE

If the need for FMLA leave is foreseeable, an employee requesting leave must provide at least 30 days advance notice to the Superintendent or his/her designee. If such advance notice is not possible, the employee must give notice as soon as practicable, which means as soon as both possible and practical, taking into account all of the facts and circumstances in the

individual case. If an employee does not provide at least 30 days notice of foreseeable leave, he or she must explain why such notice was not practicable if so requested by the District. When the need for leave is not foreseeable, an employee must provide notice as soon as practicable, which generally should be according to the District's usual and customary leave requirements. When planning medical treatment, the employee should make a reasonable effort to schedule the treatment, subject to the approval of the health care provider, so that any corresponding leave will not disrupt unduly the operations of the District.

Employees must provide sufficient information for the District to reasonably determine whether the FMLA may apply to the leave request. When an employee seeks leave due to an FMLA-qualifying reason for which the District has previously provided FMLA leave, the employee must specifically reference either the previous qualifying reason for leave or the need for FMLA leave.

F. BENEFITS AND RETURN TO WORK

Employees will be eligible to maintain health care benefits provided by the school district while on FMLA leave. The District will pay the employer's portion, if any, of such benefits. The employee will pay the same portion, if any, of such benefits as the employee paid before beginning the leave.

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

With the exception of paid vacation, personal, sick, or any other paid leave required to be substituted for unpaid leave under Section C above, the employee's absence during leave will not alter benefits which the employee accrued before taking leave. Any accrued benefits will not be lost during the leave.

Upon return from leave, the employee is entitled to be reinstated to a position equivalent to the one the employee held when he/she left on FMLA leave, with equivalent pay, benefits and other terms and conditions of employment. Upon proper notice, however, the District may deny reinstatement under this policy to an employee whose salary is in the highest 10% of the employees employed by the school district if such denial is necessary to prevent substantial and grievous economic injury to the District's operation, as determined by the District.

G. REQUIRED CERTIFICATION AND REPORTING

The District requires that a request for leave due to a serious health condition of an employee or an employee's family member or a serious injury or illness of a covered service member be supported by certification by the appropriate health care provider of the eligible employee or family member on a form to be provided by the District. This certification for a serious health

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

The District, at its own expense, may obtain the opinion of a second health care provider of the District's choice, if the District should choose to do so. If a conflict exists between the opinion in the certification and the second opinion, the District may, at its own expense, obtain a third opinion from a health care provider upon which the District and the employee jointly agree. Such a third opinion as to the necessity for the leave is binding on both the District and the employee.

Upon an employee's return to work after leave for the employee's own serious health condition, the District may require the employee to obtain certification from his/her health care provider that the employee is able to resume work.

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

The District may require an employee on FMLA leave to report periodically to his/her principal or supervisor on the employee's status and intent to return to work.

H. SPECIAL PROVISIONS

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

If an instructional employee begins leave more than five weeks before the end of a semester, the District may require the employee to continue taking leave until the end of the semester if

1. the leave will last at least three weeks; and
2. the employee would return to work during the three-week period before the end of the term.

If an instructional employee begins leave for a purpose other than the employee's own serious health condition during the five-week period before the end of the semester, the District may require the employee to continue taking leave until the end of the semester if

1. the leave will last more than two weeks; and
2. the employee would return to work during the two-week period before the end of the term.

If an instructional employee begins leave for a purpose other than the employee's own serious health condition during the three-week period before the end of a semester, and the leave will last more than five working days, the District may require the employee to continue taking leave until the end of the semester.

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

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

(2) Definitions

(a) “Breach of contract” occurs when an educator fails to honor a signed contract for employment with a school/school system by resigning in a manner that does not meet the guidelines established by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission.

(b) “Certificate” refers to any teaching, service, or leadership certificate, license, or permit issued by authority of the Professional Standards Commission.

(c) “Child endangerment” occurs when an educator disregards a substantial and/or unjustifiable risk of bodily harm to the student.

(d) “Educator” is a teacher, school or school system administrator, or other education personnel who holds a certificate issued by the Professional Standards Commission and persons who have applied for but have not yet received a certificate. For the purposes of the Code of Ethics for Educators, “educator” also refers to paraprofessionals, aides, and substitute teachers.

(e) “Student” is any individual enrolled in the state’s public or private schools from preschool through grade 12 or any individual between and including the ages of 3 and 17 under the age of 18. For the purposes of the Code of Ethics and Standards of Professional Conduct for Educators, the enrollment period for a graduating student ends on August 31 of the year of graduation.

(f) “Complaint” is any written and signed statement from a local board, the state board, or one or more individual residents of this state filed with the Professional Standards Commission alleging that an educator has breached one or more of the standards in the Code of Ethics for Educators. A “complaint” will be deemed a request to investigate.

(g) “Revocation” is the invalidation of any certificate held by the educator.

(h) “Denial” is the refusal to grant initial certification to an applicant for a certificate.

(i) “Suspension” is the temporary invalidation of any certificate for a period of time specified by the Professional Standards Commission.

(j) “Reprimand” admonishes the certificate holder for his or her conduct. The reprimand cautions that further unethical conduct will lead to a more severe action.

(k) “Warning” warns the certificate holder that his or her conduct is unethical. The warning cautions that further unethical conduct will lead to a more severe action.

(l) “Monitoring” is the quarterly appraisal of the educator’s conduct by the Professional Standards Commission through contact with the educator and his or her employer. As a condition of monitoring, an educator may be required to submit a criminal background check (GCIC). The Commission specifies the length of the monitoring period.

(m) “No Probable Cause” is a determination by the Professional Standards Commission that, after a preliminary investigation, either no further action need be taken or no cause exists to recommend disciplinary action.

(3) Standards

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

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

1. committing any act of child abuse, including physical and verbal abuse;
2. committing any act of cruelty to children or any act of child endangerment;
3. committing any sexual act with a student or soliciting such from a student;

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

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

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

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

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

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

1. misusing public or school-related funds;
2. failing to account for funds collected from students or parents;
3. submitting fraudulent requests or documentation for reimbursement of expenses or for pay (including fraudulent or purchased degrees, documents, or coursework);
4. co-mingling public or school-related funds with personal funds or checking accounts; and,
5. using school property without the approval of the local board of education/governing board or authorized designee.

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

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

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

1. sharing of confidential information concerning student academic and disciplinary records, health and medical information, family status and/or income, and assessment/testing results unless disclosure is required or permitted by law;
2. sharing of confidential information restricted by state or federal law;
3. violation of confidentiality agreements related to standardized testing including copying or teaching identified test items, publishing or distributing test items or answers, discussing test items, violating local school system or state directions for the use of tests or test items, etc.; and
4. violation of other confidentiality agreements required by state or local policy.

(i) **Standard 8: Required Reports** - An educator shall file reports of a breach of one or more of the standards in the Code of Ethics for Educators, child abuse (O.C.G.A. §19-7-5), or any other required report. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. failure to report all requested information on documents required by the Commission when applying for or renewing any certificate with the Commission;
2. failure to make a required report of a violation of one or more standards of the Code of Ethics for educators of which they have personal knowledge as soon as possible but no later than ninety (90) days from the date the educator became aware of an alleged breach unless the law or local procedures require reporting sooner; and
3. failure to make a required report of any violation of state or federal law soon as possible but no later than ninety (90) days from the date the educator became aware of an alleged breach unless the law or local procedures require reporting sooner. These reports include but are not limited to: murder, voluntary manslaughter, aggravated

assault, aggravated battery, kidnapping, any sexual offense, any sexual exploitation of a minor, any offense involving a controlled substance and any abuse of a child if an educator has reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused.

(j) **Standard 9: Professional Conduct** - An educator shall demonstrate conduct that follows generally recognized professional standards and preserves the dignity and integrity of the education profession. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to a resignation that would equate to a breach of contract; any conduct that impairs and/or diminishes the certificate holder's ability to function professionally in his or her employment position, or behavior or conduct that is detrimental to the health, welfare, discipline, or morals of students.

(k) **Standard 10: Testing** - An educator shall administer state-mandated assessments fairly and ethically. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

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

(4) **Reporting**

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

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

(5) **Disciplinary Action**

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

1. unethical conduct as outlined in The Code of Ethics for Educators, Standards 1-10 (PSC Rule 505-6-.01);
2. disciplinary action against a certificate in another state on grounds consistent with those specified in the Code of Ethics for Educators, Standards 1-10 (PSC Rule 505-6-.01);

3. order from a court of competent jurisdiction or a request from the Department of Human Resources that the certificate should be suspended or the application for certification should be denied for non-payment of child support (O.C.G.A. §19-6-28.1 and §19-11-9.3);
4. notification from the Georgia Higher Education Assistance Corporation that the educator is in default and not in satisfactory repayment status on a student loan guaranteed by the Georgia Higher Education Assistance Corporation (O.C.G.A. §20-3-295);
5. suspension or revocation of any professional license or certificate;
6. violation of any other laws and rules applicable to the profession (O.C.G.A. §16-13-111); and
7. any other good and sufficient cause that renders an educator unfit for employment as an educator.

(b) An individual whose certificate has been revoked, denied, or suspended may not serve as a volunteer or be employed as an educator, paraprofessional, aide, substitute teacher or in any other position during the period of his or her revocation, suspension or denial for a violation of The Code of Ethics. The superintendent and the educator designated by the superintendent/Local Board of Education shall be responsible for assuring that an individual whose certificate has been revoked, denied, or suspended is not employed or serving in any capacity in their district. Both the superintendent and the superintendent's designee must hold GaPSC certification. Should the superintendent's certificate be revoked, suspended, or denied, the Board of Education shall be responsible for assuring that the superintendent whose certificate has been revoked, suspended, or denied is not employed or serving in any capacity in their district.

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

ATTENDANCE RECORD PROCEDURE FOR SCHOOL CLOSINGS

Dalton Public Schools recognizes the need to close schools and offices due to severe weather or other emergencies as provided in the Emergency Closings Policy AFC. The following procedure details how employees are to record their attendance for payroll and leave purposes when schools are closed for emergencies.

When Schools are Closed for Students but Staff Report

All employees should report at the time announced by the district. However, an employee may determine that attending work would require travel under hazardous conditions and choose to not report to work. The employee must notify his or her supervisor. An employee who does not report to work for a scheduled work day must record the absence using one of four options.

1. Personal Leave (*if one of three allowable personal days from sick leave is available*)
2. Paid Annual Leave (*for 250-day employees who earn paid annual leave*)
3. Unpaid Annual Leave
4. Unpaid Leave

Staff who choose not to report to work may not make up the day for which all staff were asked to report by working an unscheduled work day (*i.e., Saturday or Sunday, holiday or a day beyond the contract year*) and then report the unscheduled time as a work day. Supervisors are prohibited from authorizing individual make-up days in this manner.

When Schools are Closed for All Staff

All employees whose work schedules are less than 225 days will make up school closing days as scheduled by the district. The district office will distribute notification of revised work calendars to all affected staff as soon as practicable after closings have occurred.

If the number of closings would require an extension of the school year work calendar beyond a reasonable time as determined by the superintendent, the district may convert scheduled holidays to scheduled work days. The priority order for converting holidays to work days is Memorial Day, Presidents' Day, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day and spring break. The district may also consider scheduling opportunities to make up days through extended work schedules or, in rare circumstances, on selected Saturdays. The superintendent and Dalton Board of Education may adjust the calendar or work schedule as necessary.

Employees working schedules of 225 or more days already work all available days as scheduled by the adopted calendar. Therefore extending the school year calendar by adding a day to the regular work calendar is not an option. A 225/248-day employee may record the day as:

1. Personal Leave (*if one of three allowable personal days from sick leave is available*)
2. Paid Annual Leave (*for 248-day employees who earn paid annual leave time*)
3. Unpaid Annual Leave
4. Unpaid Leave (*if all unpaid annual leave has been taken*)

Staff may not make up the day for which all staff were asked to report by working an unscheduled work day (*i.e. Saturday or Sunday or holiday*) and reporting the unscheduled time as a work day. Supervisors are prohibited from authorizing individual make-up days in this manner.

In no case shall an employee be required to use more than three days of personal or annual leave or take more than three days unpaid due to school closings. Any year in which more than three days of closings occur, the superintendent shall authorize adjustment of days to the work calendar to allow staff to make up those days missed. If a work day is scheduled on a day formerly designated as a holiday or as a non-work day, the employee shall have the option of taking personal leave or annual leave on that day with the approval of his/her supervisor. The employee may not take unpaid leave on a rescheduled workday unless extenuating circumstances compel the supervisor to approve the day as unpaid.

When Called to Work on a Day School is Closed for All Staff

An employee who is called to work by his supervisor on a day which school is closed for all staff shall count that day as a work day and will not be charged personal leave, annual leave or an unpaid day. If staff are scheduled to make up the day on a day that was formerly a scheduled holiday or a rescheduled work day the employee who was called to work is not required to report unless directed to report by his supervisor. The day will be compensated at the employee's hourly or daily rate.

Supervisors who report directly to the superintendent are the only supervisors with authority to request that a member of his/her staff report to work on a day school is closed for all staff. If an employee who

is requested to work believes that reporting to work would be hazardous his/her discretion will be accepted by the supervisor and it will not result in adverse action.

When Attending an Out-of-District Meeting on a Day School is Closed for All Staff

An employee who is on approved professional leave/work-related leave out-of-the district and is in attendance at that event when school is closed shall count that day as a work day and the day will not be charged as personal leave, annual leave or an unpaid day. If staff are scheduled to make up the day on a day that was formerly a scheduled holiday or a rescheduled work day the employee who was in attendance at an approved activity is not required to report on the makeup day unless directed to report by his/her supervisor.

Discretion to Work on a Day School is Closed for All Staff

A 225/248-day employee at the level of principal, coordinator, director, assistant to the superintendent, or superintendent may report to work on a day for which school is closed for all staff at his or her discretion and that day shall count as a work day and will not be charged as personal leave, annual leave or an unpaid day.

If staff are scheduled to make up the day on a day that was formerly a scheduled holiday or a rescheduled work day the employee who was in attendance is not required to report on the makeup day unless directed by the superintendent.

PERSONAL EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

The beginning of each new school year is exciting; it's a time for starting over, when schools should only be focused on students and the startup of school. But in today's climate we must also consider the issue of Safety and Security.

Each year it seems that a new community and school are devastated by violent acts. For some, these acts seem so removed they are dismissed as happening "somewhere else." For others, these acts have many feeling concerned as they wonder where and when the next occurrence will take place. We must be willing to admit that without the proper precautions and planning any school may be vulnerable. But at the same time proper security measures can help to ease concerns. The district maintains a close relationship and ongoing communication with local law enforcement – in particular with the Dalton Police Department – regarding our plans, familiarity with our facilities and procedures and awareness of potential issues and safety concerns.

Dalton Public Schools is mindful of the need for providing a safe and secure environment. The district and each school has a detailed Emergency Operation Plan that you will becoming acquainted with. Along with our district plans, it is important for school staff to develop personal and family emergency response plans to complement staff responsibilities with the district. School personnel have moral and legal responsibilities at school should the unthinkable occur. Family members should anticipate that staff members may be required to remain at school following disruptive events.

MORAL RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Schools are a vital community resource.
2. Each day parents are entrusting the care of their children to us.
3. Your school is responsible for students during day-to-day operations.
4. School personnel have a moral and legal responsibility to the students in their care.

5. After a disaster, the school must account for all students and make sure that all students are released to parents or that parents are notified of the location to pick up their students.
6. In most cases, teachers and staff members will be required to remain at school until they are released by the principal or superintendent.

TEACHERS AND STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES TO STUDENTS

Teachers and staff shall be responsible for the supervision of students and shall remain with students until directed otherwise. They shall:

1. Take steps deemed necessary to ensure the safety of students, staff, and other individuals in the implementation of Emergency Management Protocols.
2. Direct students in their charge according to established procedures.
3. Render first aid if necessary.
4. Teachers should keep a class roster during any emergency or drills.
5. Take roll and account for all students every time the class relocates.
6. Report missing students and staff to school administration.
7. Assist as directed by the principal, superintendent or safety personnel.

PREPARING FAMILY EMERGENCY PLAN

1. Each family should prepare a family emergency plan. That emergency plan will help staff to know that things at home are taken care of so that they can focus on their responsibilities.
2. All staff should prepare family members that they may be required to remain at school to assist in emergency situations.
3. Let family members know that the student accountability and release process is a time-consuming process.
4. Remind family members that in some situations you may not be able to contact them for an extended length of time.
5. Make sure that, in the event of an emergency, small children and elderly parents will be taken care of.
6. Let family members know not to go to the school if an emergency takes place, they will not be able to see you there.
7. Family members should monitor the district's social media channels, local television and radio broadcasts to receive information and instructions. The school district's media personnel will communicate as much information as is appropriate based on circumstances.
8. Staff family members may come to the reunification site, but must not interfere with the staff member's work responsibilities. All responsibilities must be fulfilled before staff will be released.

DPS EMERGENCY STAFF RELEASE POLICY

1. While DPS recognizes the moral and legal responsibility that a staff member has during an emergency situation, we also recognize that staff members will want to be reunified with their families as soon as possible.
2. Staff members will not be released until all responsibilities have been fulfilled.
3. If there is a gradual release of staff, the following priority list will be followed.
 - a. Staff members who are sick or physically unable to continue with present assignments.
 - b. Staff members who have small children or elderly parents to take care of.
 - c. Staff members who have completed all assigned responsibilities.
 - d. Staff members who have the greatest distances to drive.

- e. Staff members who have extenuating circumstances will be evaluated on a case-by-case base.

SCHOOL EMERGENCIES FOR FAMILY MEMBERS

If an emergency situation should arise at the school of a staff member's child:

1. In the case of an emergency such as this, staff should remember their responsibility to their students.
2. School administration will evaluate the level of emergency.
3. If deemed appropriate, school administrators will do everything possible to release staff to go to the reunification site.