

# Employee Handbook



Turner County Schools  
2024-2025

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**Disclaimer:TEACHER HANDBOOK PROVISIONS**

The terms described in this Employee Handbook may be altered, modified, changed, or eliminated by the Turner County School District at any time, with or without prior notice. This Employee Handbook and all provisions contained herein do not establish conditions of employment, are not a guarantee of employment, and are not an employment contract, express or implied.

**Turner County Schools Employee Handbook Introduction**

This Employee Handbook represents a brief summary of Human Resources policies, practices, benefits, and services at the time of its publication. More specific detail of each policy is available in the Turner County Board of Education (BOE) Policies available for review on the district's board website at

[https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SB\\_ePolicy/SB\\_PolicyOverview.aspx?S=4163](https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SB_ePolicy/SB_PolicyOverview.aspx?S=4163) .

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

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

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

## Absenteeism

**Just as student attendance is important for academic success, staff members are expected to be consistent in attendance.**

1. From time to time, everyone must be away from work for a variety of reasons. However, as the teacher in your classroom, you are extremely valuable to the learning process. Please remember, **the success of our school system is dependent on teachers being at work.** Every effort should be made to schedule doctor, dental, or other appointments outside the school day. When you must be out of school, we will make every effort to have a qualified substitute for you on that day. On days when a large number of teachers are out, you may be asked to cover classes for a colleague. We will do our best to limit this, but it cannot be eliminated altogether.
2. If you are going to be absent from school let the office know the day before or sooner when possible. If it is not possible, call the school's designee as early as possible.
3. Required leave forms will need to be completed for all absences including requested leave.
4. On your first day back to work from Sick Leave, complete a Leave Form. If you are charged with the wrong type of leave, and you have not turned in this form, we cannot help you get it straight at the central office.
5. Use Leave Request Forms to request permission to leave early or come in late.
6. Personal and professional leave must be approved at least ten (10) school days in advance. Appropriate forms are available through the office and online. **Generally speaking, personal leave on days prior and immediately following a scheduled holiday is prohibited. Personal leave will not be approved during testing periods except in the case of emergencies.**
7. Professional leave for classes and conferences must be pre-approved through your Principal and the Central Office. We encourage and support professional leave that helps improve instruction in the classroom. However, understand that not everyone will be able to attend every workshop or conference. Each situation will be handled on a case-by-case basis.
8. Teachers earn 1.25 sick leave days per month and may carry over unused sick leave from one year to another to accumulate up to 45 days of sick leave. Unused sick leave beyond 45 days is banked and can be used toward retirement. Three full workdays per year may be used for personal leave.
9. Each teacher is responsible for preparing a substitute folder and having it on file. This folder should consist of rosters and seating charts for all of your current classes (remember to make updates as you gain or lose students), a lesson plan, basic class rules you expect of your students, and any other information needed by a substitute. Have this ready by the end of the first week, and update as needed. However, these plans are only for emergencies. All other times – please make current plans available for the substitute.

10. If you would like a particular substitute, please make your preference known to the school designee.

- **Excessive absences can result in a Professional Development Plan**

### **After School Events for Parents**

Employees are expected to attend events that are scheduled in the school system building and involve events for parents to attend. For example, parent engagement events such as Title I events, Bridge Bill activities, math and science nights, etc.

### **Assemblies**

Faculty members are required to attend ALL school assemblies and help maintain proper order unless assigned other duties by their supervisor.

### **Board Meetings**

Turner County Board of Education members meet every 1st and 2nd Monday of the month at 6:00 p.m. at the Turner County Board of Education Conference Room, unless there is a holiday conflict. Your presence is always welcomed.

### **Cell Phones**

Although staff members are allowed to have cell phones at school, the phones should not be used for personal reasons, during class time, or any time students are under your care. Cell phone use should never interfere with instructional time. Cell phones should rarely be used during the school day.

### **Certification**

For a certified educator contract to be valid, an educator must meet the proper professional qualifications established by the Turner County Schools. It is the responsibility of all educators to be certain they possess a valid certificate. Staff members with questions related to certification may contact the Human Resources Office or the school principal. It may also be necessary for an educator to contact the Georgia Professional Standards Commission in Atlanta, Georgia.

The educator is responsible for submitting an application for a new certificate when he/she is eligible for a higher level certificate and/or for adding a new field. The application packet must be completed and sent to the Professional Standards Commission. The Office of Human Resources can assist the educator with this. For more information on certification, log onto [www.gapsc.com](http://www.gapsc.com).

**Chain of Command**

It is appropriate and acceptable for teachers to discuss issues with the superintendent or Board members; however, staff should follow the appropriate chain of command. It is as follows: (1) Grade Level or Department Chair/Immediate Supervisor, (2) School Administration, (3) Central Office Director, if appropriate, (4) Assistant Superintendent, (5) Superintendent, and (6) Board of Education. Superiors cannot address issues and concerns if they are not aware of them. Most issues and decisions can be dealt with professionally if communication lines remain open. Failure to follow the chain of command undermines the supervisory process and could result in poor evaluations and/or termination of employment.

**Children of Employees**

It is not appropriate and it is not allowed for children/grandchildren/family members of staff members to come to work with employees. This includes teacher work days.

**Civility Guidelines**

It is the goal of the Turner County School Board and the Turner County Schools that staff, principals, teachers, students, parents, and guardians treat one another with mutual respect and courtesy. The Turner County Schools is committed to maintaining an orderly educational environment free from disruptions. We do not intend for these guidelines to deprive any person of his or her right of freedom of expression. Rather, we seek to maintain, to the extent possible and reasonable, a safe, harassment-free workplace for our students and staff. In the interest of presenting teachers and other employees as positive role models, Turner County Schools encourages positive communication and discourages offensive, disruptive, volatile, hostile, or aggressive communications or actions. Principals, staff and teachers, may in their discretion take the following steps:

1. Disruptive individuals may be directed to leave the school or district facility. The disruptive individual(s) may be directed to leave by the principal or his/her designee.
2. If any member of the public uses loud and/or offensive language, swearing, cursing, or displays a temper, he or she may be calmly asked by the teacher or employee to refrain from such behavior and if the behavior continues the teacher/employee may terminate the phone conversation, meeting, or conference. The principal or designee may direct the individual to leave the facility if the incident happened on campus.
3. If an individual refuses to leave the school or district facility, the superintendent, principal, or designee may notify law enforcement.
4. Threatening to do bodily or physical harm to a teacher, school administrator, school employee or student may constitute a criminal violation.
5. If any district employee receives an email, text, or voice mail which is abusive, offensive, threatening, or obscene, the employee is not obligated to respond to the email, text, or telephone call. Such incidents may be reported to the employee's immediate supervisor.



**Classroom Care**

Custodians assigned to schools will do most of the cleaning work; however, the building is large and time is limited. Teachers and students should help by keeping paper off the floor and giving proper care to the desks, walls, equipment, etc. Please strive daily to keep your room attractive and orderly to maintain the right classroom atmosphere. At the end of each day, ask students to remove any paper in or around their desk. Before you leave school each day, please ensure that all windows are closed and locked, lights and all electronic equipment are turned off, check the AC setting, and the door is locked. Employees should not paint any walls or permanent fixtures. Approval from the operations director is required before installation of any fixture that requires drilling or nailing.

**Code of Ethics**

All educators are bound by the Code of Ethics as promulgated by the Professional Standards Commission. Certificated personnel should stay apprised of the Code of Ethics and should always adhere to them. The Code of Ethics and other related information is available online through the Georgia Professional Standards Commission website at

<http://www.gapsc.com/Ethics/Home.aspx>

[Code Of Ethics](#)

**Computer/Internet Use**

- The Turner County Schools' network is intended for educational use only.
- All activity over the network or using district technologies may be monitored and retained.
- Access to online content via the network may be restricted in accordance with our policies and federal regulations, such as the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA).
- Turner County Schools will make a reasonable effort to ensure safety and security online, but will not be held accountable for any harm or damages that result from use of school technologies.
- Users of the district network or other technologies are expected to alert the school level principal or assistant principal immediately of any concerns for safety or security.
- Users are expected to respect that the TCS' web filter is a safety precaution, and should not try to circumvent it when browsing the Web
- All passwords are to be complex and treated as sensitive information.
- Misuse of school resources can result in disciplinary action.
- Cyber events should be reported to the Technology Director immediately
- Cyber Security Training and awareness modules should be completed by the assigned date

**Ownership and Access of Electronic Mail, Internet Access, and Computer Files; No Expectation of Privacy:**

The Turner County school system owns the rights to all data and files in any computer, network, or other information system used in the school system and to all data and files sent or received using any school system technology. The School system also reserves the right to monitor electronic mail messages (including personal/private/instant messaging systems) and their content, as well as any

and all use by employees of the Internet and of computer equipment used to create, view, or access e-mail and Internet content. Employees must be aware that the electronic mail messages sent and received using school system equipment or school system provided Internet access, including web-based messaging systems used with such systems or access, are not private and are subject to viewing, downloading, inspection, release, and archiving by school system officials at all times. The School system has the right to inspect any and all files stored in private areas of the network or on individual computers or storage media in order to assure compliance with school system policies and state and federal laws. No employee may access another employee's computer, computer files, or electronic mail messages without prior authorization from either the employee or an appropriate school system official.

It is a violation of school system procedure for any employee, including system administrators and supervisors, to access electronic mail and computer systems files to satisfy curiosity about the affairs of others, unless such access is directly related to that employee's job duties. Employees found to have engaged in such activities will be subject to disciplinary action.

### **Conduct Expectations**

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

### **Confidentiality**

Much of what personnel may see or hear in district facilities is confidential by law. Any information concerning student performance and behavior is confidential. The confidentiality rights of students are protected through state and federal regulations, and employees become liable for protecting students' rights. Confidential information regarding students or staff is not to be discussed or communicated at any time. This includes social media posts. A breach of this confidentiality can result in termination of employment.

All employees with Turner County School System are required to read and sign the Turner County Board of Education Confidentiality Agreement, acknowledging the understanding that any confidential information regarding a student, employee, or school business will not be disclosed to anyone inside or outside of the school system.

### **Copier/Printer Use**

The copiers are available for teacher use. We will do everything possible to keep the necessary supplies for the copiers stocked but be mindful these supplies are expensive. Make copies of

what is necessary to teach your class, but consider alternatives when possible. Also consider printing side-by-side and 2-sided or using your Interactive Panels or document cameras. Money spent on copies means less money for other areas of instruction. With the implementation of technology devices, teachers are encouraged to go more paperless. No personal/community copies shall be made. No personal/community posters will be made.

### **Copyright Law**

All staff members shall comply with the Copyright Law, Title 17, U.S. Code. Staff members who fail to follow the Copyright Law shall be held personally liable for copyright infringement. Turner County Schools will not be responsible for any violations of the Copyright Law by its staff and hereby notifies all employees that a willful infringement of the law may result in disciplinary action. Digital videos/materials also adhere to all copyright laws.

### **Criminal Arrest Report**

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

### **Criminal Background Check**

All personnel must be fingerprinted and successfully complete a criminal records check at time of hire. All certified staff will also complete a background check each time their certificate is renewed through the Professional Standards Commission’s certificate renewal application process. Non Certified staff will be fingerprinted on a periodic basis within the final year of each five-years of employment based on the most recent hire date. Any expense associated with a background check is the responsibility of the staff member.

### **Dress**

Faculty and staff dress should reflect the guidelines set forth in the student dress code. As leaders we should set an example of appropriate dress for our students. Guidelines for faculty and staff are as follows:

1. Faculty and staff should dress professionally at all times.
2. Jeans and t-shirts should be reserved for pre-approved Fridays, scheduled dress-down days, or when appropriate for the activity. Only Turner County t-shirts and/or school colors should be worn.
3. No casual shorts; any shorts must be dressy and appropriate length. (Appropriate length is touching the knee.) Coaches are allowed khaki/dress shorts for gym classes.

4. Skirts and dresses should be the appropriate length. (Appropriate length is below the knee.)
5. No tank tops, sleeveless, or sundresses will be allowed.
6. Sandals are appropriate, but beach/shower/bedroom shoes/ slides are not allowed.
7. Leggings should only be worn with the appropriate length top/dress. (Appropriate length is at the knee.)
8. Headwear such as caps, bonnets, scarves, etc are only allowed for religious or medical purposes. Coaches and all staff must remove caps when entering the building.
9. Avoid jogging/wind suits/gym shorts including coaches during academic instructional classes.

Supervisors may approve exceptions to these guidelines based on specific classes, activities, and/or events.

### **Dress Code Guidelines for Lunchroom Staff**

Personal appearance is vital to the integrity of the School Nutrition Program. All employees are expected to maintain a neat and professional appearance. Professional appearance includes but is not limited to:

1. Showing up for work dressed in proper, clean uniforms and good, clean, closed toe, leather or leather like, rubber bottom shoes. No cloth shoes. Non-slip shoes are recommended (Sweat suits, open toe sandals, oversized tee shirts, cut-off tee shirts, garments that are too tight are not acceptable).
2. Keeping the body clean.
3. Hair clean and covered by a hairnet. All hair should be in hairnet. Beard nets are required if applicable.
4. Remain home when ill.
5. Do not wear nail polish and keep fingernails short and clean. No false fingernails. No false eyelashes.
6. For safety of employees and customers, the ONLY jewelry to be worn is a wedding band with no stones. Wedding bands must be removed when working with dough. Earrings and watches may not be worn.
7. Wear gloves when preparing and serving food and replace as required.
8. Do not use tobacco, cigarettes or snuff at work. All school campuses are smoke & tobacco free areas.
9. Drugs and alcohol are prohibited.
10. Practice proper hand washing techniques.
11. Remove and replace aprons, as required. Remove aprons before entering restrooms or taking out trash.
12. Chewing gum is prohibited.
13. No cellular device or earphones/earbuds are allowed at any time.

**Drug-Free Workplace**

Turner County Schools adheres to the rules in the district's Drug-Free Workplace Policy GAMA. This policy is found in its entirety in the Appendix and in the district's online policy manual.

Administration should be notified immediately should a controlled substance be prescribed to any employee.

**Earphones/Earbuds**

Earphones/earbuds are not allowed in the school building at any time. This includes teacher work days.

**Educational Associations**

Teachers are encouraged to belong to professional educational organizations whose function is the betterment of educators.

**Employee Classifications**

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

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

**Full-Time/Part-Time:** Any employee who works at least 40 hours during a regularly scheduled work week is a full-time employee. A School Nutrition Employee is considered full-time if she/he works a minimum of 35 hours during a regularly scheduled work week. An employee who works less than 30 hours is a part-time employee.

**Employee Timeclock**

Employees in the schools will sign in and out daily through the TimeTracker module with the YOSS Platform.

**Employee Types**

Full-time employees who are certified and contracted are covered by O.C.G.A. § 20-2- 940 (The Fair Dismissal Act of 1975), and are afforded certain rights under the Act. 5 Other employees, including classified and part-time employees, are employed under Georgia's "at-will" employment law and may be terminated at any time without cause.

**Equal Opportunity Employer**

Turner County Schools is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate based upon race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age or disability.

[Policy GAAA: Equal Opportunity Employment](#)

[Policy JAA: Equal Educational Opportunities](#)

Turner County School will use TKES for evaluations. Where applicable, annual evaluations will be based on the Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (“TKES”) in accordance with Official Code of Georgia 20-2- 210, all applicable rules of the State Board of Education, and the Implementation Handbook for TKES. Leadership positions will be evaluated based upon the Leader Keys Effectiveness System (“LKES”), and some will be evaluated using an instrument approved by the school system. In accordance with TKES, all teachers will be evaluated on ten different standards, plus growth in student achievement. The student achievement growth factor will count at least 50% of the overall evaluation. Assistant Principals and Principals will be evaluated using the Leader Keys Effectiveness System (LKES). All certified staff members are encouraged to read details of TKES/LKES at:

<http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/School-Improvement/Teacher-and-LeaderEffectiveness/Pages/Teacher-Keys-Effectiveness-System.aspx>

Employees evaluated with TKES or LKES may request a conference within ten working days of any formative evaluation.

### **Facilities and Equipment**

School facilities and/or equipment should not be used by an employee for personal gain. Use of facilities and/or equipment must have written approval from the Superintendent. Equipment cannot be removed from school property.

### **Field Trips and Athletic/Extracurricular Activities Off-Campus**

All field trips must have a direct relationship to a course of study, must be adequately supervised by school personnel, and must be approved in advance by the school principal and superintendent. The club or class must assume cost for the field trip unless other financial arrangements have been made. All field trip forms must be properly completed before taking any trips. **Forms should be turned in to the Principal's office 45 days prior to the trip.** Trip sponsors must plan for 1 chaperone per 10 students. When taking students on a trip or activity of any nature, you must prepare an Emergency Contact list that includes the name of each person (student and adult) on the trip, a contact person, and a phone number where that person can be reached in case of an emergency. Turn one copy of this form into the office and carry one copy with you.

**Out of state and/or overnight trips require approval by the Board of Education one month prior to the trip.** Overnight trips require a male and female chaperone depending on event attendees. Principals will submit a request to the superintendent's office before the last day of the month so it will be included on the following month's BOE agenda.

In the event of an emergency, you are to call the school as soon as possible. If it is outside school hours, call the Principal.

- You must also provide a roster of students attending the trip to the office on the day prior to the trip. This will allow the students to be ‘coded’ correctly for the day they miss school and cut down on the confusion of who is on the trip and who is absent.
  - A list of anyone not traveling that is on the roster or anyone traveling who is not on the roster MUST be submitted to the school office
- Athletic and other competition teams should provide a roster of their team and a schedule of the dates and times the students will be out of class. In cases of tournaments and playoffs, discuss departure times with the administration before making plans.

### **Finance**

The Superintendent or the CFO are the only authorized employees who can fill out vendor credit applications/contracts for the Turner County School System.

To request a check, a “Check Request Form” must be filled out ten business days prior to the date the check is needed. This form can be found on our website - [turner.k12.ga.us](http://turner.k12.ga.us) > About Us > Finance > scroll down to the bottom of the page to Files & Forms.

### **Health Insurance**

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

New employees may enroll within 30 days at the time of employment regardless of the time of year. Current employees may only elect coverage during the Open Enrollment Period as determined by the state, except under certain circumstances due to change in family status such as marriage, birth of a child or loss of a dependent. Open Enrollment is typically a three-week period during October and November. The dates are announced by the state and shared with all employees by the human resources department.

### **In-Service/Pre-Post Planning Days**

The hours for In-Service/Pre-Post Planning Days are 8:00-4:00 unless adjusted by the Superintendent. Staff members should make arrangements for the supervision of personal children off campus as this is your place of employment.

**Insurance Benefits**

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

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

**Interoffice Mail**

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

**Last Check**

When you leave Turner County Schools, Turner County's procedure for receiving your last paycheck from us will be a hard copy check not a direct deposit. You may provide us with a forwarding mailing address and we can mail your check or you may pick it up from the Finance office. However, the check will not be mailed or picked up if you still have keys or property that belongs to the Turner County School System.

**Leave****Sick Leave**

Each certified person employed full-time is entitled to sick leave with full pay computed on the basis of 1.25 working days for each completed school month of service. By this formula a 10-month employee earns 12.5 days while a 12-month employee earns 15 days. An employee must be at work or on paid leave for more than half the month to earn sick leave for that month. Sick leave shall be accumulated from one school year to the next up to a maximum of 45 days for classified staff and 20 days for certified staff. For those employees who are members of the Teachers Retirement System (TRS), all accumulated sick leave over the maximum allowed for use is maintained for possible service credit toward retirement.

**Sick Leave Uses**

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

- Personal reasons (*three days per fiscal year*)
  - These three days are taken from accumulated sick leave. An employee who earns 12.5 days of sick leave and takes three personal days will have only 9.5 days of sick leave remaining for other qualifying absences.



- Personal days do not accumulate from one year to the next.
- Personal illness or injury
  - Absence due to illness for more than five consecutive days must be accompanied by a physician's excuse and completion of FMLA documentation before the employee will be allowed to return to work.

### **Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)**

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

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

To be eligible for FMLA an employee must have been employed by the district for at least 12 months and worked for at least 1,250 hours during the prior 12-month period. For any medical qualification for an employee's own condition or that of an immediate family member, the district requires an approved health care provider's statement or military orders.

Although FMLA provides for unpaid leave, Turner County Schools requires that an employee use any accumulated leave during his or her absence.

### **Returning From Leave**

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

### **Personal Leave**

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

**Professional Leave**

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

Coastal Plains RESA makes every effort to provide high quality professional learning experiences at low cost to member school districts. Registrants are responsible for registering and canceling their registrations. Individuals may register or cancel their registrations through their Learning Stream account. Registrants can also contact the Registrar ([erinstephens@cpresa.org](mailto:erinstephens@cpresa.org)) or call CPRESA (229-546-4094, ext. 110). School districts will be invoiced for no-shows and/or cancellations made less than two weeks prior to class. There may be a no-show fee which will be charged to the employee.

**Work-Related Leave**

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

**Bereavement Leave**

This benefit is only available to benefit eligible employees. Turner County Schools has allotted one bereavement day for an immediate family member. When an employee wishes to use more than the one allotted bereavement day due to the death of an immediate family member, up to five sick leave days may be utilized. In the event of a death in the immediate family including "step" relationships (spouse, children, parents, siblings, grandparents, grandchildren, father-in-law, mother-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, daughter-in-law, son-in-law or other relatives living in the household). When an employee is absent due to the death of any family member other than the immediate family, up to one day of sick leave may be utilized.

**Leaving School Procedure**

Teachers' workdays are assigned by your school. Many of you come in early and stay late, and your efforts are appreciated. Occasions may occur that require you to leave early or for a short time, do so through the office. Avoid running errands during the school day including your

planning period. When it is necessary to leave campus, obtain the permission of an administrator and sign out in the office. Please do not ask to leave unless it is an important reason.

### **Lunchroom**

Point of sale system will be available in all lunchrooms for employees to view their balance.

**Employees are not able to charge accounts for the lunchroom.** Employees are required to prepay or pay at point of sale. Policies set by the state require employees to receive the same portion of food as senior students. Food that exceeds the senior student's portion will be charged extra. Policies set by the state allow free meals to nutrition employees, custodians, and first responders. Other staff are required to pay for meals unless they are assisting the nutrition program.

Should any negative balances remain before the school year ends, the employee's paper check will be held until balance is paid.

### **Mandated Reporter**

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

### **Maintenance Request**

Requests for maintenance are submitted by staff on-line and require approval by the principal or supervisor. Emergency maintenance requests should be reported to the central office by the school principal or his/her designee.

### **Money Collection**

Any money collected for gate sales or from students must be turned in daily to the bookkeeper. Money will be counted by the collector and the bookkeeper and both will sign a document recording the total amount of money and recording the date and time the money is turned in. Proceeds from a night performance or activity shall be dropped in the night depository and retrieved for regular deposit the following working or banking day. **Under no circumstances should money be collected through personal cash apps. The use of personal cash apps for school business is a direct violation of the GaPSC standard number 5, co-mingling public or school-related funds with personal funds or checking accounts.**

**Monitoring**

Teachers and Paras should be monitoring the hallways and bathrooms during class changes and other transitional times. Teachers should be standing in their doorways to monitor their classroom and the hallway.

**Paid Parental Leave**Turner County Board Of Education Policy GARHB

The Board of Education shall make paid parental leave equally available to all eligible employees of the Board of Education in accordance with HB146 under the following terms:

1. An employee of the Board of Education shall be eligible for paid parental leave fo qualifying life events upon satisfying the following criteria:
  - a. The employee is classified as full-time by the District and is eligible to participate in the TRS (Teacher Retirement System of Georgia) or the PSERS (Public School Employees Retirement System); and
  - b. The employee has six continuous months of employment with the Board, regardless of whether he or she is eligible for paid or unpaid leave under federal law. An employee paid on an hourly basis must have worked a minimum of 700 hours over the six-month period immediately preceding the requested paid parental leave date.
2. A qualifying life event means:
  - a. The birth of a child of an eligible employee;
  - b. The placement of a minor child for adoption with an eligible employee; or
  - c. The placement of a minor child for foster care with an eligible employee.
3. The maximum amount of paid parental leave that may be taken by an eligible employee during a rolling 12 month period is 240 hours, regardless of the number of qualifying life events that occur during such period.
  - a. The rolling 12 month period shall be measured backward from the date an eligible employee first uses parental leave.
  - b. Parental leave may be taken as needed and may be taken in increments of less than eight hours. The smallest increment of parental leave that may be taken is four hours.
  - c. Any unused paid parental leave that remains 12 months after the qualifying event shall not carry over for future use.
  - d. Unused paid parental leave shall have no cash value at any time of the eligible employee's separation from employment with the Board of Education.
4. Paid parental leave under state law shall run concurrently with any leave provided under federal law.
5. Eligible employees requesting paid parental leave must submit the district's designated form

to the Superintendent or designee at least ten school days in advance of the requested leave start date.

This will run concurrently with FMLA.

### **Parent Contacts**

Parent contacts should make a minimum of 3 contacts weekly (ex: 1 concerns; 2 positive).

Failing grades should be addressed with parents so they are not surprised. Document all contacts in Infinite Campus in the parent contact log.

### **Parent Relations**

A good relationship between teacher and parent is important in effective teaching. Some things to consider in teacher-parent relationships are

1. Be patient and courteous.
2. Take time to discuss problems fully and offer suggestions for the best possible solution.
3. Recognize and consider the parent's problems. (Empathize)
4. Cooperate with and encourage parent's efforts.
5. A teacher can never keep parents too informed.

### **Parents and Grades**

Parents have daily access to their child's grades through Infinite Campus. If a parent asks about a password for their child, they should be referred to the office. Parents should be encouraged to use this source to be aware of their child's progress. They can also view attendance through this method. Keeping parents aware of their child's progress early in the game can save problems down the road. Teachers need to be able to justify all grades given through recorded test grades, daily grades, etc. Points should never be deducted as a disciplinary measure..

### **Payroll Information**

It is the employee's responsibility to provide necessary payroll information to the central office. Upon beginning employment, the employee should complete W-4 and G-4 forms. These forms are available on the YOSS platform. Payroll checks are issued on the last working day of each month. Changes in payroll status or deductions should be requested in writing by the 10th of each month with appropriate paperwork submitted.

### **Personnel Records**

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

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

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

### **Pets/Animals**

Turner County Schools is a professional environment. It is not appropriate to bring personal pets/animals to your work environment. Service animals are defined by two categories: (1) essential to live function and (2) emotional support. It is the opinion of Turner County Schools that only essential to life function officially trained service animals are allowable.

### **Professionalism**

As educators, we are professionals and it is the expectation that we will all act in a professional manner. It is unrealistic to think that a group of co-workers as large as ours will not have occasional misunderstandings. These should be handled in an appropriate and professional manner. Spreading gossip and ill will is unprofessional and unacceptable. Do not air your disputes in a public forum and make every effort to get along with other employees.

### **Purchases**

DO NOT make any purchases without prior approval meaning an approved purchase order. If you are at the school level, purchases must be handled by the bookkeeper or a director. All invoices must be turned in to the school bookkeeper, director, or finance office.

### **Records and Reports**

All records and reports are expected to be accurate, complete, and on time. Final school year paychecks may be withheld until all records are completed to the satisfaction of the administration. The permanent records should NEVER be taken from the record room unless they have been signed out on the sheet on top of the filing cabinets. They should ALWAYS be returned before the day is over and should NEVER be left in the classroom overnight or taken home. This is a State Board of Education policy.

**Reprimand**

The Superintendent may write a letter of reprimand to a teacher or other school employee for any valid reason. A copy of the letter of reprimand will be placed in the teacher's or employee's permanent personnel file. The teacher or employee receiving such a letter of reprimand shall have the right to appeal the decision of the Superintendent to the Board of Education. The Board shall have the right to either affirm the decision of the Superintendent or to reverse it. If the decision of the Board is to reverse it, the letter of reprimand shall be removed from the teacher's or employee's permanent personnel file. (OCGA 20-2-944)

**Resignations**

Notice of resignation must be presented in writing to the principal as soon as practical. The resignation should include a final date of work and must be signed. Employees under contract should request to be released from the contract if the resignation date is before the end of the contract. The Superintendent makes recommendations for release, and the Board of Education acts on those recommendations. Not all requests are granted, depending upon the timing of the request.

**School Involvement**

One of the best ways to build trust with your students is to show an interest in the activities that they take part in here at Turner County Schools. It can go a long way to let a student know you saw them in a performance, game, or even at a practice to let him/her know that he/she did a good job. Make a point to attend extra-curricular events that your students are participating in. Even if you can only stop by an event for 10 minutes as you leave school, it will make a difference with them.

**School/Office Telephones**

Turner County Schools' telephones are provided for business communications. Accepting personal phone calls during work is discouraged with the exception of emergency calls.

**Sexual Harassment Policy**

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

Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to:

- Unwelcome sexual advances

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

Policy GAEB: Harassment

Policy JCAC: Harassment

### **Smoking/Vaping**

All personnel and visitors are prohibited from smoking, using tobacco in any form, and using electronic delivery systems on Turner County School System (TCSS) school grounds or in TCSS facilities, in TCSS owned vehicles or at any on or off campus TCSS sponsored events, at all times. School grounds include all school campuses, athletic fields and facilities, all central office facilities, and school buses. This prohibition shall specifically include any product containing cannabidiol (CBD), whether hemp or cannabis, and regardless of the amount of THC in the product or the extent to which it is legal or illegal under state law.

### **Social Media and Text Messaging**

Turner County School Employees should not be posting or commenting on any social media during the work day hours. Staff should never post names or pictures of students on your personal social media sites. Teachers are strongly discouraged from texting students or allowing students to “befriend” them on Facebook® and other social networking sites. Remember that anything posted on a personal networking site is no different than posting the same in the local newspaper. Ethics issues arise when teachers do not heed this advice.

**Send all information that you would like shared on the school/system social media sources to the appropriate staff for approval and posting as defined by your building principal.**

### **Solicitation**

Employees are prohibited from using any email list serve or email group announcing any event where the sender or the sender’s friends or family would benefit financially from the event. Examples include Tupperware® parties, fundraisers benefiting the employee directly, etc. Notices regarding benevolent fundraising activities to benefit another employee or community member are allowed. Examples include a fundraiser to help defray medical expenses of an employee, student, community member, or worthy cause. If you have a question about the activity, ask your Principal. Violations will result in permanent blocking of the sender’s email account from the school system’s servers.



**Staff Meetings**

Regular staff meetings are a necessary part of school operation. Each school will schedule staff meetings as needed for the purpose of sharing information or for professional learning. All staff members are required as part of their teaching/employment responsibilities to attend all such meetings as determined by the principal or district administration. Students or staff members' children should not attend staff meetings.

**Student Accidents**

If a student is injured while under your supervision, notify the office immediately. An accident report, detailing the incident, will need to be completed by the end of the day.

**Student Relations**

A good relationship between student and teacher is of great importance. Some suggestions are:

1. Be fair and consistent.
2. Be reasonable and tolerant, but sufficiently firm when necessary.
3. Commend students and give recognition for accomplishments.
4. Be constructive in criticism - never embarrass or ridicule a student.
5. Give students responsibility.
6. Do not prejudge students.
7. Explain clearly to the students the rules, standards, and expectations.

**Students with Disabilities**

Each school has a Ga Multi-Tiered System of Supports (GaMTSS) that provides interventions for students struggling to make progress academically, behaviorally, and in the area of speech and language. This system works to provide evidence and research-based interventions to improve performance prior to a referral for a special education evaluation or 504 plan.

Turner County provides support to students served through an Individual Education Plan (IEP) and/or a 504 Plan. These supports are developed by a team decision and our teachers are required to follow these plans. The Department of Special Education works to ensure that all students with disabilities are provided a free appropriate public education. As an employee of this school system, you may be asked to serve on these teams to ensure that the student's needs are addressed to support their participation in the general education classroom setting. Teams meet at least once annually to update these plans.

The school 504 coordinator and the special education case managers will provide instructional, behavioral, and testing accommodations to the general education teachers working with students with disabilities within the first 5 days of school or within 5 days of the student entering the

teacher's class. The school 504 coordinator and the special education case managers are available to explain and assist with the implementation of instructional, behavioral and testing accommodations and/or modifications on an as needed basis. It is important to note that special education instructional accommodations may include significantly more accommodations than the allowable state testing accommodations.

Without choice, teachers are required to follow the accommodations and/or modifications defined within these plans until the plans are reviewed and amended. If a teacher has a concern regarding a student with a disability, the teacher should contact the special education lead teacher in their school or the school 504 coordinator. If concerns are not addressed adequately, please contact the Director of Special Education for additional support/information.

Together, we work to ensure that ALL students learn regardless of their academic or behavioral limitations. With the implementation of supports and services, we will help children learn!

### **Tardies to Work / Late to School Procedures**

All teachers and staff members should be at work and present in the areas as assigned by your administrator. If you are going to be later than your assigned report time, telephone the designated person to notify them for adequate coverage. Leave forms must be submitted in YOSS when you are tardy. Star passes may be earned and used when approved by administrators. Continually being late to work could result in your being placed on personal leave for the time you are out. If tardiness becomes a problem, then the teacher may need a PLP. Continual tardiness can be a reason for dismissal. **You are essential to the learning process!**

### **Tips, Gratuities and Gifts**

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

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

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

**Outside agencies or individuals:** Staff members shall not accept individual gifts from outside agencies or individuals that are a result of business transactions between the school district and said agency or individual. Business partners may provide gifts of nominal value to a department or staff as part of an ongoing relationship with the district. District employees may not accept

gifts from vendors or those seeking a business relationship with the district, including tickets, vouchers, passes, or gift cards to events, retailers or restaurants. Refer to Policy DJE-R(1).

### **Transfers**

The superintendent and his/her designated school and department administrators may assign and reassign personnel as required by the needs of the district within the area(s) of an employee's qualifications. The involuntary reassignment of certified personnel will be kept to a minimum and based upon student enrollment and program needs. An employee may request a transfer to another location or position at any time during the year whenever a vacancy occurs for which the employee is qualified. The supervisor or district administration may deny the opportunity for a transfer due to anticipated disruption in school or department continuity. In general, teachers will not be transferred at their request from one school to another in the system during the school year. Exceptions shall be cleared through the superintendent. Staff members may request transfers for the next school year on their Letters of Intent for the following school year.

### **Travel Regulations**

Professional leave must be approved by the principal or immediate supervisor. If traveling, requisitions must be entered and purchase orders must be obtained BEFORE signing up for any conference or securing a hotel room. If the exact amount for the registration and/or hotel room is unknown at the time of submitting the requisitions, use your best educated estimate for the requisitions.

- You will be the vendor on the requisition for the hotel room unless you request a check for the hotel room.
- You will also be the vendor for the registration unless you have Turner County School System invoiced, at which time the vendor will be whomever the check should be made.

Please follow the procedures that are already in place for all purchase orders. Please remember that when obtaining a hotel room, you must ask for the conference group rate or the government rate. If the hotel rate exceeds the conference group rate, pre-authorization must be obtained by the director who will reimburse the travel costs or the CFO.

If a check will be needed for your hotel room, a "Check Request Form" must be filled out ten business days in advance of departure. This form can be found on our website - [turner.k12.ga.us](http://turner.k12.ga.us) > About Us > Finance > scroll down to the bottom of the page to Files & Forms.

Upon arrival at a hotel/motel facility, furnish the facility operator with the Tax Exemption Form to be exempt from paying local hotel/motel excise tax. This excise tax cannot be reimbursed by the Turner County Board of Education. The state sales tax is not exempt.

**Travel Reimbursement Documents**

A travel expense form must be filled out for reimbursement purposes. Be sure to include the date and time of departure and arrival for each listing on the travel expense form. On out-of-town trips, meal reimbursement is dependent on this information.

Mileage readings must be listed for reimbursement for use of personal car at the current state rate. Local transportation costs will not be allowed between the individual's home and school headquarters. If multiple people are attending the same conference/meeting, travel will only be paid to the driver of a full carpool. Meals and parking costs must be entered separately in the indicated spaces.

No reimbursement will be allowed for entertainment, personal expense, or any portion of conference fees covering social activities. Properly completed employee expense statements should be received in the finance office no later than five (5) working days after the end of the month in which the travel occurred. With the expense statement, the employee should submit a copy of their approved leave form, agenda, and appropriate receipts.

**ABSOLUTELY NO PAYMENT CAN BE MADE FOR TRAVEL EXPENSE STATEMENTS RECEIVED AFTER THE END OF THE CURRENT FISCAL YEAR.****Visitation During Work Hours**

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

**Waste, Fraud and Abuse**

This procedure is established to facilitate the development of controls concerning fiscal matters that aid in the detection and prevention of waste, fraud, abuse and corruption against the Turner County Board of Education. It is the intent of the District to promote consistent organizational behavior by providing guidelines and assigning responsibility for the development of controls and conduct of investigations. These procedures apply to acts involving employees as well as consultants, vendors, contractors, and any other parties doing business with the District.

Management is responsible for the detection or prevention of fraud, misappropriations, and other inappropriate conduct. Each employee is responsible for reporting any indication of irregularity. Any fraud that is detected or suspected must be reported to the Superintendent.

The Superintendent has the primary responsibility for the investigation of all suspected fraudulent financial acts as defined herein. If the investigation substantiates that fraudulent activities have occurred, final action or resolution will rest with the board.

Investigations related to fraud will be treated with confidentiality. Investigation results will not be disclosed or discussed with anyone other than those who have a legitimate need to know.

## Appendix A

### Turner County School System Social Media Guidelines and Procedures

The Turner County School System recognizes the importance of using social media as a communication and learning tool. The way and manner in which TCSS staff members communicate with students, parents and the community shapes public perception. The purpose of these guidelines is to assist District employees in navigating the appropriate use of social media tools in their professional and personal lives. Social media includes websites and applications where users share and create content and includes blogs, wikis, podcasts, virtual worlds and social networks.

All staff are expected to serve as positive ambassadors for the District and appropriate role models for students. It is vital that staff maintain professionalism in their interactions with students and the community. Failure to do so could put you in violation of existing District policy as well as TCS guidelines and at risk of disciplinary action.

Posting on personal social media sites during instructional time or times when you are responsible for students is not acceptable and places you at risk of disciplinary action. Additionally, it is not acceptable for staff to use TCSS owned computers or electronic devices to interact on personal social media sites during the designated work day.

#### **You are Always a School Employee**

The lines between public and private, personal and professional are sometimes blurred in the digital world. Even when you have a disclaimer or use a different username, you will always be considered to be a district employee. Whether it is clearly communicated or not, you will be publicly identified as working for and sometimes representing the district in what you do and say online.

- Always write in the first person and make it clear that you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of the district.
- Do not misrepresent yourself by using someone else's identity or misrepresenting your identity. Be honest about who you are, where you work and what you do.
- Do not share confidential information whether it is internal school discussions or specific information about students or other staff. Even if the communication takes place from a personal account, all communication related to the educational process is considered a public record. What you post will be seen by others and can be forwarded or shared in just a few clicks.
- Do not use District contact information (email, address, phone, etc.) when using social media for personal use.
- Use discretion and carefully consider the policies of the District before accepting any permission-based friend or follower requests received from students. Doing so puts you in a teacher-student relationship.
- Do not use District equipment or District network as primary tools for maintaining personal accounts.
- No School system email address should be associated with any personal social media pages or sites.
- As a district employee, TCS Ethics Guidelines govern your behavior(s). You may still be identified with the district, and your behavior is governed by the Ethics Guidelines of the Georgia Professional Standards Commission even if you choose NOT to identify yourself with the district.

#### **Be Professional**

Represent the district values of respect, responsibility, integrity, citizenship, honesty and teamwork. Express your ideas and opinions in a respectful manner and consider carefully what you post through comments and photos.

- Online posts should be well written. Write for your immediate purpose, but also for a worldwide audience by following writing conventions including proper grammar, capitalization, and punctuation.

- Respect copyright and fair use guidelines.
- Refrain from derogatory statements about colleagues or students, or other comments that would reflect badly on your professional reputation.
- Do not use any school logo or image without permission from the District's Technology Department.
- If you make a mistake, admit it and correct it quickly. Clearly state if you've corrected a previous post and apologize if appropriate. Even though damage may be done, it is best to admit your mistake and correct it.
- Be cautious about posting personal videos. Content never disappears entirely once it is posted, so it's important you correct any errors as soon as possible. Video is an especially rich form of communication that often tells more about you than you might realize. Assume the video you post is public and will be viewed by everyone in your personal and professional worlds.
- Never create an alias and never be anonymous. Misidentifying yourself or providing false information may result in disciplinary action.
- Think before you post. If you feel angry or passionate about a subject, it may not be the time to share your thoughts in a post- you should delay posting until you are calm and clear-headed.

### **Manage Staff/Student Relationships Carefully**

Employees are prohibited from establishing personal relationships with students that are unprofessional and thereby inappropriate. Do not fraternize with students as though they are your peers or friends.

- Unprofessional relationships include writing personal letters, email or text messages; calling students on cell phones or allowing students to make personal calls to you unrelated to class work or school activities; sending inappropriate pictures to students; discussing or revealing personal matters about your private life or inviting students to do the same; engaging in sexualized dialogue in any form.
- Inappropriate or offensive content posted to social networks by employees and viewed by students, parents or other staff may be investigated by school and district officials and, if warranted, may result in disciplinary action.
- School email is not private and is subject to open records request. All communications by employees to students or parents at any time from any email system shall be expected to be professional. Email between employees and students and parents shall be done through the school provided email application and must conform to school email policies.

### **Respect Others and Ensure the Safety of Students**

Respect the privacy and the feelings of others and do not, under any circumstance, post offensive comments about students, colleagues, or the district in general. Negative comments about people may amount to cyberbullying and could be deemed a disciplinary offense.

- You are responsible for what you post publicly, so be certain it is accurate and supports, or remains neutral of your organization. If you are about to publish something that makes you hesitate, wait a day and talk to a colleague or supervisor. Once posted you can't take it back.
- Employees who join or engage in social networks that include students have the responsibility for monitoring content and addressing appropriate behavior or activity, including the protection and safety of minors.
- Permission should be sought when posting photos or movies of fellow employees when possible. Permission should be sought when posting photos or movies that single out or personally identify a student.
- Be aware of students who have "opted-out" of District communications before posting photos and names online. (District social media teams have been put in place to post for schools, clubs and sports. You are welcome to share items that you would like posted with the appropriate social media team for your building)

## **Appendix B**

### **Board Policy GAMA: Drug-Free Workplace**

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

**Directory for Roles & Responsibilities**

Job	Who	Contact
504	Sonya Mizell	sonya.mizell@turner.k12.ga.us
Accounts Payable	Glenda Farmer	glenda.farmer@turner.k12.ga.us
Assistant Superintendent	Bernard Joiner Liz Walker	bernard.joiner@turner.k12.ga.us liz.walker@turner.k12.ga.us
Athletic Director	Christopher Raymond	christopher.raymond@turner.k12.ga.us
Benefits/Insurance	Michelle Owens	michelle.owens@turner.k12.ga.us
CFO	Liz Walker	liz.walker@turner.k12.ga.us
Contracts	Michelle Owens	michelle.owens@turner.k12.ga.us
CPI	Michelle Owens	michelle.owens@turner.k12.ga.us
CTAE	Eva Joiner	eva.joiner@turner.k12.ga.us
Curriculum & Instruction	Bernard Joiner	bernard.joiner@turner.k12.ga.us
Email Accounts	Jennifer Thomas	jennifer.thomas@turner.k12.ga.us
Federal Programs	Zetta Terry	zetta.terry@turner.k12.ga.us
Food & Nutrition	Artemio Gomez	artemio.gomez@turner.k12.ga.us
FTE	Sonya Mizell	sonya.mizell@turner.k12.ga.us
GaPSC	Michelle Owens	michelle.owens@turner.k12.ga.us
Gifted	Bernard Joiner	bernard.joiner@turner.k12.ga.us
Homeless Liaison	Shylynski Johnson	shy.johnson@turner.k12.ga.us
Human Resources	Michelle Owens	michelle.owens@turner.k12.ga.us
Infinite Campus	Sonya Mizell	sonya.mizell@turner.k12.ga.us
Maintenance & Operations	Ben Lavender	ben.lavender@turner.k12.ga.us
Mental Health	Tosha Turner	tosha.turner@turner.k12.ga.us
Payroll	Michelle Owens	michelle.owens@turner.k12.ga.us
PBIS/Leader In Me	Zetta Terry	zetta.terry@turner.k12.ga.us

PreK Director	Bernard Joiner	bernard.joiner@turner.k12.ga.us
Psychological Testing	Sonya Mizell	sonya.mizell@turner.k12.ga.us
RTI/MTSS	Sonya Mizell	sonya.mizell@turner.k12.ga.us
Sick Leave	Michelle Owens	michelle.owens@turner.k12.ga.us
SLDS	Michelle Owens	michelle.owens@turner.k12.ga.us
Social Worker	Shylynski Johnson	shy.johnson@turner.k12.ga.us
Special Education Director	Sonya Mizell	sonya.mizell@turner.k12.ga.us
Student Records	Sonya Mizell	sonya.mizell@turner.k12.ga.us
Student Services	Zetta Terry	zetta.terry@turner.k12.ga.us
Superintendent	Christy Wray	christy.wray@turner.k12.ga.us
Technology Director	Jennifer Thomas	jennifer.thomas@turner.k12.ga.us
Technology Specialist	Jason Poppell	jason.poppell@turner.k12.ga.us
Testing	Zetta Terry	zetta.terry@turner.k12.ga.us
Title IX	Zetta Terry	zetta.terry@turner.k12.ga.us
TKES/LKES	Bernard Joiner	bernard.joiner@turner.k12.ga.us
Transportation	Michael Wiggins	michael.wiggins@turner.k12.ga.us
Work Based Learning	Eva Joiner	eva.joiner@turner.k12.ga.us
Workman's Compensation	Jennifer Felton	jennifer.felton@turner.k12.ga.us

# Turner County Schools Employee Handbook 2024-2025

Your signature below indicates that you have read, understand, and agree with the policies and procedures found in the Turner County School Employee Handbook.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Disclaimer: TEACHER HANDBOOK PROVISIONS**

The terms described in this Employee Handbook may be altered, modified, changed, or eliminated by the Turner County School District at any time, with or without prior notice. This Employee Handbook and all provisions contained herein do not establish conditions of employment, are not a guarantee of employment, and are not an employment contract, express or implied.