





2023-2024

Wilson County Schools

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

.....
 **117 NE Tarboro St.**
PO Box 2048
Wilson NC 27893

 **252-399-7700**


 **252-234-8001**

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General Information

1-1 Introduction

Dear Fellow Employee,

On behalf of the Wilson County Board of Education, the Superintendent, and the Central Office, welcome to Wilson County Schools! Each of our employees has an important role in accomplishing our mission:

To provide an educational environment which creates success for all students through the community working together.

The success of our students depends on the transportation team getting our students to school on time, the school nutrition workers ensuring that our children eat nutritiously so they can do their best, the teacher and assistant engaging students through well-planned instruction, and the instructional support staff ensuring our students are well-cared for, and office staff greeting our stakeholders. All together creating a partnership for success. Thank you for serving our students and their families! Our school system is proud of its employees and appreciates each person's efforts in helping our students and making our schools the best they can be.

This handbook has been prepared by the Human Resource Services to provide you with information about benefits, policies, and responsibilities that you may have, depending upon your specific position. Read it carefully and use it as a reference. Your school or office may have other policies and procedures that apply to you, as well.

Many of our benefits, policies and procedures originate at the state level, while others are determined at the local district level. Our Human Resources staff is knowledgeable of both state and local benefits and looks forward to assisting you with any questions you may have.

We're glad to have you in Wilson County Schools.

All the best,

Cheryl F. Wilson, Ed.D.
Associate Superintendent

1-2 Wilson County School Board of Education

District 1: **Ms. Deborah Powell**

District 2: **Mrs. Velma Barnes**

District 3: **Dr. Christine L. Fitch, Chair**

District 4: **Henry Mercer, Vice Chair**

District 5: **Mrs. Beverly Boyette**

District 6: **Mr. Blake Boykin**

District 7: **Mr. Rhyan Breen**

1-3 Executive Administration

Dr. Lane B. Mills

Superintendent

Dr. Cheryl F. Wilson

Associate Superintendent

Mrs. Robin May

Assistant Superintendent of Instructional Services

Dr. Ben Williams

Assistant Superintendent of Administrative Services

Ms. Shannon Collins

Chief Finance Officer

1-4 Vision/Mission/Belief Statement of Wilson County Schools

Wilson County Schools is a place where students participate in an educational environment in which they are engaged and empowered in their learning and graduate as responsible citizens prepared to compete in the global economy. Collectively, students, educators, families, and community members commit to becoming lifelong learners and ensuring students are prepared for success and equipped with the skills to pursue their dreams.

Mission Statement for Wilson County Schools

The mission of Wilson County Schools is to provide an educational environment which creates success for all students through the community working together.

Beliefs of Wilson County Schools

- Educators set high expectations that drive learning and coursework to be rigorous, engaging and aligned with college and career readiness.
- Student achievement and success should not be predictable by race, ethnicity, gender, or socioeconomic status.
- Educators believe in and share the responsibility for the development of the whole child.
- All stakeholders share responsibility for promoting a culture of integrity, honor, and respect.
- Effective family and community partnerships are a cornerstone of the educational experience.

Vision of Human Resources Services

The Wilson County Schools Human Resources Services will support the goals and challenges of the district by providing services which promote a work environment that is characterized by fair treatment of staff, open communications, personal accountability, trust, and mutual respect.

Human Resources Services Mission Statement

The Wilson County Schools Human Resources Services staff will support the district mission by delivering superior customer service through recruitment, support, and retention of a diverse and highly qualified workforce.

1-5 Policy Manual

The Wilson County Board of Education has adopted several policies relating to our schools' operation. These are included in the Wilson County School Policy Manual which is continually updated. The Policy Manual is accessible online at wilsonschoolsnc.net for the employee's reference at any time. Once you are at the website, click "About Us," and then, open the link to the "Board of Education." Employees can also access the North Carolina Public Schools Benefits and Employment Policy Manual at: <https://www.dpi.nc.gov/media/344/open>.

1-6 Open Door Policy

The administrative offices of Wilson County Schools strive to operate with an “open door” policy for staff who may have needs or concerns. Open communication is extremely important in our school system environment to maintain a positive and smooth operation. There are also times when appointments are necessary to ensure that you can see the person who can best meet your needs, especially regarding special concerns, finances, and human resources (benefits, retirement, etc.). Making an appointment will help you have uninterrupted time with the person who can best meet your needs and or hear your concerns and will ensure that your valuable time is well spent.

1-7 At-Will Employment

North Carolina is an at-will employment state, which means that the district has discretion to end employment. Unless your termination violates a specific law or violates the terms of your contract, the district can terminate you for any reason. This handbook does not create or imply a contract.

1-8 Inclement Weather Plan & Procedures

During current and forecasted periods of inclement weather, the Assistant Superintendent of Administrative Services and other designated staff will survey conditions and consult with the appropriate agencies. Information regarding issues affecting travel or the safe operation of facilities (e.g., road conditions and weather forecasts) will be discussed with the Superintendent. The Superintendent then makes the final decision concerning the dismissal of school or any modification to the school day. When possible, a decision on school closings will be made during the afternoon or evening prior to the day schools are to be closed.

Information about school openings and closings will be communicated in the following ways:

- Automated Phone Call/Email
- Wilson County Schools Social Media Sites (Facebook, Instagram, and X)
- Inclement Weather Hotline (252-265-4037)
- Wilson County Schools Website (www.wilsonschoolsnc.net)
- News media outlets (e.g., Wilson Times, WRAL, WITN)

Instructions for reporting to work during inclement weather will be given in the communication methods listed above. All supervisors will communicate instructions to their staff as well.

NO ANNOUNCEMENT MEANS SCHOOLS WILL OPERATE ON A REGULAR SCHEDULE.

Workplace Policies and Procedures

2-1 Equal Employment Opportunities

Wilson County Schools is committed to providing a workplace which reflects the racial, gender, and cultural diversity of our county and the children we serve. We provide all applicants for employment with equal employment opportunities and provide current employees with training, compensation, promotion, and other benefits of employment without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, military affiliation, genetic information, sex, age, or disability, except when sex, age, or physical requirements are essential occupational qualifications. The system will make reasonable accommodations upon request to enable any employee with a disability to perform essential job functions.

2-2 Fair Labor Standards Act (Overtime)

It is the policy of the Wilson County Board of Education to comply with wage/hour requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act for all non-exempt employees. Non-exempt employees must obtain approval from their supervisor before working overtime and must agree with the supervisor whether the time worked will be for pay or compensatory time. Under usual circumstances, your work week should not exceed 40 hours. If you work more than 40 hours in one work week, you must be paid overtime or granted compensatory time. Overtime should not be worked except in emergencies or extraordinary circumstances and upon prior approval by your supervisor.

The budget does not usually allow overtime pay, but you will be granted compensatory time by your supervisor if you work over 40 hours in one work week. Compensatory time pay may be accrued at the rate of 1.5 hours for every hour worked over 40 hours in each workweek, in lieu of overtime pay. Supervisors must arrange for employees to take the compensatory time within one pay period following the time it is earned if possible. Employees must maintain accurate records of their hours and compensatory time on timesheets provided by the school system. Any employee who falsifies work records will be subject to termination. Please see your supervisor or principal about completing your timesheets. For additional information, contact the Human Resource Services.

2-3 Sexual Harassment

The Board acknowledges the dignity and worth of all students and employees and strives to create a safe, orderly, caring, and inviting school environment to facilitate student learning and achievement. The Board will not tolerate discrimination on the basis of sex, including any form of sexual harassment as that term is defined under Title IX, in any education program or activity of the school system. The Board takes seriously all reports and formal complaints of sexual harassment. The school system does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its education programs in accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 and federal regulations.

Sexual harassment, as that term is defined under Title IX, is prohibited. All incidents of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment are to be reported and treated in accordance with Policy 1725/4035/7236 - *Title IX Sexual Harassment - Prohibited Conduct and Reporting Process*.

Although not an inclusive list, some examples of sexual harassment include the following: unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, such as deliberate, unwelcome touching that has sexual connotations or is of a sexual nature; suggestions or demands for sexual involvement accompanied by implied or over promises of preferential treatment or threats; pressure for sexual activity; continued or repeated offensive sexual flirtations, advances, or propositions; continued or repeated verbal remarks about an individual's body; sexually degrading words used toward an individual or to describe an individual; sexual assault, sexual violence; the display of sexually suggestive drawings, objects, pictures, or written materials, posting sexually suggestive pictures of a person without that person's consent; and forwarding pornographic material depicting a classmate or other member of the school community.

It is possible for sexual harassment to occur at various levels: between co-workers, between supervisor and employees, between employees, between students or imposed by non-employees and/or students. **Any employee who receives a report of alleged sexual harassment from a student must report the complaint to the principal.**

Individuals who believe they have been subjected to sexual harassment prohibited by this policy or who have witnessed or have reliable information that another person has been subjected to sexual harassment prohibited by this policy should use the process provided in Policy 1726/4036/7237 - *Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Process*.

This process is designed to achieve prompt and equitable resolution of formal complaints of sexual harassment through a formal investigation and adjudication of the allegations in the complaint or through informal resolution processes.

The Board has designated two Title IX Coordinators to coordinate its efforts to comply with its responsibilities under Title IX. Inquiries about the application of Title IX and its implementing federal regulations may be referred to the Title IX Coordinators and/or the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights in the Office for Civil Rights at the U.S. Services of Education.

Contact information for the Wilson County Schools Title IX Coordinators:

Personnel

Name: Dr. Cheryl F. Wilson, Associate Superintendent

Office Address: 117 Tarboro St. NE, Wilson, NC 27893

Email Address: cheryl.Wilson@wilsonschoolsnc.net

Phone Number: 252-399-7700 ext 8631

Student

Name: Cheryl Baggett, Executive Director of Student Services

Office Address: 117 Tarboro St. NE, Wilson, NC 27893

Email Address: cheryl.Baggett@wilsonschoolsnc.net

Phone Number: 252-399-7700 ext 8678

Contact information for the Office for Civil Rights with jurisdiction over North Carolina:

4000 Maryland Ave, SW

Washington, DC 20202-1475

Telephone: 202-453-6020 TDD: 800-877-8339

FAX: 202-453-6021 Email: OCR.DC@ed.gov

2-4 Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying

Wilson County Schools believes that all employees and students should be free from unlawful discrimination, harassment, and bullying as a part of a safe, orderly, caring, and inviting working and learning environment. The Board commits to nondiscrimination in all its educational and employment activities. The Board expressly prohibits unlawful discrimination, harassment or bullying, including based on race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, socioeconomic status, academic status, gender identity, physical appearance, sexual orientation, sex, pregnancy, childbirth, age or mental, physical, development, or sensory disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics. A process is provided in Policy [1720/4015/7225](#) - *Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Complaint Procedure*, for those individuals who believe that they may have been discriminated against, bullied, or harassed in violation of Policy [1710/4021/7230](#) - *Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying*.

2-5 Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Control

Wilson County Schools has a Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Control Plan designed to minimize employee exposure to potentially infectious blood and other bodily fluids. Employees must comply with the provisions of the plan. Some employees are classified as occupationally exposed because they can reasonably anticipate coming into contact with blood or bodily fluids in the normal performance of their assigned work duties. These employees will receive appropriate training, be offered the Hepatitis B vaccination free of charge, and use specific work precautions to minimize contact with potentially infectious bodily fluids. Employees designated as occupationally exposed will be notified regarding training and HBV vaccinations. Copies of the Exposure Control Plan are available at school. Questions may be directed to the Wilson County Schools Administrative Services.

2-6 Communicable Diseases

Wilson County Schools is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all students and employees. To maintain a balance between the need to protect the rights of students and employees and the need to control the spread of serious communicable diseases and conditions, the school system shall make decisions regarding the employment status of employees with communicable diseases or conditions on a case-by-case basis, in accordance with Policy 7262 - *Communicable Diseases-Employees*.

All employees must follow regulations regarding the handling and cleanup of potentially infectious bodily materials (universal precautions) to prevent the spread of communicable diseases. Any employee suffering from a communicable disease or condition is encouraged to inform his or her principal or supervisor so that appropriate accommodations may be made, and appropriate precautions may be taken.

2-7 Drug-Free and Alcohol-Free Workplace

The Wilson County Board of Education believes that work environments must be free of employees who are under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances, or who are impaired by the excessive use of prescription drugs. Employees shall not manufacture, sell, distribute, dispense, possess or use any illegal drug. Emphasis will be placed on rehabilitation of employees who abuse drugs or alcohol so that they may live up to their responsibilities and the standards set by the school system. For more information, please reference Policy 7240 - *Drug-Free and Alcohol-Free Workplace*.

In compliance with the Drug-Free Workplace Act and as a condition of employment with Wilson County Schools, each employee is required to notify their immediate supervisor and the Associate Superintendent within five days after any criminal conviction or no contest plea involving alcohol or drugs. Employees who are aware of another employee's on-the-job alcohol or drug violation must notify their immediate supervisor and the Associate Superintendent.

2-8 Drug and Alcohol Testing of Commercial Motor Vehicle Operators

Wilson County Schools has established a comprehensive program for the drug and alcohol testing of school bus drivers and all other commercial motor vehicle operators employed by the Board of Education. The purpose of drug and alcohol testing is to help ensure the safe operation of school vehicles. Any employee, volunteer, or independent contractor who operates a commercial motor vehicle or performs other safety-sensitive functions may be subject to drug and alcohol testing in accordance with Policy 7241 - *Drug and Alcohol Testing of Commercial Motor Vehicle Operators*. When there is reasonable suspicion that an employee is in violation of Policy 7240 - *Drug-Free and Alcohol-Free Workplace*, the Superintendent or designee(s) may require that the employee submit to testing for the presence of alcohol and/or controlled substances.

2-9 Safe Schools

Safe schools are critical to creating a learning environment in which students can succeed. Staff and students share the responsibility for taking reasonable precautions and following established safety measures to create and maintain safe schools. All school personnel shall be trained in how to respond to a variety of emergency situations. For specific safety measures implemented to ensure school safety, please reference Policy 1510/4200/7270 - *School Safety*.

2-10 Smoke-Free Workplace

Wilson County Schools promotes the health and safety of all students and staff. We believe that employees have a right to work in a smoke-free environment. The Board of Education has adopted a policy that prohibits smoking and the use of tobacco products. Tobacco products include any product that contains or is made or derived from tobacco and is intended for human consumption, including all lighted and smokeless tobacco products, as well as electronic cigarettes, vaporizers, and other electronic smoking devices even if they do not contain tobacco or nicotine. Employees are prohibited from using any tobacco products at any time in any school building, in any school facility, on school campuses, and in or on any other school property owned or operated by the School Board, or at school-sponsored events. For more information, please reference Policy 5026/7250 - *Smoking and Tobacco Products*.

2-11 Weapons and Explosives

Wilson County Schools is committed to providing a safe school environment that is free from violence to the maximum extent possible. Employees, visitors, and other persons are prohibited from possessing, carrying, using, or threatening to use, or encouraging another person to possess, carry, use, or threaten to use, weapons or explosives on school property or while attending curricular or extracurricular activities sponsored by the school system except as specified by Board policy. Any employee who violates this policy will be subject to immediate termination. For more information, please reference Policy 5027/7275 - *Weapons and Explosives Prohibited*.

2-12 Staff Identification Card (ID Badge)

In order to provide a safe and orderly environment for our students and employees, including part-time employees who access a school site must be issued a staff identification card. As applicable, this includes contracted agencies who provide services to our students. This card will be issued through the Human Resource Services. All identification cards are, and will remain, the property of Wilson County Schools. When a person is no longer employed by the school system, the identification card should be turned in to the principal or supervisor. Questions regarding ID cards should be sent to the Human Resource Services by the school secretary or site administrator.

Employment Policies and Procedures

3-1 Recruitment and Selection of Personnel

It is the policy of the Board to provide all applicants for employment with equal employment opportunities and to provide current employees with training, compensation, promotion, and other benefits of employment without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, military affiliation, genetic information, sex, age, or disability, except when sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, sexual orientation, and gender identity), age, or physical requirements are essential occupational qualifications. All candidates will be evaluated on their merits and qualifications for positions. All employment decisions will be consistent with the Board's objective of providing students with the opportunity to receive a sound, basic education, as required by state law.

The Board also is committed to diversity throughout the programs and practices of the school system. To further this goal, the recruitment and employment program is designed to encourage a diverse pool of qualified applicants.

The Board recognizes the need to employ personnel occasionally on a part-time basis to best serve the interests of the school system. The employment of such persons will follow the same policies and procedures for full-time employees. Any benefits for part-time personnel will be provided consistent with State Board of Education policies and procedures.

State and federal guidelines will be followed in the selection and employment procedure. The Superintendent will develop any other procedures necessary to carry out this policy. Candidates for employment will be selected based upon their likely ability to fulfill duties identified in the job description as well as performance standards established by the Board. In making the determination, the following information will be considered:

- application;
- education and training;
- licensure and certification (when applicable);
- relevant experience;
- personal interviews;
- references; and
- background checks

A criminal history check and a check of sex offender registries must be conducted on all final candidates for employment with the school system. Criminal records checks will be conducted in accordance with state law and any procedures established by the Superintendent. School officials shall not require candidates to disclose expunged arrests, charges, or convictions and shall not ask candidates to voluntarily disclose such information without first advising that disclosure is not required. The Superintendent or designee shall report to the State Board of Education any licensed individual who is found to have a criminal history, as required by State Board policy.

Special requirements are described in Section D of Board Policy 7100 - Recruitment and Selection of Personnel, for criminal history checks of candidates for certain positions working with preschool children or working in after school or developmental day programs.

Employees must notify his/her immediate supervisor and the Associate Superintendent if they are arrested, charged with, or convicted of a criminal offense (including entering a plea of guilty or *nolo contendere*) other than a minor traffic violation (e.g., speeding, parking, or a lesser violation). Notice must be in writing, must include all pertinent facts, and must be delivered to the Associate Superintendent within 24 hours following the arrest, charge, or conviction, unless the applicant is hospitalized or incarcerated, in which case the applicant must report the alleged violation within 24 hours after his or her release. Upon judicial action in the matter, the employee must report the disposition and pertinent facts in writing to the Associate Superintendent no later than the next business day following adjudication. For more information, please reference, Policy 7300 - Staff Ethics and Responsibilities.

If a final candidate is found to have been convicted of a criminal offense, other than a minor traffic violation, the Superintendent or his/her designee must determine whether the individual poses a threat to the physical safety of students or personnel or has demonstrated that he or she does not have the integrity or honesty to fulfill the duties of the position as a role model to students. The following factors will be considered in making this determination: (1) the nature and gravity of the offense or conduct; (2) the time that has passed since the offense or conduct and/or completion of the sentence; and (3) the nature of the job sought. Before the Superintendent may exclude a final candidate based on his or her past criminal convictions, the Superintendent must give the candidate the opportunity to demonstrate that the exclusion does not properly apply to him or her. If the Superintendent/designee recommends a candidate with a criminal record to the Board for employment or for hiring as an independent contractor and the candidate has been convicted of a criminal offense, other than a minor traffic violation, the Board must be notified of the criminal record and the basis for the Superintendent or designee's determination for hiring. The requirements of this paragraph do not apply to a child care provider who is determined to be disqualified by the Division of Child Development and Early Education on the basis of a criminal history check conducted pursuant to G.S. 110-90.2, 42 U.S.C. 9858f, and 45 C.F.R. 98.43.

The Board has determined that every position with the school system potentially entails contact with students, either on a regular, occasional, or emergency basis, regardless of whether the person is in a school or elsewhere. For that reason, individuals who are registered sex offenders will not be hired for any position with the school system subject to the provisions of Policy 5022 - Registered Sex Offenders.

In addition, each contract executed by the Board with an independent contractor for services of independent contractors must require the contractor to check sex offender registries as specified in Board Policy 5022 - Registered Sex Offenders.

3-2 Compliance with Board Policy

It is the responsibility of all employees to familiarize themselves with the published policies of the Wilson County Board of Education. Employees will be held accountable for compliance with those policies. Failure to comply with Board Policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. A yearly review of specific Board policies is required. All employees must acknowledge compliance of these policies.

3-3 Certification

The North Carolina State Board of Education requires all licensed employees to maintain a valid North Carolina Professional Educator's License. Each license holder is responsible for knowing and satisfying license renewal requirements. Failure to renew your license makes you ineligible for employment.

3-4 Changes in Employment Records

Please notify the Human Resources Services of changes in name, address, or telephone number. Changes should be submitted through Timekeeper. Your prompt notification will help maintain accurate employment records for employee benefits such as insurance, pay, leave, employment verification, and other purposes.

3-5 Employee Evaluation

Employees are evaluated according to regulations established by the Board of Education and Superintendent and/or any rules and regulations required by the North Carolina State Board of Education. The primary functions of evaluations are to provide a means for growth and to measure job performance. Regulations by job category are summarized below. Contact the Human Resources Services for additional information and/or concerns.

Licensed Staff: All licensed personnel must be evaluated at least annually using state-approved evaluation instruments. School based personnel will be evaluated annually in accordance with state law and the appropriate observation cycles established by the State Board of Education Policy.

Non-Licensed Staff: Non-licensed staff, with the exception of Instructional Assistants, are evaluated at least annually by the principal, designee or supervisor using the appropriate instrument. Instructional Assistants are evaluated two times during the school year. This is usually done once during the first semester and once during the second semester.

3-6 Employee Health Certificate

All new employees, as well as employees who have been separated from public school employment for more than a year or who have been absent for more than 40 successive school days because of a communicable disease, must provide a fully completed health certificate. Such certificate must be prepared by:

- A physician licensed to practice in North Carolina; or
- A nurse practitioner approved pursuant to state law; or
- A physician's assistant licensed to practice in North Carolina

A new employee who has not previously been employed in a public school in North Carolina may provide a certificate prepared by a physician, nurse practitioner, or physician's assistant who holds a current unrestricted license or registration in another state, so long as evidence of that license or registration is on the certificate. Such a certificate must certify that the employee does not have tuberculosis in the communicable form; any other communicable disease; or any disease, physical or mental, that would impair the ability of the individual to perform effectively in his or her duties. The Board or Superintendent may require any individual covered by this policy to have a physical examination when deemed necessary. (Board Policy 7120 - Employee Health Certificate)
Legal references: G.S. 115C-323

Health Certificates will be maintained in separate, confidential medical files in the Human Resources Services.

3-7 Employee Transfers

- **Voluntary:** An employee who is seeking a transfer to a different school or position must submit a Transfer Request in writing to the Human Resources Services during the period of May 1 through May 15. The Transfer Request documents the reasons for the desired transfer, the school and/or position sought, and the applicant's qualifications when appropriate. No transfer requests for certified employees will be approved during the current school year unless there are extenuating circumstances. **Classified employees can be approved to transfer at anytime throughout the year.**
- **Involuntary:** Principals may submit recommendations for transferring staff at their school. This may be due to overstaffing and budget cuts.

3-8 Employment Status

- **NON-CAREER STATUS TEACHERS:** The employment of a non-career status teacher is subject to annual review. The Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, may refuse to renew the contract of any non-career teacher for any reason it deems sufficient, so long as the cause is not arbitrary, capricious, discriminatory, prohibited by state or federal law, or for personal or political reasons.
- **CAREER TEACHERS:** Career status is no longer granted, but certified employees who received career status prior to July 1, 2013, shall retain the rights and privileges associated with career status as outlined in N.C. General Statute 115C-325. Career status teachers are not required to be annually appointed and may only be dismissed or demoted in accordance with N.C. General Statute 115C-325(e).
- **CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEES:** Classified employees work in positions that do not require a professional license. Employees who are not required to have contracts or professional licenses are at-will employees. At-will employees serve under the regulations set forth in Policy 7940 - *Classified Personnel*, and cannot be dismissed or demoted for illegal reasons. Teacher assistants hired as permanent employees are required to obtain their bus license unless the employee receives an exemption from the Superintendent.

- **RETIRED/REHIRED EMPLOYEES:** Retired/Rehired employees may be employed no longer than 6 months in a full-time permanent position and will only receive his/her state salary. The employee will not receive longevity, supplement, or any bonus. The employee is subject to earning restrictions of the greater of the following: 50% of his/her gross 12-month pre-retirement salary or \$39,660 (2023 amount). If the employee exceeds earning limitations, the employee's retirement benefit will be suspended the first day of the month following the month in which he/she exceeded the limit for the remainder of the calendar year.

3-9 Licensure

The policy of the Wilson County Board of Education is to employ personnel who hold or who are eligible to hold a valid North Carolina professional educator's license in the area of their employment except as may be otherwise allowed by state and federal law and State Board policy. The Board may employ candidates entering the teaching profession from other fields who hold a residency license or an emergency license. In extenuating circumstances when no other appropriately licensed professionals or persons who are eligible for a residency license are available to fill a position, the Board may employ an individual who holds a permit to teach license issued by the State Board of Education.

It is the employee's responsibility to establish and maintain licensure with the North Carolina Services of Public Instruction Division of Licensure and to meet all requirements for licensure renewal. Valid licensure is necessary to maintain employment.

3-10 Job Vacancies

All vacancies will be publicized within the school district so that employees may learn of promotional or transfer opportunities. Personnel interested in promotion shall be responsible for making proper school officials aware of their interest in and qualifications for promotion. Staff members interested in a vacancy should state their interest in writing and forward it to the Human Resources Services. Vacancies will be posted externally, as appropriate, to attract qualified applicants. However, the Superintendent/designee is not required to publicize a vacancy if the position will be filled through a lateral assignment, reassignment, or promotion of a current employee and urgency or exigent circumstances necessitate that the position be filled immediately.

3-11 Personnel Files

The school system shall maintain a confidential personnel file on each employee which includes employment records and documents collected and retained by the school system. An employee has access to information in his/her personnel file (except pre-employment data or other information obtained before his/her employment) during working hours. The employee is required to give a seventy-two hour notice to the Human Resources Services if personnel files are requested.

No evaluation, commendation, complaint, or suggestion may be placed in a personnel file unless it is signed and dated and unless a written copy is provided to the employee at least five (5) days before it is placed in the file. An employee may offer a denial or explanation of any written document which will be placed in the personnel file as long as it, too, is signed and dated.

The school system classifies the following information as directory information and reserves the right to make this information publicly available as part of an employee directory: name, address, telephone number, photo, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, and degrees and awards received. Additionally, age, date of original employment, current position, title, salary, promotion, demotion, transfer, suspension, separation or other changes in classification.

3-12 Promotions

When current employees apply for vacant positions which would constitute a promotion, a review of their qualifications will be conducted and considered.

3-13 Retention

The Board of Education's intent is to employ, re-employ, and grant continuing employment to only those teachers who strive for and have exhibited excellence in their preparation and performance. Satisfactory performance is considered the minimum acceptable standard of performance; however, satisfactory performance does not assure any teacher or administrator of rights to or consideration for employment, re-employment, or continuing employment.

3-14 Substitute Teachers

The school system will employ substitute teachers as deemed appropriate by the administration and in accordance with State Board Policy, which requires a minimum of a high school diploma or equivalent. The Board recognizes the importance of employing licensed teachers as substitutes and will give priority to those who hold or have held any teaching license and second priority to those who have completed Effective Teacher Training or comparable professional development courses.

The Effective Teacher Training course is mandatory for all substitute teachers. This virtual training is offered by App-Garden University. Once the training is completed, the substitute will receive a certificate of completion, which will serve as a record of intent to substitute in the Wilson County School system. The course includes the Substitute Orientation Course and the Effective Substitute Training. The cost for the course is \$49. Once the purchase has been made, the substitute will receive an email with a link to the training.

A teacher assistant may serve as a substitute teacher in the classroom(s) in which the assistant is regularly assigned and will be paid additional compensation according to state policies.

3-15 Teacher Contracts

The Board of Education recognizes the importance of establishing a clear contractual relationship with teachers employed by the school system. The Board expects teachers to meet all performance standards established by the Board, the Superintendent or designee, state law, and State Board of Education policy and to pursue professional development as provided in Policy 1610/7800 - *Professional and Staff Development*. Employment contracts for teaching will be granted or renewed only for individuals of proven ability who strive for excellence.

A new or renewed contract will be for a term of one school year for teachers who have been employed as a teacher for less than three consecutive years. For teachers who have been employed as a teacher for three or more consecutive years and who are in good standing, a new or renewed contract will be for a term of two school years. After a teacher has completed a two-year contract, subsequent contracts will be for a term of four years if the teacher is in good standing at the time of the contract offer.

For detailed information regarding teacher contracts, please refer to Board Policy 7410 - *Teacher Contracts*.

3-16 Verification of Work Eligibility

Wilson County Schools uses E-verify to electronically verify the identity and work eligibility of new employees.

3-17 Employment Categories

Full-Time Permanent

Employees who work six or more hours per day, or thirty or more hours per week, and whose assignment is to a position which is greater than six months in duration shall be considered as full-time, permanent employees.

Employees in this category shall be eligible for membership in the State Employees' Retirement System, coverage under the State Health Plan, paid holidays, annual leave, and sick leave according to improved earning rates. Employees in this classification are earning "Aggregate State Service" toward annual leave and longevity, if applicable.

Full-Time Temporary

Employees who are filling in during the leave of absence of another employee, or who are hired to complete a school term, and who work six or more hours per day and thirty or more hours per week for a period of less than six months (for whatever reason) are considered full-time, temporary employees. Employees in this category are not eligible for membership in the State Employees' Retirement System, coverage under the State Health Plan, holidays, annual leave, and sick leave, while the employee they are filling in for is still on state payroll. They do not earn "Aggregate State Service" toward annual leave and longevity pay. However, if the employee they are filling in for is off state payroll, the full-time temporary employee may be eligible for the State Employees' Retirement System, coverage under the State Health Plan, paid holidays, annual leave, and sick leave. They do earn "Aggregate State Service" toward annual leave and longevity pay.

If the initial employment period is six months or longer for this employee, the employee is classified the same as full-time, permanent.

Part-Time Permanent

- **20 to Less Than 30 Hours Per Week:** Persons employed for at least four hours per day, or twenty hours per week, but less than six hours per day, or thirty hours per week, who are also initially employed for a duration of six months or longer are considered part-time, permanent employees who are entitled to earn annual leave, sick leave, and paid holidays on a pro-rata basis. A part-time, permanent employee in this category does not receive retirement and hospitalization coverage. Persons in this category are earning a pro-rata portion of "Aggregate State Service" toward annual leave and longevity pay.
- **Less Than 20 Hours Per Week:** Persons employed for less than four hours per day, or twenty hours per week, for six months or longer are considered part-time employees, but do not receive sick leave, annual leave, or holiday pay. These employees do not receive hospital insurance or retirement benefits. This classification is not eligible for hospitalization coverage, even if willing to assume full costs. Employees in this classification are not earning "Aggregate State Service."

Part-Time Temporary

Persons employed for less than six hours per day, or thirty hours per week, and for a period less than six months are classified as part-time temporary employees and are not eligible for membership in the State Employees' Retirement System, coverage under the State Health Plan, paid holidays, annual leave pay, or sick leave. Persons employed in this classification are not earning "Aggregate State Service" toward annual leave and longevity pay.

Temporary Employment (Substitutes)

Persons employed on a day-to-day basis and who are replacing regular employees who are absent shall be considered as substitutes. Substitutes are not eligible for membership in the State Employees' Retirement System nor coverage under the State Health Plan, and do not earn sick leave, paid holidays, or "Aggregate State Service."

Instructional Personnel

Employees who are classroom teachers, media specialists, and instructional assistants are considered Instructional Personnel. Counselors who regularly teach any part of the day will be instructional personnel. In Wilson County, substitutes are obtained for classroom teachers, media specialists and some teacher assistants (based on their assignment).

Employee Conduct

4-1 Absences Due to Inclement Weather

On a day that employees have the option to report for a workday, but students are not required to attend school due to inclement weather, employees have the following options: report to work; take accumulated annual (vacation) leave; take accumulated personal leave, if available (teachers only); take leave without pay; use compensatory leave already accumulated. When the school system is closed to staff and students due to inclement weather, the Board will consider options for making up missed days.

4-2 Administration of Medication

School personnel who are trained, approved, and supervised by a school nurse may administer medication prescribed by a licensed health care provider upon the parent's/guardian's submission of a medical authorization form.

4-3 Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct

Each employee is responsible for both the integrity and consequences of his or her own actions. The highest standards of honesty, integrity, and fairness must be exhibited by each employee. Employee conduct should be such as to protect both the person's reputation and the integrity and/or reputation of the school system. Employees should perform their jobs in a competent and ethical manner without violating either the public trust or applicable laws, policies, and regulations. For more information, please reference Policy 7300 - Staff Ethics and Responsibilities.

Employees must notify the Associate Superintendent if they are arrested for, charged with, or convicted of a criminal offense (including entering a plea of guilty or nolo contendere) other than a minor traffic violation (i.e., speeding, parking, or a lesser violation). Failure by an employee to provide timely notice may lead to disciplinary action up to, and including, dismissal.

4-4 Conflict of Interest

Employees are expected to avoid engaging in any conduct that creates or gives the appearance to the public of creating a conflict of interest with their job responsibilities or with the school system. Employees shall not engage in or have a financial interest, directly or indirectly, in any activity that conflicts with duties and responsibilities in the school system. The Board of Education recognizes that some employees may pursue outside income on their own time. Any such employee shall not, among other things, engage in non-school employment that adversely affects the employee's availability or effectiveness in fulfilling job responsibilities. No school employee may accept gifts from any person or group desiring to do or doing business with the school system, unless such gifts are instructional products or advertising items of nominal value that are widely distributed.

4-5 Copyrighted Materials

The Wilson County Board of Education does not condone any infringement on the property rights of copyright owners. Employees are prohibited from the use or duplication of copyrighted materials not allowed by copyright law, fair use guidelines, licenses or contractual agreements. Copyright law makes it illegal for anyone to duplicate copyrighted materials whether in audio, visual, printed, or electronic format. Employees who knowingly violate copyright law or board policy are subject to disciplinary action. For more information, please reference Policy 3230/7330 - *Copyright Compliance*.

4-6 Corporal Punishment

The school system believes that children can be appropriately disciplined without the use of physical punishment such as spanking, paddling, or slapping, and prohibits the use of these or other forms of corporal punishment on the part of all employees.

4-7 Employee Conduct Toward Students

All employees of the Wilson County Schools are prohibited from dating, entering a romantic relationship or having sexual contact with any student enrolled in the school system, regardless of the student's age. Employees engaging in such inappropriate conduct will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, and may be subject to criminal action. Any employee who has reason to believe that another employee is inappropriately involved with a student, as described above, shall report the information to the Associate Superintendent. An employee who fails to inform the Associate Superintendent of a reported or suspected inappropriate relationship between an employee and a student may be subject to disciplinary action. For more information, please reference Policy 7310 *Staff-Student Relations*.

4-8 Employee Dress and Appearance

The Wilson County Board of Education recognizes that teachers and other staff are role models for the students. The Wilson County Board of Education expects all employees to dress professionally, neatly, and appropriately relative to their specific job duties and responsibilities. Supervisors and school level administrators are authorized to interpret and enforce this policy. Any employee in violation of this policy may be asked by his or her supervisor to go home and change clothes and/or refrain from wearing such clothing in the future. Failure to follow the supervisor's directive and/or blatant repeated violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Reasonable accommodations shall be made by the appropriate supervisor for those employees who, because of a sincerely held religious belief, cultural heritage, or medical reason, request a waiver of a particular part of this policy. Reasonable modifications to this policy may be made by the appropriate supervisor to accommodate staff members who are engaged in specialized duties such as physical education, vocational education, field trips, or workdays, etc. that require a relaxed mode of dress. For more information, please reference Policy 7340 - *Employee Dress and Appearance*.

4-9 Employee Use of Social Media

Creating, maintaining, or posting information on a publicly accessible website, blog, or social media platform are forms of communication accessible to students, parents, and co-workers. Moreover, inappropriate use of social media and other forms of electronic communication may breach laws and policies governing confidentiality and privacy and/or cause disruptions in the school environment or workplace. Accordingly, all employees must adhere to the rules established by the Board of Education in the use of social media and other forms of electronic communication. In board policy, the term "social media" includes, but is not limited to personal websites, blogs, wikis, social networking sites, online forums, virtual worlds, video-sharing websites, and any other Internet-based applications which allow the exchange of user-generated content. It also includes any form of instant or direct messaging available through such applications. For more information, please reference Policy 7335 - *Employee Use of Social Media* for specific details regarding the personal and professional use of social media.

4-10 Removal of Information from the Personnel File

Any employee may petition the Wilson County Board of Education to remove from the personnel file information that the employee deems invalid, outdated, or irrelevant. To make such a request, an employee should contact the Human Resources Services.

4-11 Resolving Formal Complaints and Grievances

The school system encourages equitable solutions at the lowest possible level to the problems which arise from time to time and affect employees. A grievance is a formal written claim by an employee against another employee that there has been a violation, misapplication, or misinterpretation of a law, policy, or regulation. A formal grievance must be filed within thirty (30) days of the facts giving rise to the grievance. The complete grievance procedure is fully described in Board Policy 1750/7220 - *Grievance Procedure for Employees*.

4-12 Reporting of Child Abuse, Human Trafficking, and Related Threats to Child Safety

Any school employee who knows or has cause to suspect that a parent, guardian, custodian, or caretaker of a child has caused the child to be abused, neglected, or dependent; or that a child has died as the result of maltreatment or been a victim of human trafficking, involuntary servitude, or sexual servitude by any person is legally required to report the case in accordance with procedures outlined in Policy 4240/7312 - *Child Abuse, Human Trafficking, and Related Threats to Child Safety - Reporting, Investigating and Training*.

The employee must promptly report the case to the principal, designee, or supervisor.

When a principal, designee, or supervisor receives a report of suspected child abuse, neglect, dependency, or death because of maltreatment, this information must be reported to the Services of Social Services (DSS) at 252-206-4000. In the absence of the principal, designee, or supervisor, or where that authority refuses to comply with the North Carolina Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Law, a school employee shall make at once an oral report to DSS at 252-206-4000. Once the suspected abuse or neglect is reported school employees should refrain from further investigation. If the child needs medical attention, the reporting employee should inform the child protective services investigator when making the report. Information regarding suspected child abuse or neglect should be shared only among appropriate school staff who are asked to assist in the investigation by the Services of Social Services.

4-13 Solicitation, Selling, and Gifts

There shall be no soliciting from or selling to students or staff within the school without approval of the Superintendent. No employee shall solicit money from students or parents for additional materials or equipment or create impressions with students that such equipment or materials are necessary. Soliciting outside the school premises for funds for school activities, or sales of products outside the school premises for funds for school activities by the students or staff of any school, in the name of any school, or on behalf of any school, shall have the prior written approval of the Superintendent and the principal.

No employee shall set a precondition of membership or participation in any course or other school-related activity, endeavor, or function, any requirement calling for an expenditure of money by a parent, guardian, or student, except with the knowledge and consent of the Superintendent. School employees shall not accept gifts of substantial value.

4-14 Teacher Responsibilities

The teacher is directly responsible to the principal. The primary functions are to direct the growth and development of students, and to assume definite responsibilities toward the efficient operation and the improvement of the total program of the school. Examples of additional responsibilities which may be assigned include bus duty, cafeteria supervision, playground duty, supervision of extracurricular activities, and service on committees.

4-15 Teacher Assistant Responsibilities

The primary responsibility of the teacher assistant is to support classroom teachers, especially with performing routine duties. Teacher assistants shall also be assigned for the purpose of providing services to meet the unique needs of identified students with disabilities. Teacher assistants perform routine duties under the supervision of teachers and school administrators.

4-16 Tutoring for Pay

Tutoring of students for a fee on school property or with school supplies is prohibited. Teachers should not accept compensation for tutoring a student in a subject in which the tutor teaches the student during the day.

4-17 Workday Defined

Teachers: The teacher's minimum workday shall extend from one-half hour before the student's day begins until the teacher has completed his or her professional responsibility to the students and the school. Program development, professional growth activities, faculty meetings, bus duty, parent conferences, special help for individual students, and care of school property and equipment are examples of the kinds of activities which will require the continuation of professional service beyond the departure of students.

Teacher Assistants: The workweek for assistants shall be five (5) workdays per week, not to exceed forty (40) hours per week.

Other Non-Licensed Staff: The normal workday shall be eight (8) hours with only exceptions as specific job assignments may require.

The workday on non-instructional days shall be 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Employee Relations

5-1 Communication

The school system considers good communication essential in creating a positive work environment that will retain motivated staff who can work together to achieve goals. Several social media platforms are updated on a regular basis by the Public Relations Office to keep employees and the school community informed. District news is published on the website to spotlight various school programs and accomplishments of employees of the school system, as well as to give information to staff and the community concerning upcoming events.

Additionally, if you need information or clarification about a matter affecting you, we encourage you to discuss the subject with your supervisor or principal. If the problem cannot be handled by your supervisor or principal, you should contact the Human Resources Services for assistance.

5-2 Orientation

New employee orientation meetings are scheduled throughout the summer months (June – August) for each new school year. You will be notified about this session. The purpose of this orientation is to assist employees in making a smooth transition to his/her job by acquainting them with policies, procedures, and benefits related to employment. Additional orientations are also conducted at school and department levels to address specific job responsibilities and procedures.

System wide beginning teacher orientation meetings are held three days prior to the opening of the school year. Initially licensed teachers and teachers new to the North Carolina Public School System will be notified about these sessions. This orientation is designed to assist beginning teachers in making a successful transition to the teaching profession by acquainting them with policies, procedures, and benefits related to employment and the Beginning Teacher Support Program. Additional orientations are also conducted at school and department levels to address specific job responsibilities and procedures.

5-3 Exit Interview

Any employee separating from the school system may request a Wilson County Schools exit interview as an opportunity to note positive aspects of the job as well as to recommend changes that might be made to make the school system a better place to work. Employees interested in having an exit interview conference should contact the appropriate administrator in the Human Resources Services.

5-4 Professional Service Fund

Funds are generally available to cover travel expenses and substitute teacher pay for certified staff who are invited to represent the school system or to make presentations at various professional meetings at state and national levels or who are receiving special awards from various professional education or civic groups. For more information, contact the Human Resources Services.

5-5 Recognition

A variety of employee awards programs to recognize outstanding service or achievement are conducted each year. Those include but are not limited to: Teacher of the Year, Principal of the Year, and Beginning Teacher of the Year.

5-6 Wilson Education Partnership

The Wilson Education Partnership is a cooperative association of Wilson County Schools, the Wilson Chamber of Commerce, as well as other citizens of Wilson County. The Partnership focuses on complementing our educational programs and assuring continuous improvement in educational experiences for the students. The Partnership offers various programs and rewards to both staff and students, including mini grants, student scholarships, awards, and recognitions. For more information, contact the Wilson Education Partnership at 252-399-7726.

5-7 Employee Assistance Program

Wilson County Schools permanent full-time and part-time employees are eligible to receive services through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). This benefit offers the support and resources needed to address personal or work-related challenges and concerns. McLaughlin Young Group provides this service for Wilson County Schools. The EAP is designed to help with all kinds of life situations. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Marital difficulties
- Family problems
- Parenting
- Stress
- Balancing work and family
- Relationship issues
- Work-related concerns
- Depression
- Alcohol and drug use/abuse
- Grief and loss
- Elder care
- Healthy living
- Crisis events
- Preventative measures

Employees may participate in EAP for additional services if more than issue occurs. You may access the EAP by calling 800-633-3353.

Employee Compensation

6-1 Salary

Licensed employees are paid according to the licensure levels and years of experience determined by the Services of Public Instruction when the North Carolina license is issued, plus any local supplement approved by the Wilson County Board of Education. Wilson County Schools offers an 8% supplement for certified staff.

Non-licensed and other support employees are paid based on the grade assigned to the position they fill and any additional local supplement. Wilson County Schools offers a 6% supplement for non-licensed staff.

6-2 Direct Deposit

Direct deposit is mandatory for any Wilson County Schools payroll compensation. This includes salary, hourly wages, supplements, longevity, disability, contracts, substitute pay and all other forms of paid compensation. Direct deposit vouchers may be viewed and printed through the employee portal and are not mailed.

Wilson County Schools takes the privacy, protection, and security of our employees very seriously. Many precautions are enforced to prevent cybersecurity threats and identity theft. Direct deposit forms for additions, changes or deletes will only be accepted through:

- District courier system
- In person in the payroll Services
- In person in the HR Services

Permanent full-time and part-time employees will have their checks automatically deposited into the bank, savings and loan, credit union, or other financial institution of their choice.

6-3 Longevity Pay

All permanent full-time employees or 75% or more part-time classified employees receive longevity pay after completing 10 years of qualifying service. Longevity is an annual payment based on a percentage of your yearly salary. The annual rate of pay does not include bonuses or pay for extra duties. This percentage increases as years of state service increase. Longevity payments are paid during the pay period following your anniversary date of employment.

Years of State Service

10 but less than 15 years
15 but less than 20 years
20 but less than 25 years
25 or more years

Longevity Pay Rate

1.50 percent
2.25 percent
3.25 percent
4.50 percent

6-4 Ending Employment with Wilson County Schools

Dismissal

Licensed employees included in the definition of “teacher” under North Carolina General Statute 115C-325 are subject to the dismissal procedures outlined in that law. Although non-licensed employees are not entitled to the protections of North Carolina General Statute 115C-325, and are considered at-will employees, the school system is committed to fair employment practices that assure there is a reasonable basis for dismissal or termination.

Resignation

Licensed staff must give a 30-day written notice prior to resigning from the school system. The 30 days are counted from the date of receipt of the resignation by the Human Resources Services. Failure to give 30 days’ notice may result in license revocation. Non-licensed staff must give at least 14 calendar days’ notice prior to resigning from the school system. Administrators are required to give 60-day written notice prior to resigning from the school system.

Retirement

Employees may retire with unreduced benefits if they: (1) have 30 years of service or (2) reach age 60 with 25 years of service. Employees nearing retirement should attend a retirement information session offered monthly by the Human Resource Services at least 90 days prior to the anticipated retirement date. For additional information, please visit <https://www.myncretirement.com>.

Reduction in Force

The Board recognizes that circumstances may require a reduction in the number of persons employed by the school system because of district reorganization, decreased enrollment, or decreased or discontinued funding. When circumstances require such a reduction in the workforce, the Board follows the procedures set forth by Policy 7920 - Reduction In Force: Teachers and School Administrators.

6-5 Experience Credit

“How much experience do I have?” is a commonly asked question. The answer is, “It depends on the kind of experience one is asking about.” The following is a description of the different kinds of experience one may earn.

Teaching Certificate

If a person teaches (receiving full pay) as much as six months during the year, he/she earns a year of experience based on the teaching certificate and, thus, on the teachers’ salary schedule. If a person teaches in a fifty percent position for ten months, he/she can earn the equivalent of five months on his/her certificate and will not earn the increment annually. Two part-years of experience can be added together for teaching certificate rating, but one can never earn more than one year

of experience during a twelve-month period. Teaching in summer school can be counted, on a prorated basis, toward a year of experience on a person's teaching certificate unless specifically exempted by legislation for that summer. Unlike many states, North Carolina allows year-for-year experience credit for teachers coming from out of state. Sometimes work experience outside education will count toward a directly related teaching area; this is common with vocational teachers. Also, sometimes experience as a teacher assistant (once one qualifies for a teaching certificate) can be counted on a 2:1 basis on one's teaching certificate. The Human Resources Services can assist those who have questions regarding these situations.

Retirement System Service Credit

Each month an employee contributes (i.e., has money withdrawn from his/her check as a contribution) to the North Carolina Retirement System, he/she earns a month of service credit in this System. A person can buy retirement system service for many different reasons. Employees must be on the payroll half or more of the days in the month to earn any of the preceding benefits for the month.

6-6 Timekeeper/Employee Portal & Essential Payroll Information

TimeKeeper is the electronic timesheet and absence recording system Wilson County Schools uses for payroll processing and for compliance with the requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). The use of TimeKeeper is mandatory for all classified employees. Exact time (hours and minutes) are tracked exclusively for hourly-paid employees as designated by FLSA.

Employees are given an employee number and a pin number and may access TimeKeeper/Employee Portal from anywhere with internet access. Employees may only sign in to work at a networked PC or device in the school system. Signing in at an alternate location other than your designated work site should only occur if the employee is beginning his/her official work hours at the location. Time displayed on the timesheet is TimeKeeper server time, not PC time.

Any questions about TimeKeeper should be referred to your secretary/bookkeeper.

Leave Benefits

7-1 Annual Vacation Leave

Permanent full-time and 75% part-time employees earn annual leave. To earn annual vacation leave in a given month, employees must be working or be on paid leave during half or more of the workdays in that month. Eligible part-time permanent employees earn leave equal to their percentage of full-time employment. Instructional personnel and bus drivers are not permitted to take annual leave on days when students are scheduled to be in class.

Annual leave may be accumulated without any applicable maximum until June 30 of each year. On June 30 of each year, employees with more than 30 days of accumulated leave will have the excess accumulated leave converted to sick leave so that only 30 days are carried forward to the next fiscal year which begins on July 1. Requests for annual leave must be approved by the employee's immediate supervisor.

Annual leave will be transferred when employees transfer among local educational agencies and may be transferred to state agencies if they are willing to accept the leave; otherwise, employees leaving the system will be paid for up to 30 days of accumulated leave. In case of death, the employee's estate will receive payment for any accumulated annual leave up to 30 days.

The following chart shows the number of days of vacation earned each month based on years of state service.

WHEN YOU HAVE	YOU ARE GRANTED			
Years of State Service	Days per Month	10-Month Employees	11-Month Employees	12-Month Employees
Less than 2 years	1.00	10.00	11.00	12.00
2 but less than 5 years	1.15	11.50	12.65	13.80
5 but less than 10 years	1.40	14.00	15.40	16.80
10 but less than 15 years	1.65	16.50	18.15	19.80
15 but less than 20 years	1.90	19.00	20.90	22.80
20 years or more	2.15	21.50	23.65	25.80

7-2 Holiday Leave

Twelve-month employees observe 11 or 12 holidays per year depending on the day of the week Christmas falls. Ten-month and Eleven-month employees have 10 or 11 holidays yearly, depending on the day of the week Christmas falls. The Wilson County Board of Education determines when holidays are scheduled within a school year.

Absence from school for a bona fide religious holiday may be allowed for a maximum of two days within any one school year with prior approval from the superintendent or his designee. The employee must agree to make up the amount of time for which their absence has been excused.

7-3 Extended Sick Leave (Teachers Only)

Teachers are provided 20 days each year of additional sick leave for personal illness, less the cost of a substitute, regardless of whether a substitute is actually paid for the day. This extended sick leave may be used after accumulated sick leave has been exhausted. Extended sick leave cannot be accumulated.

7-4 Family and Medical Leave

Employees who are taking sick, annual, personal, extended sick leave or leave without pay because of personal illness, birth of a child, placement of an adopted or foster child, or to take care of an ill child, spouse, or parent are eligible for up to 12 work weeks of leave. During those twelve work weeks, the employee's hospitalization insurance premium is paid by the system. Employees are eligible if they have been employed for at least one year and have worked at least 1250 hours in the previous 12 months.

7-5 Family Leave

All school employees are granted a leave of absence without pay for up to one calendar year for the birth or adoption of a child. The 12 months of leave may be extended for the remainder of the year when this leave would otherwise end in the latter half of the school year. After an eligible employee has exhausted all benefits provided under FMLA, he or she will not be covered by health, dental, or life insurance unless he or she contacts the Director of Benefits in the Human Resource Services to arrange for coverage on a self-pay basis. Employees do not receive pay for holidays or annual leave days scheduled on the calendar during non-paid leave. Non-paid leaves can usually be extended but not shortened. Employees should contact Human Resource Services to arrange non-paid leave.

7-6 Leave of Absence Request

Leave should be requested on a Request for Leave of Absence form which is available at all schools, major departments, and Human Resource Services. The form needs to be completed by the employee and signed by the principal or department head and then sent to the Human Resource Services. Any questions concerning leaves of absences should be referred to the Human Resource Services.

7-7 Leaves of Absence with Pay

Jury Duty: When permanent school employees are absent from work to serve on a jury, no deduction is made from their regular salaries. Employees are entitled to regular compensation plus any fees received for jury duty.

Court Attendance: When permanent employees are absent from work to attend court in connection with their official duty or because they were subpoenaed or directed by proper authority to appear as a witness for another individual, no salary deduction is made. Any fees received when serving in an official capacity as a witness must be returned to the local school system. If, however, an employee is a defendant or a plaintiff in a case and must be absent from work, no salary is to be received unless that time is charged to annual or personal leave.

Military Leave: Leave with pay is granted to members of reserve components of the U.S. Armed Forces for certain periods of active-duty training and for state military duty. Leave with pay is extended to full-time or part-time permanent school employees, normally not to exceed 15 working days during the Federal fiscal year (October 1 - September 30), for annual training and military maneuvers. Military leave without pay can be granted for one enlistment period of active service, not to exceed five years plus 90 days.

Personal Leave (Teachers Only): Teachers earn two days of personal leave during the ten-month school term with a salary deduction for the cost of substitute teachers. These days can be accumulated to a maximum of five days and are transferable among school systems. With at least 5 days notice and a stated reason, personal leave is granted upon authorization of the teacher's principal. This type of leave is not normally provided on the first day of school, a required teacher workday or the last day before or the next working day after a holiday or scheduled vacation day. In special situations, principals may approve leave which does not conform to these stipulations.

7-8 Professional Leave

Short-term professional leave for participation in workshops and meetings is available if approved by the principal or supervisor. Teachers should check with the principal and/or specific program coordinators about the availability of funds to pay for substitutes for professional leave purposes. Long Term professional leave of up to one year for educational purposes may be requested after an employee has been employed with the system for three years. Long term professional leave is non-paid. An employee must apply to the Associate Superintendent to request professional leave. Requests are subject to approval by the principal or supervisor, the Superintendent, and the Board.

7-9 Sick Leave

Permanent employees who are working or who are on paid leave for half or more of the workdays in a monthly pay period earn sick leave at the rate of one day per month in addition to any excess accumulated annual leave that may be converted to sick leave. Eligible permanent part-time employees earn sick leave equal to their percentage of full-time employment. Sick leave may be granted for: (1) periods of temporary disability caused by personal illness, injury, or other temporary disability, (2) illness in the employee's immediate family that necessitates the employee's attendance, (3) death in the immediate family, and (4) medical appointments.

Sick leave may be accumulated indefinitely and is transferable among local school systems and may be transferred to a state agency, community college, or technical institute if they are willing to accept the sick leave.

7-10 Voluntary Shared Leave

The purpose of voluntary leave is to provide economic relief for employees, who by reason of prolonged absence caused by serious medical conditions of self or immediate family, are likely to suffer financial hardship. Only permanent full-time and part-time employees are eligible to receive donated (Shared) leave.

An employee must apply to the Human Resources Services to request donated leave. An employee may make an application for shared leave at such time as medical evidence is available to support the need for leave beyond the employee's available accumulated leave.

Any eligible employee in the school system may donate annual leave to any approved employee in the same school system. An employee of an LEA may donate sick leave to a non family member in the same or another LEA under the following provisions: 1) The donor shall not donate more than five days of sick leave per year to any one nonfamily member; 2) the combined total of sick leave donated to a recipient from a nonfamily member donor shall not exceed 20 days per year. There is no provision for public school employees to donate or receive annual leave from employees or family members in State agencies, community colleges, technical institutes, or positions covered by the State Personnel Act in county agencies of mental health, public health, social services, or emergency management.

A donating employee may not donate more annual leave than he or she can earn in one year. Additionally, the amount donated must not reduce the donor's annual leave balance below one-half of what that person can earn in the year. Employees may not give or receive compensation in any form for donated leave.

7-11 Retirement

Permanent, full-time employees are covered by the North Carolina Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System. Employees' contributions are automatically deducted from the employee's paycheck and matched by the employer's contribution. Employee contributions are paid with pretax dollars, thereby reducing the current state and federal income taxes. Employees who are involuntarily terminated or resign after five or more years of Retirement System membership may withdraw their retirement contributions plus any interest they have earned. Persons who voluntarily resign with less than five years' membership in the Retirement System may withdraw only the funds they contributed. Persons leaving public school employment with five or more years of membership credit in the retirement system may elect to leave their contributions in the Retirement System and receive future retirement benefits.

7-12 State Employees' Credit Union

Permanent full-time and part-time employees are eligible to become members of the State Employees' Credit Union. It is the employee's responsibility to contact the Credit Union to become a member.

The Board has authorized voluntary monthly deductions from permanent full-time or part-time employees for financial obligations incurred with the State Employees' Credit Union. Credit Union payroll deductions may be made for savings, checking, and/or loan accounts.

7-13 Supplemental Retirement Income Plan of North Carolina (401K)

Participation is available in the 401(K) Supplement Retirement Income Plan of North Carolina. **Truist** is the state administrator of the plan. To request an enrollment packet (which includes a complete brochure) or to ask questions about the 401(K) Plan contact Truist 401(K) state services at 1-800-722-4015.

Payroll deductions are available for plan contributors and plan loan repayments. It is the employee's responsibility to contact Truist to request an increase/decrease to their contract. If an employee becomes ineligible to participate in the 401(K) Plan due to a decrease in percentage employed or for any other reason, it is the employee's responsibility to contact Truist to make the proper arrangements.

Effective April 1, 2022, **Empower** officially acquired the full-service retirement business supported by the NC Retirement System. The Total Retirement Plans offered are 401k and 457 supplemental accounts.

Contact an Empower Retirement Education Counselor at 866-NC Plans (866-627-5267) or by visiting ncplans.retirepru.com.

7-14 Tax-sheltered Annuities (403b)

Tax-sheltered annuities are available for interested employees. Employees are provided payroll deductions for the purchase of a tax-sheltered annuity from any vendor on the Board approved list.

7-15 Workers' Compensation

All public-school employees are entitled to receive workers' compensation under the North Carolina Workers' Compensation Act. Employees must have suffered an accidental injury or contracted an occupational disease in the course of employment to be eligible for medical payments, compensation for lost salary, or death benefits under this program.

7-16 Insurance

Health Insurance coverage is provided for full-time, permanent employees with dependent coverage available. Employees may choose from among several state plans. Permanent part-time employees are eligible for coverage on a self-paid basis. Questions concerning plans offered to employees and dependents should be directed to the proper Human Resources Services administrator. Open Enrollment begins in November.

Dental and Vision Insurance are also made available to all full-time, permanent employees on an individual or a family basis. The system pays a small portion of the cost of this insurance. The employee has the option to accept coverage on either an individual or a family basis. If coverage is declined by the employee and eligible dependents during the first 30 days following the employment date, the employee and/or dependents will have a (12) month waiting period before full coverage begins.

Wilson County Schools provides \$5,000 in **Life Insurance** for all full-time, permanent employees. There is no cost to the employee for this coverage. Additional coverage for the employee and dependents is available at a small cost to the employee. Coverage will begin on the first day of the month following the employment date.

Colonial also provides additional life, vision, and health policies. Enrollment in Colonial programs is usually held in February and March of each year.

Learning and Growth Opportunities

8-1 Beginning Teacher Support

Wilson County Schools (WCS) provides a research- and evidenced-based program of guidance and support for all beginning teachers in their first three years of teaching. All teachers meeting the requirements for their first North Carolina Professional Educator's License and having less than three years of teaching experience receive an initial or alternative license. Persons holding these licenses are required to participate in a state-mandated and locally implemented Beginning Teacher Support Program for three years. A minimum of six consecutive months of participation is required per school year for the “year” to count toward fulfillment of the BTSP requirement.

Teacher education extends beyond higher education programs and past experiences. The WCS Beginning Teacher Support Program (BTSP) assists with the transition from university training or past work experience, to novice teacher, and on to continued growth towards mastery teaching. The program takes the form of a Professional Learning Community (PLC) and reflects a strong emphasis of support and clinical guidance (as distinguished from evaluation) for beginning teachers and a commitment to high-quality training and support for mentors.

The Beginning Teacher Support Program is designed to help new teachers make a smooth transition into the educational profession. Support is provided for all new teachers through an orientation, ongoing guidance, and opportunities to enhance each teacher’s professional development while encouraging individuality and creativity.

A collaborative approach helps the beginning teacher acclimate to the educational setting and profession. A team comprised of personnel including their administrator(s), assigned mentor, the Beginning Teacher Support (BTS) Coordinators, school staff, and other support personnel are readily available to provide the nurturing and clinical guidance needed for beginning teachers.

Each year of the three-year process, the principal or designee conducts three formal observations during three observation cycles. Additionally, an experienced teacher conducts a fourth peer observation and provides feedback to the Beginning Teacher.

A Continuing License will be granted when the BT has successfully completed the required professional growth as prescribed by the district, licensure requirements, and three years of successful teaching. Beginning Teachers may access the Beginning Teacher Support Plan at www.wilsonschoolsnc.net.

8-2 Effective Teacher Training Program

The N.C. Effective Teacher Training Program (ETTP) is offered online through App-Garden University. The course provides training in effective teaching for substitute teachers and others interested in becoming an educator to improve the learning environment for students. The class is usually taught at least once each semester. Once the training is completed, he/she will receive a certificate of completion. The course includes the Substitute Orientation Course and the Effective Substitute Training. The cost for the course is \$49. Once the purchase has been made, he/she will receive an email with a link to the training.

8-3 Tuition Reimbursement

Partial tuition reimbursement for courses taken through four-year colleges and universities will be granted to certified teachers employed by the Wilson County Schools and other employees who are enrolled in teacher education programs subject to the availability of funds and in the following order of priority:

- Courses required to clear a provisional certificate in the area to which the individual is assigned;
- Courses included in a program of study to upgrade the certificate in the area of current assignment or to add an area of critical need;
- Courses at the junior-level or higher included in a program of study leading to licensure taken by non-certified employees;
- Courses to add an initial license in administration or supervision.

Applications for tuition reimbursement may be submitted to the Human Resources Services throughout the school year for consideration in May. Documentation of successful completion of the courses and a copy of the receipt for payment of tuition must also be submitted with the application. The cost of textbooks will not be reimbursed. Tuition reimbursement grants will be awarded according to the following process.

The Human Resources Services will:

- Identify funds available for this purpose by the last weekday of May during the current school year;
- Determine the level(s) of priorities to be addressed
- Determine the number of semester hours to be reimbursed, with a maximum of six semester hours per person per year;
- Calculate the available reimbursement, \$150 per semester hour up to a maximum of \$900.

Note: All applications for tuition reimbursement are due to the Human Resources Services by the end of the day on the last weekday of May during the current school year. Awarded reimbursements will be deposited into the employee's payroll account in June. The HR Services will process any application received beginning June 1 during the next processing period. All reimbursements are subject to the availability of funds. The employee must have continued employment with Wilson County Schools to receive reimbursement.

8-4 National Board Certification

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards recognizes and acknowledges the advancements of educators. This prestigious certification is open to any person who:

- * Possesses a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution,
- * Has completed three years of successful teaching,
- * And who holds a valid North Carolina teaching license for those three years of teaching.

As a candidate for National Board Certification teachers undergo a process that has been defined as the best professional development experience of their career. National Board certification is an up to three-year long process, which includes the completion of performance portfolios. These portfolios provide evidence of the innovations used by teachers to meet the needs of all students. The deadlines for the various portfolios are scheduled throughout the term of the year. This is an extensive and detailed process. The end result is one of honor and distinction.

Wilson County Schools provides support sessions and will reimburse the total cost of certification for employees who successfully obtain National Board Certification. In addition, North Carolina will provide a twelve-percent bonus to educators who achieve National Board Certification.

Certification is available in the following areas:

- Art:
 - Early and Middle Childhood
 - Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood
- Career and Technical Education
 - Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood
- English as a New Language:
 - Early and Middle Childhood
 - Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood
- English Language Arts:
 - Early Adolescence
 - Adolescence through Young Adulthood
- Exceptional Needs Specialist
 - Early Childhood through Young Adulthood
- Generalist
 - Early Childhood
 - Middle Childhood
- Health Education
 - Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood
- Library Media
 - Early Childhood through Young Adulthood
- Literacy: Reading-Language Arts
 - Early and Middle Childhood

- Mathematics
 - Early Adolescence
 - Adolescence and Young Adulthood
- Music
 - Early and Middle Childhood
 - Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood
- Physical Education
 - Early and Middle Childhood
 - Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood
- School Counseling
 - Early Childhood through Young Adulthood
- Science
 - Early Adolescence
 - Adolescence and Young Adulthood
- Social Studies-History
 - Early Adolescence
 - Adolescence and Young Adulthood
- World Languages
 - Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood

For additional information, interested individuals should contact the Human Resources Services.

8-5 Licensure Renewal Credits

North Carolina “Continuing” licenses are renewed every five years. Licensure renewal is the responsibility of the individual, not of the school system. Any employee who allows a license to expire must have it reinstated prior to the beginning of the next school year. A teacher whose license has expired is subject to dismissal. The school district may offer courses, workshops, and independent study activities to help school personnel meet license renewal requirements. According to 2016 Budget bill §8.32 Loss of License v. MIP, standards for continuing licensure shall include the following: “For all teachers employed by a local board of education, evidence of a rating of at least proficient on the most recent annual evaluation to maintain the current license status. A teacher who is unable to satisfy this requirement but has been placed on a mandatory improvement plan may be eligible to receive an initial degree license if that teacher satisfies all other licensure requirements.”

Interpretation: Teachers in their licensure renewal year must be proficient in all standards to be issued a continuing license. Teachers not proficient in any standard, but otherwise eligible for continued employment will be placed on a mandatory improvement plan and may be eligible to receive an initial license.

Renewal and Reinstatement Guidelines

*As a condition of employment per NC State Board of Education Policy LICN-005 employing school systems reserve the right to assign literacy requirements for any educator.

*Renewal requirements are subject to change based on NC State Board of Education policy updates.

As a result, the State Board of Education approved the following requirements to renew the Continuing license. Professional Educators whose license expires June 30, 2019, or later must obtain the following:

*K-5 Teacher – 8 CEUs

- 3 Content
- 3 Literacy
- 2 Digital Learning Competencies

*6-12 Teachers

- 3 Content
- 3 General
- 2 Digital Learning Competencies

*Student Service Personnel

- 3 Content
- 3 General
- 2 Digital Learning Competencies

Administrators:

- 3 credits focused on the school executive's role as instructional, human resources and managerial leader
- 3 general credits (as determined by the LEA, if employed), not to include years of experience
- 2 Digital Learning Competencies

National Board Certification:

- 8 credits for completion
- 2 credits (1 for literacy and 1 for content) for renewal

Expired Licenses

All expired licenses shall be invalid until reinstated. To be eligible for reinstatement, an individual must have earned a minimum of 8 units of credit during the five-year period immediately preceding the date of application for reinstatement. A reinstated license shall be valid for a three-year period that begins from the date of completion of the required credits.

At least 8 renewal credits must be completed during the three years. At the end of the three-year cycle, if all 8 credits have been completed, the license will be issued with a new five-year dating cycle or the license remains expired until all renewal credits have been earned.

Only an employing school system can request reinstatement of a license for a person who holds an expired license. This is not an option for currently employed individuals who have not met the renewal requirements.

Renewal Criteria

- A unit of renewal credit (CEU) is equal to 10 clock hours of professional development
- 8 units of renewal credit are required to renew both a current and expired Continuing Professional License (CPL)
- For a CPL to remain current, all renewal credits must be earned by the expiration date of the license

Activities Accepted for Renewal Credit

- College or university courses
 - Official transcripts are required as documentation; grade reports are not accepted.
- Local in-service courses or workshops
 - The administrative unit certifies credits.
- Classes and workshops approved by an LEA
 - Documentation of completion is provided by the agency sponsoring the activity.





2023-2024


Wilson County Schools

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

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PO Box 2048
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 **252-399-7700**

 **252-234-8001**