



Employee Handbook 2025-2026 School Year

**St. Clair County Board of Education
410 Roy Dr.
Ashville, AL**

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WELCOME MESSAGE

This handbook is a compilation of pertinent information for employees of the St. Clair County Board of Education. The policies and procedures represented in this handbook and the complete Board Policy Manual found on-line are products of collaborative efforts. This handbook primarily covers procedures. Again, most of the policies are covered in the Policy Manual.

It is our desire that you be informed about the rules, regulations and procedures that govern our daily operations. This handbook is designed to assist you in carrying out your assigned duties in the most effective manner possible. Employees should review Section 6 of the St. Clair County Policy Manual for all the policies related to employment.

Sincerely,

Justin Burns
Superintendent

MISSION STATEMENT

Mission:

Equip. Enrich. Encourage

Vision:

We strive to equip, enrich, and encourage every student to be successful in life beyond the classroom.

- Students will be *equipped* with the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in life.
- Students will have the opportunity to learn in *enriching*, safe and caring learning environments.
- Students will be *encouraged* to develop exemplary character and to reach their full potential.

Beliefs:

- That knowledge is gained through learning and experience both inside and outside of the classroom.
- That learning environment should promote resilience, respectfulness, and strong work ethic.
- That exemplary character is demonstrated as having integrity, showing compassion, and setting and achieving goals.

Goals:

- We will equip students to be ready for enrollment, enlistment, employment, or entrepreneurship in an enriching and encouraging environment.
- We will equip our staff with the necessary tools and resources to foster student achievement.
- We will interact with our community through efficient bidirectional communication.
- We will intentionally distribute resources to optimize efficiency and success for everyone.

CODE OF ETHICS

A professional educator constantly strives to uphold the honor and integrity of the profession in all actions and relations with pupils, colleagues, and the community. The professional educator should recognize the worth and dignity of everyone. He/she should recognize the supreme importance of the pursuit of truth, devotion to excellence, and the nurturing of democratic citizenship.

The professional educator should obey local, state, and national laws; should hold himself/herself to high ethical and moral standard; and should give loyalty to his/her country and to the causes of democracy and liberty. He/she should carry out in good faith all policies duly adopted by the Board and should render professional service to the best of his/her abilities.

The professional educator should not permit private gain or personal economic interest to affect the discharge of professional responsibilities. He/she should recognize the magnitude of the responsibility he/she has accepted in choosing a career in education.

The professional educator should be responsible to his/her supervisors, the Board, and the public whom he/she serves.

ALABAMA EDUCATOR CODE OF ETHICS

INTRODUCTION

The primary goal of every educator in the state of Alabama must always, be to provide an environment in which all students can learn. To accomplish that goal, educators must value the worth and dignity of every person, must have a devotion to excellence in all matters, must actively support the pursuit of knowledge, and must fully participate in the nurturance of a democratic citizenry. To do so requires an adherence to a high ethical standard.

The Alabama Educator Code of Ethics defines the professional behavior of educators in Alabama and serves as a guide to ethical conduct. The code protects the health, safety, and general welfare of students and educators; outlines objective standards of conduct for professional educators; and clearly defines actions of an unethical nature for which disciplinary sanctions are justified.

Standard 1: Professional Conduct

An educator should demonstrate conduct that follows generally recognized professional standards.

Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Encouraging and supporting colleagues in the development and maintenance of high standards. Respecting fellow educators and participating in the development of a professional and supportive teaching environment.
- Engaging in a variety of individual and collaborative learning experiences essential to developing professionally to promote student learning.

Unethical conduct is any conduct that impairs the certificate holder's ability to function in his or her employment position or a pattern of behavior that is detrimental to the health, welfare, discipline, or morals of students. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Harassment of colleagues or students.
- Misuse or mismanagement of tests or test materials.
- Inappropriate language or behavior on school grounds.
- Physical altercations.
- Failure to provide appropriate supervision of students.

Standard 2: Trustworthiness

An educator should exemplify honesty and integrity during professional practice.

Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Properly representing facts concerning an educational matter in direct or indirect public expression.
- Advocating for fair and equitable opportunities for all children.
- Embodying for students the characteristics of intellectual honesty, diplomacy, tact, and fairness.

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting professional qualifications, criminal record, or employment history when applying for employment or certification.
- Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting information submitted to federal, state and/or other governmental agencies.
- Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting information regarding the evaluation of students and/or personnel.
- Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting reasons for absences or leaves.
- Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting information submitted during an official inquiry or investigation.

Standard 3: Unlawful Acts

An educator should abide by federal, state, and local laws, and statutes.

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the commission or conviction of a felony or of any crime involving moral turpitude. As used herein, conviction includes a finding or verdict of guilty, or a plea of nolo contendere, regardless of whether an appeal of the conviction has been sought or a situation where first offender treatment without adjudication of guilty pursuant to the charge was granted.

Standard 4: Teacher/Student Relationship

An educator should always maintain a professional relationship with all students, both in and outside the classroom.

Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Fulfilling the roles of trusted confidante, mentor, and advocate for students' growth.
- Nurturing the intellectual, physical, emotional, social, and civic potential of all students.
- Providing an environment that does not needlessly expose students to unnecessary embarrassment or disparagement.
- Creating, supporting, and maintaining a challenging learning environment for all students.

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Committing any act of child abuse, including physical or verbal abuse.
- Committing any act of cruelty to children or any act of child endangerment.
- Committing or soliciting any unlawful sexual act
- Engaging in harassing behavior based on race, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, religion, or disability.
- Soliciting, encouraging, or consummating an inappropriate written, verbal, or physical relationship with a student.
- Furnishing tobacco, alcohol, or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any student or allowing a student to consume alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs.

Standard 5: Alcohol, Drug and Tobacco Use or Possession

An educator should refrain from the use of alcohol and/or tobacco during professional practice and should never use illegal or unauthorized drugs.

Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Factually representing the dangers of alcohol, tobacco and illegal drug use and abuse to students during professional practice.

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Being under the influence of, possessing, using, or consuming illegal or unauthorized drugs.
- Being on school premises or at a school-related activity involving students while documented as being under the influence of, possessing, or consuming alcoholic beverages or using tobacco. A school-related activity includes, but is not limited to, any activity that is sponsored by a school or a school system or any activity designed to enhance the school curriculum such as club trips, etc., where students are involved.

Standard 6: Public Funds and Property

An educator entrusted with public funds and property should honor that trust with a high level of honesty, accuracy, and responsibility.

Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Maximizing the positive effect of school funds through judicious use of said funds.
- Modeling for students and colleagues the responsible use of public property.

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Misusing public or school-related funds.
- Failing to account for funds collected from students or parents.
- Submitting fraudulent requests for reimbursement of expenses or for pay.
- Co-mingling public or school-related funds with personal funds or checking accounts.
- Using school property without the approval of the local board of education/governing body.

Standard 7: Remunerative Conduct

An educator should maintain integrity with students, colleagues, parents, patrons, or businesses when accepting gifts, gratuities, favors, and additional compensation.

Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Ensuring that institutional privileges are not used for personal gain.
- Ensuring that school policies or procedures are not impacted by gifts or gratuities from any person or organization.

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Soliciting students or parents of students to purchase equipment, supplies, or services from the educator or to participate in activities that financially benefit the educator or his/her family members unless approved by the local governing body.
- Accepting gifts from vendors or potential vendors for personal use or gain where there appears to be a conflict of interest.
- Tutoring students assigned to the educator for remuneration unless approved by the local board of education.

Standard 8: Maintenance of Confidentiality

An educator should comply with state and federal laws and local school board policies relating to confidentiality of student and personnel records, standardized test material, and other information covered by confidentiality agreements.

Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Keeping in confidence information about students that has been obtained in the course of professional services unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law.
- Maintaining diligently the security of standardized test content, supplies and resources.

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Sharing confidential information concerning student academic and disciplinary records, health and medical information, family status/income, and assessment/testing content or results unless disclosure is required or permitted by law.
- Violating confidentiality agreements related to standardized testing including copying or teaching identified test items, publishing, or distributing test items or answers, discussing test items, and violating local school system or state directions for the use of tests or test items.
- Violating other confidentiality agreements required by state or local policy.

Standard 9: Abandonment of Contract

An educator should fulfill all the terms and obligations detailed in the contract with the local board of education or educational agency for the duration of the contract.

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Abandoning the contract for professional services without prior release from the contract by the employer.
- Refusing to perform services required by the contract.

REPORTING

Educators are required to report a breach of one or more of the Standards in the Alabama Educator Code of Ethics as soon as possible, but no later than sixty (60) days from the date the educator became aware of the alleged breach, unless the law or local procedures require reporting sooner. Educators should be aware of their local school board policies and procedures and/or chain of command for reporting unethical conduct. Complaints filed with the local or state school boards or with the State Department of Education Teacher Certification Section, must be filed in writing and must include the original signature of the complainant. *Alabama Administrative Code 290-3-2-.05*

(1)-5-c Each Superintendent shall submit to the State Superintendent of Education within ten calendar days of the decision, the name and social security number of each employee holding an Alabama certificate or license who is terminated, or non-renewed, resigns, or is placed on administrative leave for cause, and shall indicate the reason for such action.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Disciplinary action shall be defined as the issuance of a reprimand or warning, or the suspension, revocation, or denial of certificates. "Certificate" refers to any teaching, service, or leadership certificate issued by the authority of the Alabama State Department of Education.

Alabama Administrative Code 290-3-2-.05

1. Authority of the State Superintendent of Education
 - a. The Superintendent shall have the authority under existing legal standards to:
 - i. Revoke any certificate held by a person who has been proven guilty of immoral conduct or unbecoming or indecent behavior in Alabama or any other state or nation in accordance with Ala. Code §16-23-5-(1975).
 - ii. Refuse to issue a certificate to an applicant whose certificate has been subject to adverse action by another state until after the adverse action has been resolved by that state.
 - iii. Suspend or revoke an individual's certificate issued by the Superintendent when a certificate or license issued by another state is subject to adverse action.
 - iv. Refuse to issue, suspend, or recall a certificate for just cause.

Any of the following grounds shall also be considered cause for disciplinary action:

1. Unethical conduct as outlined in the Alabama Educator Code of Ethics, Standards 1-9.
2. Order from a court of competent authority.
3. Violation of any other laws or rules applicable to the profession.
4. Any other good and sufficient cause.

An individual whose certificate has been revoked, denied, or suspended may not be employed as an educator, paraprofessional, aide, or substitute teacher during the period of his or her revocation, suspension, or denial. See to page 20 Employee Conduct.

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

The St. Clair County School System does not discriminate based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex (including pregnancy), disability, genetics or age in any of its programs and activities, or in matters of employment, and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following people have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies:
Mark Ford- Human Resources Coordinator.

BENEFITS

The Board provides several employee benefits. Many of these benefits are listed below. Please note that our retirement plan and health insurance are managed by the Retirement System of Alabama. All changes in status or coverage must be made directly through PEEHIP:

www.rsa-al.gov or 1-877-517-0020

HEALTH INSURANCE

Medical insurance through a combination of State and employee contributions is available through the Public Education Employees Health Insurance Plan (PEEHIP). Each employee may choose the plan desired. The choice must be made by August 31 of each academic year to complete processing. Paper copies must be postmarked no later than August 31. Online changes may be made up until September 10. Each full-time employee receives a monthly allocation, which is applied toward the cost of health care. Support employees working less than 4 hours per day and certified employees working less than full-time receive a prorated health insurance allocation. In cases where the spouse of an employee has other hospital insurance, the state allocation may be used to purchase supplemental **coverage to pay out of pocket expenses or the optional insurance to cover hospital indemnity, dental, vision and cancer** for single or family coverage. Optional insurance is available to those who are insured through the state plan at an additional cost. More detailed information about hospital/medical insurance is available from the www.rsa-al.gov.

Premium Rates

Premium Rates for PEEHIP insurance can be found on the RSA/PEEHIP website:

<https://www.rsa-al.gov/peehip/premiums>

Optional Plans

There are four Optional plans offered through PEEHIP. Employees should refer to the PEEHIP Member Handbook for detailed information and limitations on these plans. The Open Enrollment/Member Handbook is available online or members can request a hard copy to be mailed to them by contacting the member's services department at 877-517-0020. All optional plans must be retained for the entire insurance year, i.e., until the end of September 30. New employees employed during the Open Enrollment period cannot enroll in the Optional plans on their date of employment and cancel the plans October 1 of that same year.

If a member is enrolled in one or more of the Optional plans, the contracts must be all family or all single plans. Members enrolled in family optional plans cannot change to single Optional plans outside of the Open Enrollment period unless all dependent(s) become ineligible due to age, death, or divorce. Optional plans offered include Cancer, Dental, Hospital Indemnity, and Vision.

PEEHIP Supplemental Coverage Plan

Provides secondary coverage to the members and covered dependent(s) when primary coverage is provided by another employer.

Allocations

A member receives the State insurance allocation for each month if that member is in pay status at least one-half of the working days of that month.

Allocations are earned in the actual month worked. To be eligible for a full allocation, support employees must work at least twenty (20) hours per week (excluding bus drivers who are full-time by law). Certified employees must work full time to earn full benefits.

3-1 Rule of Earning Allocations

A member earns one month of additional insurance allocation for every three months the employee is in pay status at least one-half of the workdays in the month for that school year. The 3-1 Rule only applies in a situation where an employee has terminated employment, retires, is not in pay status at least one-half of the workdays in the month, goes on an approved leave of absence without pay, or begins employment in the middle of the year.

- The 3-1 Rule is applied using an August through August year.
- Extra allocations earned by a member must be applied to insurance premiums immediately after the member is separated from employment.
- The member cannot pick and choose the months to use the allocation.
- An employee must be in pay status at least one-half of the available workdays for three full months to earn an extra one month of an insurance allocation.
- An employee can only use the earned allocation credit for the current fiscal year, i.e., the allocation credit cannot be used after September 30.
- The 3-1 Rule is handled in the same manner for all employees regardless of whether they are paid on a 9, 10, 11, or 12-month basis.

The table below should be used when calculating the number of months an employee is entitled to receive the insurance allocation.

Months Worked*	Allocation Earned
August, September, October	1 (typically used in May)
November, December, January	1 (typically used in June)
February, March, April	1 (typically used in July)
TOTAL	3 summer months allocation earned

***Employee must be hired by the 15th of the first month of each line listed to earn that summer allocation.**

The system is not required to pay the September allocation for an employee terminated at the end of May when the employee has worked August through May. These employees have earned the insurance

allocation through August and should not be given credit for the September insurance allocation. The 3-1 Rule applies even when a member is granted leave under the Family Medical Leave Act. If the employee earns additional allocations under the 3-1 Rule prior to going on leave under FMLA, the extra allocations should be applied to the months following said leave.

Extra insurance allocations earned under the 3-1 Rule can only be used by the employee and cannot be used by the employee's family in the event of the employee's death.

Retiring members are eligible to receive the extra allocations earned under the 3-1 Rule.

How Leave Impacts your Insurance

A member can use accrued or donated sick leave to be in pay status to receive the State allocation. **A member must use his/her accrued sick leave, personal leave, vacation, comp time (if applicable) or catastrophic leave continuously and consecutively when not actively employed.**

PEEHIP Wellness Program

A Wellness Premium Waiver of \$50 a month can be earned by eligible PEEHIP members by completing certain required wellness activities by August 31st of each year. If you miss the deadline, you will be charged the wellness premium beginning with the October coverage period. If you complete your wellness requirements after August 31st the wellness premium will be waived prospectively (not retroactively). Log on to www.MyActiveHealth.com/PEEHIP to check your completion status.

Federal Premium Assistance Program (PAP)

Some employees may be eligible for a discount on their PEEHIP hospital/medical premiums based on their combined household income level and family size. For more information you can refer to the RSA website or call PEEHIP directly.

All Kids

All Kids is a program sponsored by the Alabama Department of Public Health to provide affordable health insurance to children under the age of 19. Eligibility is based on family size and income level. To find out more please visit <http://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/allkids/> or call 1-888-373-5437.

RETIREMENT

All regular employees of the school system are required to be members of the Teachers Retirement System of Alabama. The major portion of the contribution is provided by the State of Alabama through legislative appropriation. Any member of the Retirement System who had service for which he or she received credit in the Employees' Retirement System or in the Teachers' Retirement System prior to January 1, 2013, is considered a Tier 1 plan member. The employee contribution (7.5% of contract salary) is tax sheltered. This means that employees do not pay income tax on their 7.5 per cent contribution until such time as it is received by the employee as retirement income. The retirement program provides for retirement at age 60 with 10 years or more of participation service or at any age with 25 years of service. A Tier 2 plan member is any member of the Retirement System who first began eligible employment with an Employees' Retirement System or a Teachers' Retirement System participating employer on or after January 1, 2013, and who had no eligible service in the Employees' Retirement System or the Teachers' Retirement System prior to January 1, 2013. The employee contribution is 6%. The retirement program provides for retirement at age 62 with at least 10 years of service credit. In addition to retirement benefits, the Retirement System provides life insurance in an amount equal to the annual salary paid to the

employee during the last scholastic year (July 1-June 30) and \$15,000 life insurance for full time employees and \$7,500 for half-time employees. More information is provided under the section “Retirement” in this handbook.

Filing for Retirement

Written application should be made to the State Retirement System not less than thirty (30) days or more than ninety (90) days before the date of expected retirement. For example, if you wish to retire on June 1, you must file by the end of April. A representative of the Retirement System conducts local retirement seminars periodically throughout the year for school system employees planning to retire. Information regarding these meetings is available on the RSA website. Any employee who plans to retire shall submit his/her resignation in writing to the St. Clair County Board of Education through the Superintendent. Code of Alabama 16-25-1. Employees will be expected to use a Talent Ed form for retirement and resignation. Employees must complete “exit process” before last check will be issued. This process includes a checklist to turn in all equipment that has been issued to the employee and completed the checkout process.

VOLUNTARY PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS

As a service to employees, several voluntary payroll deductions can be made. These include:

- Alabama Conference of Educators (ACOE) (866) 266-2263
- Alabama Education Association (AEA) (334) 834-9790
- AlaTrust Credit Union (205) 581-8800
- American Family Life (AFLAC) (800) 992-3522
- American Federation of Teachers (AFT) (205) 879-3663
- American Fidelity (800) 662-1113
- American General (800) 888-2452
- Colorado Bankers Life (800) 367-7814
- Horace Mann (800) 999-1030
- LegalShield (800) 654-7757
- Liberty National (800) 333-0637
- Life of Alabama (256) 543-2022
- National Life Group (800) 732-8939
- Ohio National (800) 366-6654
- VALIC (800) 448-2542
- VSP (800) 877-7195
- RSA-1 (formerly known as PEIRAF) (877) 517-0020
- St. Clair Educational Foundation
- Texas Life (800) 283-2933
- United Way (205) 251-5131

To cancel any payroll deductions, you will need to complete the “Payroll Deduction Cancellation” form in Talent Ed. You will also need to contact the vendor to notify them of these cancellations- St. Clair County Board of Education is not responsible for notifying 3rd parties. The school system may institute a uniform start and cancellation time for voluntary payroll deductions. Our current guidelines are as follows:

Type of Deduction	Enrollment Period	Payroll Deduction Starts	Effective Date	Cancellation Timeframe	Effective Date
Teacher Organizations* (AEA, AFT, ACOE)	Beginning of school year- 9/15	September Paycheck	October 1 st	Beginning of school year- 9/15	October 1 st
Non-Tax Sheltered	Beginning of school year- 9/15 & with Cafeteria Plan Manager	January Paycheck	February 1 st	Any time of year	Next paycheck when received by 15 th of the month
Tax Sheltered**	Beginning of school year- 9/15 & with Cafeteria Plan Manager	January Paycheck	February 1 st	Beginning of school year- 9/15 & with Cafeteria Plan Manager	February 1 st

*Due to state laws, membership in teacher union groups (AEA, AFT, ACOE) can only be cancelled during open enrollment. Open enrollment is from the start of the school year until September 15th, but we cannot prohibit anyone from joining an organization midyear.

**Tax sheltered deductions can only be cancelled before the start of the plan year through the TalentEd form or when meeting with the Cafeteria Plan Manager (American Fidelity). They cannot be cancelled mid plan year.

DISTRICT WIDE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

CERTIFICATION

Each employee is responsible for keeping track of his/her renewal times. The valid period of each certificate is noted on the certificate. Certified employees are encouraged to keep a current copy of their certificates and to give a copy to their principal. The personnel staff will assist employees upon request but will not be responsible for notification of expiration of certificates. It is the employee's responsibility to keep track of and earn the necessary CEU's or PLUs for certificate renewal.

CONTRACT VARIANCE FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAYS

(When applicable to school system calendar) to exchange a workshop for a professional development day (swap day), the workshop attended must meet the following requirements:

- 1) The workshop must last six (6) hours or longer.
- 2) The workshop must be approved in advance by the local supervisor.
- 3) An approval must be submitted ten (10) or more days prior to the workshop for approval to be granted.
- 4) Contract variance forms received via fax will not be acknowledged.
- 5) The contract variance form must be completed in its entirety.
- 6) The contract variance form must be accompanied by a copy of the brochure or itinerary advertising the workshop.
- 7) The workshop must be research-based and relevant to the employee's work assignment & professional development need. The professional development need of the employee may be based on PDP, PLP, the school improvement plan, or the district improvement plan.

- 8) Written documentation must be provided as a certificate of attendance for the workshop and submitted with the appropriate time sheet for payroll purposes.
- 9) The attendee must share the information from the workshop with the faculty/staff at his/her local school; however, this does not necessarily mean a formal presentation at a faculty meeting. The information may be shared at a grade level or small group meeting.
- 10) If an employee receives a stipend for a workshop, the workshop will not qualify for contract variance purposes.
- 11) College coursework cannot be used for contract variance purposes.
- 12) Contract variance applies to 9- and 10-month CERTIFIED employees only.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING

In accordance with the Federal Transportation Employee Testing Act of 1993, certain employees involved in the operating of St. Clair County School System owned vehicles on a regular basis are required to submit to drug and alcohol testing. The Board, in compliance with the Act, has adopted the following provisions:

- All School System employees, including substitutes, who must hold a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) as a precondition to employment or to continued employment, will be subject to drug and alcohol testing. Such employees will be prohibited from performing assigned duties while under any prohibited drug or alcohol. While employees are prohibited from having any alcohol present in their systems while on duty, a Blood Alcohol Count (BAC) of .04 will be accepted as presumptive evidence of intoxication. An employee who tests between .01 and .039 BAC will be removed from job related functions until they test below .01 or until their next duty period, which must be at least 24 hours.
- All employees who drive a St. Clair County owned vehicle will be subject to drug and alcohol testing. Such employees will be prohibited from performing assigned duties while under any prohibited drug or alcohol. While employees are prohibited from having any alcohol present in their systems while on duty, a Blood Alcohol Count (BAC) of .04 will be accepted as presumptive evidence of intoxication. An employee who tests between .01 and .039 BAC will be removed from job related functions until they test below .01 or until their next duty period, which must be at least 24 hours. Employees who refuse or do not pass a drug or alcohol test will be recommended for termination or removed from consideration for employment. Employees testing positive by urinalysis or alcohol/breathalyzer test or requesting treatment may be referred to a mental health substance abuse counselor for an assessment of needs and possible referral for treatment. All such treatment shall be at the individual employee's expense.
- All employees who drive a St. Clair County owned vehicle should not use the vehicle for personal errands.
- The proper use of medication prescribed by a physician is not prohibited; however, the Board prohibits the misuse of prescribed (or over the counter) medications and requires all employees using drugs at the direction of a physician (or over-the-counter drugs) to notify the Board's Medical Review Officer (MRO), or the employee's supervisor where these drugs may affect their job performance, such as causing drowsiness.
- Employees who are required to hold a CDL as a precondition to employment or to continued employment who refuse or do not pass a drug or alcohol test will be recommended for

termination or removed from consideration for employment. Employees testing positive by urinalysis or alcohol/breathalyzer test or requesting treatment may be referred to a mental health substance abuse counselor for an assessment of needs and possible referral for treatment. All such treatment shall be at the individual employee's expense.

- Drug and alcohol testing will include the following categories:
 - Pre-employment: (Post-Offer - This is to be interpreted as a conditional offer of employment.) Each person, after a conditional offer of employment has been made, will have to undergo a drug test before being employed in a position that requires the employee to hold the CDL.
 - Reasonable Cause Testing: Each employee that is required to hold the CDL as a precondition to employment or to continued employment will be subject to drug and alcohol testing based on reasonable cause as established by a supervisor through the use of objective evidence.
 - Post-Accident: Any employee who is required to hold the CDL as a precondition to employment or to continued employment that is involved in a reportable accident will undergo drug and alcohol testing within two (2) hours following any accident.
 - Random Testing: All employees required to hold a CDL as a precondition to employment or to continued employment will undergo testing on a random basis. Random testing will be administered in a number equal to or greater than 50 percent (drug screening) and 25 percent (alcohol screening) of the CDL work force, without advanced notice, in the first 12 months of testing. There will be no maximum number of samples that any one employee will be required to provide during the testing period. Employees refusing to be tested may be suspended pending a recommendation for termination.
 - Return to Duty Testing: Any employee who is required to hold a CDL as a precondition to employment or to continued employment and tests positive or refuses testing must pass a "Return to Duty Drug Test." In such instance, the Medical Review Officer must determine when and under what conditions the employee may return to duty. Any employee subject to "Return to Duty Drug Testing" will be subject to random and/or unannounced drug testing for sixty (60) months after return to duty. Follow-up tests for alcohol are unannounced and at least six (6) tests must be conducted in the first 12 months after an employee returns to duty.

The Medical Review Officer is designated by the Board.

Test results will not be released by the Board beyond the MRO without the individual's written authorization.

Procedures for drug testing shall be distributed to all affected employees. Receipt of St. Clair County School System Drug Free Workplace regulations and procedures shall be acknowledged by employees on signed acknowledgement forms as required for initial and continued employment.

FIELD TRIPS

The St. Clair County Board of Education recognizes that educational field trips and trips to various types of contests for instructional purposes help provide desirable learning experiences. The Board delegates to the Superintendent the responsibility for development of administrative criteria governing field trips. However, only those field trips that grow out of the instructional program or are otherwise related to the

course of study are to be permitted during school hours. Other trips, such as those involving band or athletic activities should be confined to after school hours except when the school is engaged in an activity, competition, or contest that must take place during school hours.

Teachers planning field trips or out-of-class learning experiences shall submit a field trip form, in writing, to the school Principal for approval well in advance of the trip. If the Principal approves the trip, he/she will forward the request to the Transportation Director (if applicable) or his/her designee for approval. The Transportation Director will forward it to the Superintendent for approval. The application shall include an itinerary of the trip and the course of study objectives that will be met or enhanced because of the trip, mode of travel, and how the trip will be financed. If school buses will be utilized for travel, a *Transportation Request Form* shall be included with the request for approval. Teachers planning a field trip are responsible for scheduling a board approved bus driver(s) to drive on the day of the trip. If assistance is needed in finding a driver, the teacher should contact the Transportation Department for assistance. If the principal and transportation director approve the trip, a copy of the application with the itinerary of the trip should be submitted to the head nurse for notification. A list of health needs should be included in the packet provided to the head nurse. The teacher applying for approval for a field trip should have conversations with the head nurse to discuss any health concerns and to plan for students' health needs. Allow adequate time to plan with the head nurse for health issues.

After the trip has been approved by the Administrator/ Transportation Director (if applicable) and Superintendent the teacher will secure written parental/guardian permission for each child planning to participate in the trip. Students who have not submitted the appropriate permission forms shall not be allowed to take the trip.

Employees attending field trips must be participating sponsors regularly assigned to work with the students involved or use personal leave or non-paid leave (with their supervisors' prior approval) and pay the cost of a substitute if participating in the field trip.

An employee trained in giving medications must attend all field trips and in some cases a nurse may be required.

All out of state travel must have board approval before any plans are made or confirmed. This request should be submitted to the Superintendent with all the information required several months prior to the expected date of travel.

HOMEWORK

The St. Clair County Board of Education recognizes that homework should be meaningful and reasonable.

The Board also encourages the use of reasonable homework assignments that both support instructional objectives and expand the scope of instruction limited by the constraints placed on classroom teaching. Homework should not be a substitute for teaching but should enhance the classroom lesson by practical application and enrichment of what has been taught. Consideration should be given to the time required to complete a homework assignment. Homework assignments should be commensurate with the resources available to the student. Homework assignments that do not directly support a clearly defined instructional objective should not be made.

INSTITUTE DAY

Institute is a mandatory attendance day for all certificated employees of the St. Clair County Board of Education. Exceptions to this mandatory attendance rule require an excuse from the employee's attending physician and/or prior written approval from the Superintendent. Failure to provide the required

documentation for an Institute absence will result in a loss of pay equal to one day.

MAIL DISTRIBUTION

Personal mail will not be distributed through the Central Office or local school in-house mail system. Employees should not give the school or Central Office as a return or destination address.

MEDIA-VIDEO/ELECTRONIC MATERIALS

All video/electronic materials shall be previewed by the teacher and approved by the school principal prior to showing in the classroom. Video/Electronic content should relate and correlate to the unit being taught or contain positive educational value to justify viewing the material. Films with any rating other than "G" require written permission from the principal prior to being viewed by students.

NAME, ADDRESS, OR TELEPHONE CHANGES

The St. Clair County School Board does not accept name, address, and phone number changes over the phone. Employees will need to use the Talent Ed software program to make these changes. When the Talent Ed form is used it will also make changes with the retirement system.

PARENT CONFERENCES

The St. Clair County Board of Education encourages that at least once each semester every classroom teacher attempt to contact the parent/guardian of each student for whom that teacher is responsible. The purpose of the parent/guardian/teacher conference is to provide the teacher an opportunity to advise parents of the academic progress of each student and to discuss with the parent/guardian suggested strategies that the parent/guardian can implement in supporting the teacher's instructions. Each teacher should develop written documentation of each parent/guardian conference and the objectives discussed during the conference. Copies of conference documentation should be maintained for a minimum of three (3) years. Conferences should be scheduled at times when teachers are not engaged in classroom instruction.

STAFF MEETINGS

An administrator, supervisor, and/or principal may call staff meetings when he/ she feels such meetings are warranted. Mandatory attendance by employees may be required. However, such compulsory attendance should be stated within the notice announcing the meeting.

Staff meetings should be planned and announced as far in advance as possible to allow employees to appropriately plan their individual schedules.

Supervision/Duties

Employees are required by their job description to supervise morning, afternoon, detention, etc. as assigned by the principal.

Employees are required to perform other job-related duties, parenting conference nights, curriculum themed nights, etc, as assigned by the principal.

SUBSTITUTES

We have contracted with Will Sub for all our substitutes except for substitute bus drivers and substitute nurses. Any employee needing assistance with obtaining a substitute (except for bus drivers) through Will Sub, call and ask for the Will Sub Coordinator. They can aid with the process of securing a substitute.

Bus drivers are required to have proof of a high school diploma or GED, hold an Alabama Driver's License,

hold a Commercial Driver's License, hold a school bus certificate, and obtain a clear background check. Those interested in becoming a substitute bus driver should contact the transportation office at 205-629-6255.

TEST SECURITY

Failure to follow security procedures promulgated by the Alabama State Board of Education and published in the Alabama State Board of Education, State Department of Education Administrative Code (290-040-020-.04) the Student Assessment Handbook, and the test administrator's manual may result in disciplinary action by the local board of education and/or revocation of the teaching certificate by the Alabama State Department of Education. Each employee will be required to sign a test security policy stating specific actions which are inappropriate and violate, in spirit and intent, the stated policy.

EMPLOYEE CONDUCT

ALCOHOL OR CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES

The Board prohibits the use or possession of alcohol or other controlled substances by employees during the school day or at any time when there is contact with students. Use of tobacco and vaping is also prohibited. Appropriate disciplinary action will be initiated by the Board for violation of this policy. Please consult Board policy for further details section 5.16.

ARREST

Employees shall notify the Superintendent and or Human Resources Coordinator within 48 hours if arrested or charged with a criminal offense.

CHILD ABUSE/ NEGLECT

Under Alabama law, all public K-12 employees, including all schoolteachers and officials, are required to report known or suspected child abuse or neglect immediately, either by telephone or direct communication, followed by a written report, to a "duly constituted authority." Ala. Code § 26-14-3(a). A "duly constituted authority" under the law is "[t]he chief of police of a municipality or municipality and county; or the sheriff, if the observation of child abuse or neglect is made in an unincorporated territory; or the Department of Human Resources; or any person, organization, corporation, group, or agency authorized and designated by the Department of Human Resources to receive reports of child abuse and neglect; provided, that a 'duly constituted authority' shall not include an agency involved in the acts or omissions of the reported child abuse or neglect." Ala. Code § 26-14-1(4). A "child" is defined as someone "under the age of 18 years." Ala. Code § 26-14-1(3).

Child abuse under Alabama law is defined as the "[h]arm or threatened harm to a child's health or welfare," which can "occur through non-accidental physical or mental injury, sexual abuse or attempted sexual abuse, or sexual exploitation or attempted sexual exploitation." Ala. Code § 26-14-1(1). "'Sexual abuse' includes the employment, use, persuasion, inducement, enticement, or coercion of any child to engage in, or having a child assist any other person to engage in, any sexually explicit conduct or any simulation of the conduct for the purpose of producing any visual depiction of the conduct; or the rape, molestation, prostitution, or other form of sexual exploitation of children, or incest with children as those acts are defined by Alabama law." Ala. Code § 26-14-1(1). "'Sexual exploitation' includes allowing, permitting, or encouraging a child to engage in prostitution and allowing, permitting, encouraging, or engaging in the obscene or pornographic photographing, filming, or depicting of a child for commercial purposes." Ala. Code § 26-14-1(1).

Neglect is defined as Alabama law as the "negligent treatment or maltreatment of a child, including the

failure to provide adequate food, medical treatment, supervision, clothing, or shelter.” Ala. Code § 26-14-1(2). Certainty that child abuse or neglect has occurred is NOT required to trigger your mandatory reporting responsibility. All that is required is a reasonable suspicion that a child is a victim of abuse or neglect. If you have a reasonable suspicion, you must report.

The mandatory reports required by Alabama law “shall state, if known, the name of the child, his or her whereabouts, the names and addresses of the parents, guardian, or caretaker, and the character and extent of his or her injuries.” Ala. Code § 26-14-5. “The written report shall also contain, if known, any evidence of previous injuries to the child and any other pertinent information which might establish the cause of such injury or injuries, and the identity of the person or persons responsible for the same.” Ala. Code § 26-14-5.

Failure to comply with Alabama’s mandatory reporting law is a crime. Under Ala. Code § 26-14-13, “[a] Any person who shall knowingly fail to make the report required by [the law] shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and shall be punished by a sentence of not more than six months’ imprisonment or a fine of not more than \$500.00.”

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Generally, a conflict of interest exists when a board member, board employee, or agent of the board participates in a matter that is likely to have a direct effect on his or her personal and financial interests. A financial interest may include, but is not limited to, stock ownership, partnership, trustee relationship, employment, potential employment, or a business relationship with an applicant, vendor, or entity. A board member, board employee, or agent of the board may not participate in his or her official capacity in a matter that is likely to have direct and predictable effects on his or her financial interests. A board member, board employee, or agent of the board will abide by the Federal and state laws and regulations that address conflict of interest standards. In general, the Federal rules provide that:

No employee, officer, or agent of the board shall participate in selection, or in the award or administration of a contract supported by Federal funds if he or she has a real or apparent conflict of interest. Such a conflict would arise when the employee, officer, or agent, any member of his or her immediate family, his or her partner, or an organization which employs, or is about to employ any of the parties indicated herein, has a financial or other interest in or a tangible personal benefit from the firm considered for a contract. The board’s officers, employees, or agents will neither solicit nor accept gratuities, favors or anything of monetary value from contractors, potential contractors, or parties to subcontracts.

The board’s conflict of interest policies include adherence to the Alabama Ethics Law, which defines conflict of interest as:

A conflict on the part of a public official or public employee between his or her private interests and the official responsibilities inherent in an office of public trust. A conflict of interest involves any action, inaction, or decision by a public official or public employee in the discharge of his or her official duties which would materially affect his or her financial interest or those of his or her family members or any business with which the person is associated in a manner different from the manner it affects the other members of the class to which he or she belongs.

A board member, board employee, or agent of the board may not review applications, proposals, or participate in the evaluation or selection process where his or her participation in the review process would create the appearance that he or she is: (a) giving preferential treatment; (b) losing independence

and impartiality; (c) making decisions outside official and appropriate channels; or (d) harming the public's confidence in the integrity of the board.

Situations and circumstances presenting an actual conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest should be brought to the immediate attention of the superintendent. A board employee, board member, or agent of the board who has knowledge of a possible conflict of interest should identify the conflict and notify the superintendent. The superintendent will document his or her actions related to the reported conflict of interest. Resolution can consist of disqualification, recusal, waiver, or other appropriate measures. Appropriate measures may include reporting a conflict of interest to the State Ethics Commission, the Alabama State Board of Education, or the appropriate federal agency.

The St. Clair County Board of Education prohibits any employee of the School System from directly or indirectly reaping personal profit or reward from the sale or purchase of goods or services to students in the School System or to parents of students.

St. Clair County School System employees acting as individuals are further prohibited from directly or indirectly furnishing or supplying a list or roster of names and addresses of students in the School System or parents of students to persons, firms, corporations, associations or organizations or to the salespersons or agents of any such entities who are engaged directly or indirectly in the business of selling school supplies or school-related activities, equipment or items without the written approval of the Superintendent.

DRESS CODE

School employees serve as role models and are responsible for representing the educational profession in a professional manner regarding dress, grooming and conduct. Employees are expected to use good judgement in determining appropriate attire for professional dress. Employees are expected to exceed the student dress code. Under no circumstances should employees wear clothing that would be a violation of the Student Dress Code. No facial piercing other than to the ear are acceptable. Revealing garments may not be worn at any time. Leggings are only to be worn under dresses or a shirt that meets the same requirements as student dress code. Professional shoes are always to be worn. Employees must wear proper undergarments.

The immediate supervisor and job function will determine what is deemed appropriate attire, taking into consideration the requirements of the positions. Maintenance personnel, transportation personnel, custodial personnel, physical education teachers and career technical teachers may wear clothing appropriate for the specific work, while maintaining dress code regulations.

Child Nutrition Workers will wear uniforms that meet the work requirements and dress code. Uniforms are defined as long pants, shirts with sleeves and closed toed non-slip shoes. Uniforms are provided to employees and should be worn daily unless there is a special event or occasion sponsored by the school. Uniforms are property of the St. Clair County Schools and are to be returned upon termination or resignation. Failure to return uniforms could delay final paycheck. A shoe allowance is provided annually for the purchase of non-slip shoes through a designated shoe vendor. CNP employees are responsible for paying the difference in cost over the allowable threshold for preferred style shoes.

School administrators are expected to strictly enforce proper dress code. Employees are allowed to wear jeans on Casual/Spirit Fridays. Authorized exceptions may be made by the School Administrator to allow jeans, shorts, sweats on special occasions such as field day and special events.

EMPLOYEE COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Employees should:

- Refrain from discussing confidential information as it pertains to students and other employees.
- Resolve personal differences through the established grievance procedure.
- Support the ideals, policies, and services of the schools.
- Maintain a professional attitude during contacts with parents and other school patrons.
- Discuss with the principal news items pertaining to the school program. It is the principal's responsibility to contact the appropriate individuals for news releases, publications, etc.
- Use social media in a way that reflects well on your employment

GRIEVANCES

The St. Clair County Board of Education is committed to the task of maintaining the highest possible level of professional relations among members of the staff of the school system and of maintaining good morale among employees. Grievances and problems which may arise from time to time should be resolved at the lowest possible level that provides equitable and satisfactory solutions. The goal is to encourage the best possible relations among employees and to enhance morale. Persons who become concerned in grievance matters are urged to work together constructively in a sincere effort to resolve their disagreements.

Whenever a St. Clair County School System employee believes that he/she has a complaint, every effort is to be made to arrive at a satisfactory resolution of the problem on an informal basis. When this cannot be done, employees can resort to the more formal procedures as provided in the St. Clair County Policy Manual section 4.07.

A brief explanation is as follows; (for the entire policy, see the Policy Manual)

Step 1 is an informal discussion. If an employee believes, there is a basis for complaint, he/she shall discuss the complaint with his/her immediate supervisor (except in cases of discrimination or harassment involving the supervisor, in which case the complainant shall report to the Equity Coordinator or other person designated by the Superintendent within five (5) days of the occurrence of the alleged violation except in cases involving harassment or discrimination in which thirty (30) days will be allowed.

Step 2 is a Level One Procedure. If the complainant is not satisfied with the informal resolution, he/she may, within ten (10) days, file a formal complaint in writing and deliver it to his/her immediate supervisor or alternate. The supervisor or alternate shall communicate his/her answer in writing to the complainant. Class complaints involving more than one (1) supervisor and complaints involving and administrator above the building level may be filed by the complainant at level two.

Step 3 is a Level Two Procedure. If the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution at level one, he/she may, within ten (10) days of the answer, file a copy of the complaint with the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall indicate his/her disposition in writing to the complainant.

Step 4 is a Board Appeal. If the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution by the Superintendent, he/she shall have the right to appeal to the Superintendent's decision to the St. Clair County Board of Education, provided request for placement on the Board agenda is filed within ten (10) days.

MEDICATIONS

Personal medications must be secured at all times. No employee shall endorse or encourage students to use protein drinks or any other supplements. Employees are not to give medication to students. Only trained medication assistants can disperse medications.

PRINCIPAL-PERSONNEL RELATIONS

The principal is responsible for the supervision of all personnel assigned to the school. Professional cooperation is expected between the principal and all personnel.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Certified and non-certified personnel of the School System shall respect each other's rights to choose for themselves the professional organizations with which they affiliate. Membership in professional organizations shall be on a voluntary basis. Administrators of the School System or local schools shall not take punitive action against employees because of their membership in professional organizations or because of their failure to affiliate with said organizations.

FINANCE PROCEDURES

CASH IN BUILDING

In the interest of building security, no cash or other valuable articles should be left in classrooms or other locations in the school. School funds should be receipted in the office before school is dismissed for the day. Personal articles of value should be secured in a locked cabinet or removed from the building by the owner.

FUNDRAISERS – Crowd Funding

Crowd funding fundraisers must have prior approval from the Chief School Financial Officer. A TalentEd form should be completed for approval. It is automatically routed to the CSFO. All policies and procedures must be followed if approved by the Chief School Financial Officer. If procedures are not followed, an employee may be subject to disciplinary action.

GIFTS

Employees may accept gifts from students or members of the public if the gifts are in accordance with the Alabama Ethics Law or other pertinent state laws.

Employees may accept gifts or gift cards purchased from pooled donations within a class, team, or other school organization for the employee's personal use provided that the amount that each person gives complies with the Alabama Ethics Law.

TRAVEL EXPENSE POLICY

The Board authorizes the reimbursement of professional personnel for travel expenses incurred as a requirement of their jobs. Reimbursement may be made for travel, which is at the request of, or has received prior approval from, the Superintendent and said employee's immediate supervisor. Such reimbursement shall not exceed travel and per diem authorized by the Board. Prior approval for all travel shall be obtained before any travel expenses may be incurred. Travel expense policies include reimbursements paid from all funds, including state, federal, and local school funds. All travel reimbursements must be approved by a supervisor. Under no circumstance can any employee approve their own travel reimbursement. Reimbursement requests for unauthorized travel may be denied and the employee could be required to use leave for any day missed. Travel expense is paid thru Direct Deposit

Automobile Mileage Expenses

Board approved travel is generally defined as transportation on system business more than one's normal commute. Travel includes commute from home or normal place of employment to another destination and return to home or normal place of employment. Local travel will be paid from worksite to worksite only. Commuting mileage between the employee's residence and worksite is not allowable mileage for reimbursement purposes. All mileage will be paid at the current per-mile rate (at the time of travel) set by the IRS. All mileage will be based on MapQuest or Google Maps and a copy of MapQuest or Google Maps must be submitted with travel expense/reimbursement requests for verification of mileage.

The rate of reimbursement for mileage covers all fuel, maintenance, insurance, transportation, and operating costs. Fuel costs are included in the per-mile reimbursement rate and are not reimbursed separately for use of privately owned vehicles. Damage to a privately owned vehicle used for board business is covered by the individuals' private insurance, costs for which are also included in the mileage reimbursement. The board does not assume responsibility for deductibles or other uninsured loss to the vehicle.

Travel In State

Travel expenses incurred to send employees to attend a required educational workshop within the state are an allowable cost. Reimbursement will be limited to only those costs that are considered reasonable. Any expenditure deemed unreasonable may be disallowed. Travel that is necessary and that is directly related to the operation of the St. Clair County Schools will be an allowable cost for reimbursement purposes pursuant to the following provisions.

Automobile Mileage Expenses

Automobile mileage will be paid as per the policy stated above for in/out of state travel. Allowable mileage will be to/from home or worksite (whichever is less) to the meeting site for day trips, or conference site for overnight trip. Vicinity miles (miles driven other than from home/worksite to conference/workshop destination) are NOT an allowable expense. All mileage will be based on MapQuest and a copy of MapQuest must be submitted with travel expense/reimbursement requests for verification of mileage.

Tolls and Parking Fees

Tolls and reasonable parking charges will be reimbursed. Receipts must be attached to the reimbursement request to receive reimbursement.

Meal Per-Diem Rates

Meal Per-Diem Rates are as follows:

Day Trips

1. No reimbursement for meals will be paid for a trip of less than 6 hours induration.
2. A per diem rate of \$15.00 will be paid for a day trip of 6-12 hours induration.
3. A per diem rate of \$25.00 will be paid for a day trip of 12 or more hours induration.

Overnight Trips

Employees in travel status (travel requiring an overnight stay) on School business are reimbursed up to the per diem rate as referenced on the [US Government General Services Administration \(GSA\)](https://www.gsa.gov/) website for travel related meal expenses for their travel destination. Receipts are not required (under any circumstances) for reimbursement of travel meals using per-diem rates.

The M&IE rates include:

- Meals, non-alcoholic drinks, tax & tip incidentals – e.g., baggage carries, bellhops and hotel maids

First & Last day of travel:

First and last days of travel will be reimbursed at 75% of the per diem.

Departure day – the day you leave your home or office.

Return day – the day you return to your home or office.

Employees are expected to NOT purposely delay their departure or return to qualify for unnecessary meal costs. As a traveler you will be in travel status when you are away from both your official station and official residence. Normally this is outside the town, city, or vicinity limits of where you work or live. Being in travel status does not mean you are entitled to receive per-diem.

Lodging

Travel, which requires an overnight stay, must have prior approval of the immediate supervisor, and be documented by a Professional Development Travel Request Form, which includes the following:

1. Date
2. Name of Person
3. Destination
4. Business Purpose
5. Conference agenda or schedule
6. Actual cost of lodgings (must be supported by a detailed invoice).

Fifty-Mile Rule

To be eligible for lodging reimbursement, your temporary duty station (travel destination) must be more than 50 miles from both your official worksite and your residence, using the most direct route when calculated on MapQuest. The fifty-mile rule is used to determine whether lodging will be part of your travel plans.

Exceptions to the Fifty Mile Rule are as follows:

1. The official board business requires the traveler to arrive early in the morning or late at night for back-to-back events. The amount of time between close of business on the first day and the start of business on the second day must be 11 hours or less (based on 3 hours personal time and 8 hours of sleep).
2. The health and safety of the traveler will be compromised (i.e., hazardous weather or travel conditions).
3. It is more economical to the school system.

Travelers are expected to choose lodging that meets the traveler's schedule and business needs. Receipts are required for all lodging.

Non-Conference – Departments will reimburse travelers for actual expenses up to 150% of the lodging rate for the destination city, as referenced on the [US Government General Services Administration \(GSA\)](https://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/100120) website for domestic lodging. This amount includes taxes. A copy of the per diem rates listed on the GSA website, <https://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/100120> must be attached to your Professional Development Form.

Conference – The lodging rate limit does not apply to conference travel, where the traveler is paying a pre-negotiated rate offered by the conference. A printout of the conference rate from the conference site must be attached to the professional development Form for this rate to be used. If no information with the conference rate is attached, the non-conference rate will be used. In cases where conference facilities are completely booked, or the traveler decides to stay at an alternate facility, travelers should obtain lodging based on the non-conference guidelines provided above.

Employees are required to use the school system purchasing cards for all lodging except in the case of an emergency. A copy of the cancelled check or personal credit card payment must be submitted with the reimbursement request as documentation for payment. In addition, an explanation must be provided as to why the board purchase card could not be used to pay for the lodging.

Only lodging expenses for approved travel days related to board business can be charged to a board-purchasing card. Extra days of lodging before and/or after approved travel days for business must be paid by the employee. Extra days of lodging expenses must not be charged to a board purchase card under any circumstance.

Lodging receipts charged to a board-purchasing card should be forwarded to April Giles the central office annex within 3 days after return from your trip. A copy of the approved Professional Development form and proof of the conference lodging rate or the GSA lodging rate (whichever rate was used) must be submitted with your credit card receipt. Employees should retain a copy of any lodging receipts forwarded to April Giles at April.giles@scsboe.org to be attached for documentation on travel reimbursement requests.

Reimbursement requests should be submitted within 30 days after completion of the trip unless instructed otherwise.

Out of State Travel Expenses

Policies that apply to out of state travel are as follows:

1. Costs of travel to out-of-state conventions or association meeting will be limited to those reasonable costs incurred by an employee. Reimbursement will be considered only for employees of the St. Clair County Schools whose attendance will benefit the operation of the St. Clair County Schools. The employee must submit documentation to verify that the travel is related to the St. Clair County Schools. Such evidence may be: (a) seminar registration receipts, (b) continuing education certificates, or (c) similar documentation. If verification cannot be made, reimbursement will not be allowed.
2. All out of state travel must be board approved prior to departure.
3. Travel expenses will be limited to the ordinary and necessary costs of transportation, food, lodgings, and required registration costs.
4. Whenever out of state travel could be accomplished at a lower cost by utilizing air travel, reimbursement will be limited to the costs, which would have been incurred if such air travel had been utilized at the costs normally incident to such air travel (meals, lodgings, etc.).
5. No travel expenses of a non-business nature will be reimbursed.
6. Rental of an automobile will only be reimbursed when the Superintendent has given written

approval prior to departure on the trip.

Travel Expense Reimbursements

The faculty or staff supervisor is responsible for reviewing the expense reimbursement request for compliance with policy and for submission of proper reimbursement documentation. Supervisors are required to review expenditures, and in cases where there is reason to believe the expenditures may be inappropriate or extravagant, to withhold reimbursement. Program Directors and central office administrative offices also review reimbursements and may question expenditures at any time. Reimbursements will be made by direct deposit to the primary account set up with payroll.

Each school is responsible for ensuring that personnel properly implement and administer this policy.

The ultimate responsibility for the review and approval of transactions lies with the school/department. Accounts Payable (AP), upon receipt of the completed reimbursement request form will verify that it has been signed by the traveler and the traveler's supervisor and approved by all required approvers. AP verifies that any attached Expense Policy Exception Request has been signed by the Supervisor and Superintendent or his/her designee. If the reimbursement request does not contain proper signatures and exceptions are not accompanied by an Expense Policy Exception Request, the reimbursement request will be returned to the school/department for revision. AP will, at its discretion, review expenses for reasonableness and compliance with policies and guidelines. Items that are not returned by AP should not be construed as acceptance for future practice. AP does reserve the right to seek additional information when deemed warranted. If the expense contains a charge that is not allowable, the reimbursement request will be returned to the school/department for revision. Reimbursement will not be made until all required revisions have been made.

Employee and Supervisor signatures on reimbursement requests verify that all charges are reasonable and accurate.

Travel Time Policy for Non-Exempt Employees

St. Clair County pays non-exempt employees for travel time in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

Travel Time - From Home to Work

Normal travel from home to work and travel from work to home at the end of the workday **is not considered hours worked**.

Single-Day Travel

Time spent by the employee in travel as part of his or her normal work activities – such as travel from the job site to a seminar during regular working hours **is considered hours worked**. If the employee is required to travel to another city and return home in the same day, the travel time to and from the other city **is considered hours worked**. If the employee uses public transportation, the travel time between the employee's home and the point where he or she obtains this transportation (i.e., bus station, airport, etc.) **is not considered hours worked**. If the employee takes a lunch break, it **is not considered hours worked**.

Regular Work Hours	Single Travel Day	Travel Time	Travel Time Paid
8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday - Friday	Friday	Leave at 6:30 a.m. - arrive at 8:30 a.m. Attend seminar. Take an hour lunch. Leave at 4:30 p.m. - arrive back at 6:30 p.m.	Employee is paid for 11 hours. Not paid for lunch hour.
	Sunday	Leave at 2:00 p.m. – arrive at 6 p.m.	Employee is paid for 4 hours.
11:00 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday – Friday	Wednesday	Leave at 9 a.m. - arrive at noon.	Employee is paid for 3 hours – since the travel is in the same day.

Travel Away from Home Overnight on a Workday

Travel time involving a required overnight stay is **considered hours worked only when it is during the employee's regular workday**. The employee is simply substituting travel for his or her regular work hours.

Travel time that is outside of normal work hours is **not considered hours worked**.

Regular Work Hours	Overnight Travel	Travel Time	Travel Time Paid
8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday - Friday	Friday	Leave at 7 a.m. – arrive at 1:00 p.m. Took an hour lunch.	Employee is paid for 4 hours – not paid for time outside regular hours or for lunch.
	Sunday	Leave at 2:00 p.m. – arrive at 6 p.m.	Employee is paid for 3 hours – not paid for time outside of regular hours.
11:00 a.m. to 8 p.m., Monday – Friday	Wednesday	Leave at 11:00 a.m. – arrive at 2 p.m. Took an hour lunch.	Employee is paid 2 hours. Not paid for lunch.
	Sunday	Leave at 10:00 a.m. – arrive at 3:00 p.m. Took an hour lunch.	Employee is paid 3 hours. – Not paid for the time outside of regular hours or for lunch.

Travel on a Non-Workday

If the employee regularly works from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, traveling during the same hours on Saturday and/or Sunday **is considered hours worked**. The usual lunch break **is not considered hours worked**. Time spent in travel away from home outside of regular work hours **is not considered hours worked**. Any work that the employee performs while traveling **is considered hours worked** even if these hours are outside his or her normal work schedule.

Website Address for Travel Policy

The Travel Policy is located on the St. Clair County Board of Education website
<http://www.sccboe.org/>.

Contact

Leila Avant (policy guidelines OR payments, refunds & reimbursements)
Accounts Payable/Finance
175 College Street
Odenville, AL 35120
205-594-2034
E-Mail- leila.avant@sccboe.org
LEAVE POLICIES

All leave must be entered in Will Sub for approval unless otherwise directed.

How Leave Impacts your Insurance – See page 13

A member can use accrued or donated sick leave to be in pay status to receive the State allocation. A member must use his/her accrued sick leave, personal leave, vacation, comp time (if applicable) or catastrophic leave continuously and consecutively when not actively employed.

COURT APPEARANCES & CIVIC DUTIES

Jury Duty

An employee of the St. Clair County Board of Education who is required to serve on a jury shall receive his/her regular pay to which he/she is entitled, in addition to any monies he/she receives for jury duty. A copy of the *Certificate of Jury Service* must be turned in to the school bookkeeper by the end of the pay period. Jury summons that requires an employee to report for service after 12:00 PM will entitle the employee to ½-day leave. Jury summons that requires an employee to report for service before 12:00 PM will entitle the employee to 1 full day of leave.

Job Related Subpoenas

An employee of the St. Clair County Board of Education who receives a subpoena due to their job with the St. Clair County Board of Education shall receive the regular pay to which he/she is entitled. A copy of the subpoena should be submitted with the appropriate time sheet for documentation.

Other Subpoenas

An employee of the St. Clair County Board of Education who receives a subpoena for personal reasons or another reason not specifically job-related will be required to use their own personal leave for the absence(s).

Civic Duties

An employee of the St. Clair County Board of Education, who is asked to serve or volunteers to serve as a poll worker, or as a member of a land condemnation team, etc., will be required to use their own personal

leave for the absence(s).

FAMILY & MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (FMLA)

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 requires employers to continue health benefits to employees taking FMLA Leave. The FMLA Act allows employers to deem absences that meet the criteria for FMLA to be deemed FMLA leave but the employer must notify the employee and provide the number of days that will be charged to their FMLA account.

Eligibility

Employees are eligible for leave under FMLA if they have worked 1,250 hours over the prior twelve (12) months and if they have worked for the St. Clair County School System for at least one year. (Although bus drivers are classified as full-time, normally they do not work 1,250 hours)

Conditions

- Leave earned under FMLA is for a maximum of 12 weeks during a 12 month “rolling period” – not 3 months.
- Employees must provide (60)-day notice for foreseeable leave. Leave under FMLA cannot be granted retroactively.
- Leave granted under FMLA cannot and should not be applied to the summer months for 9-month employees or during any time that the employee is not required to be at work. FMLA should begin when the member is required to be at work.
- If an employee earns an extra summer allocation under the 3-1 Rule, that month should be applied to the end of the 12 weeks that were granted under FMLA.
- An employee cannot earn the insurance allocation under FMLA if he/she is retiring or not returning to work unless the reason for not returning to work is a serious health condition or circumstance beyond the control of the employee.
- PEEHIP will invoice the employee for premiums due while the employee is on leave under FMLA if an employee is in a no pay status.
- Employees on FMLA do accrue extra insurance allocation while on leave under FMLA. Therefore, the 3-1 Rule **does apply** while an employee is on FMLA.
- An employee must use his/her accrued leave (sick leave, personal leave, vacation time, and/or comp time) when on leave. An employee may not elect to be on unpaid leave while they still have leave balances available. Unpaid leave can happen once all accrued leave is exhausted.
- All days docked will be consecutive until completed.
- Inclement weather or unforeseen occurrence resulting in school closing will be counted as an absence when it occurs during an approved leave of absence. Leave will still need to be taken on these days to be paid.

ON THE JOB INJURY

Procedures for on-the-job injury claims

The ON-THE-JOB INJURY FORM must be completed within 24 hours and submitted to your immediate supervisor or designee.

- Any exceptions must be extraordinary in nature,
- determined on a case-by-case basis, and
- Approved by the personnel director and chief school financial officer.

If the employee is off due to their injury received while ON-THE-JOB, the PHYSICIAN CERTIFICATION FORM

must be turned in to the payroll department within (2) business days of the injury along with a doctor excuse.

- Any exceptions must be extraordinary in nature,
- Determined on a case-by-case basis, and
- Approved by the personnel director and chief school financial officer.
- **A PHYSICIAN CERTIFICATION FORM is required for each subsequent doctor visit as long as the employee is off work.**
- **Original signature is required from a medical professional.**

The ON-THE-JOB INJURY REPORT and PHYSICIAN CERTIFICATION FORM will be reviewed by the chief school financial officer.

The board reserves the right to require additional information as well as requirement of the employee to see a doctor of the board's choosing. If requested, this will be paid by the board.

The employee will receive one of the following if requesting time off for the ON-THE-JOB injury:

- Approval of the on-the-job absence,
- Employee is required to provide additional information, or
- Absence is not approved as an on-the-job injury.

The employee will receive notification of receipt of the on-the-job injury form if the employee is not requesting time off.

Employee's Leave:

- Once an on-the-job injury claim is approved, leave shall not be deducted from the employee if absence from work is found to be a result of an on-the-job injury. Days requested as on-the-job injury will not be considered until all requested documentation has been provided. Days claimed because of a repetitive or pre-existing injury will not be granted.

If employee is requesting reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses, the claim must be filed directly with the Board of Adjustment. Forms can be downloaded at www.bdadj.alabama.gov.

All forms should be submitted to your direct supervisor or designee.

PERSONAL LEAVE

5.01.1 **Personal Leave** – All regular, full-time employees are eligible for two (2) non-cumulative personal leave days each scholastic year without loss of pay. Employees hired by the Board to begin work during the first semester (July 1 – December 31) shall be allowed two (2) days of personal leave. Employees hired by the Board to begin work during the second semester (January 1 – June 30) shall be allowed one (1) day of personal leave.

All regular full-time employees are eligible for additional non-cumulative personal leave days each scholastic year as follows:

<u>Years of Consecutive Service for the Board</u>	<u># of Additional Days</u>
5-9	1
10-14	2
15+	3

Teachers should attempt to plan personal leave so that the educational process will experience a minimum of disruption. No more than ten (10) percent of a local school staff may take personal leave concurrently. Requests will be approved on a first submittal basis.

Employees that wish to utilize personal days for the current contract year should do so before the close of the June payroll of that contract year. Any unused personal leave days will be converted to sick leave days on June 30th of each year, unless the employee has elected to be paid for any unused days at the highest daily rate paid to substitute teachers. Reimbursement must be requested in writing by the employee by the same deadline for them to be used. Personal leave days not used by the deadline, nor reimbursed to the employee at the end of the school year for each day of personal leave not taken by the employee will be converted to sick leave.

[Reference: ALA. CODE §16-8-26 (1975)]

SICK LEAVE

- a. An employee of the St. Clair County Board of Education that works twenty (20) or more hours per week may earn sick leave at the rate of one (1) day per month. In no case shall sick leave be utilized until it has been earned except as may otherwise be provided by policies governing the Sick Leave Bank. *Use of Sick Leave* – Eligible employees may only use paid sick leave for absences caused by:
 1. Personal illness or doctor's quarantine.
 2. Incapacitating personal injury.
 3. Attendance upon an ill member of the employee's immediate family (parent, spouse, child, foster child currently in the care and custody of the employee, sibling, child currently in the care and custody of the employee for whom a petition for adoption has been filed); or an individual with a close personal tie.
 4. Death of a family member (parent, spouse, parent, child, sibling,

mother or father-in-law, son or daughter-in-law, brother or sister-in-law, nephew or niece, grandparent, grandchild, aunt or uncle;

5. Death, injury or sickness of another person who has unusually strong personal ties to the employee, such as a person who stood in loco parentis; or
6. Attendance upon an adopted child, who is three years of age or younger.

Sick leave taken for this purpose of attending to an adopted child may be taken for a maximum of eight weeks, or 320 consecutive hours.

- b. *Certification* – By taking sick leave, the employee is certifying that the sick leave is being used for one of the reasons provided in state law. If the employee's immediate supervisor has probable cause to believe that an employee has abused or misused sick leave, a physician's statement verifying the existence and nature of the illness or medical condition or documentation verifying a petition for adoption or death may be required by the school system. Abuse of sick leave may subject the employee to disciplinary action.

If an employee is on sick leave for 6 or more consecutive workdays the employee shall provide his/her immediate supervisor with a statement signed by his/her attending physician. The use of personal days as part of the 6 days does not negate this requirement unless the personal day(s) have been approved prior to the absence. This physician statement shall be submitted with payroll as certification to the illness or injury. Failure to provide required documentation may result in disciplinary action. If absences occur frequently, if the absences constitute a pattern, or if there is a reason to question whether an absence follows the stated reasons for sick leave, the superintendent or his/her designee may require that the employee provide verification of the reasons.

Employees that have absences of more than 10 days must submit a request for approved leave (even if the employee has sick leave days, personal leave days, comp time or vacation) to cover the days. Examples of the leave request include, but not limited to, FMLA, medical leave and unpaid leave. The appropriate forms can be found in TalentEd. When possible, this leave request must be submitted prior to the absences. If it is not possible to submit prior to absence, request should be prompt. There will be no compensation paid for sick leave days upon termination of an employee's contract.

1. **Sick Leave transfer from another system: Personnel employed by
6 may transfer an unlimited number of days of sick leave from another Alabama school system upon proper verification of the number of days from the previous

employing board.

The purpose of this policy is to establish eligibility, duration, and procedures for Paid Parental Leave in accordance with the school system's commitment to supporting employees during significant family events such as birth, adoption, or foster placement.

Parental Leave

Eligible employees are entitled to Paid Parental Leave in connection with the following qualifying events:

- The birth of a child
- The adoption of a child (age three or younger at the time of placement)
- The placement of a child for foster care

This leave allows employees to be absent from work while continuing to receive compensation, subject to the eligibility criteria and procedural requirements established by the school board.

III. Eligibility and Duration of Leave

Employee Category	Qualifying Event	Maximum Paid Leave Duration
Female Employees	Birth, Stillbirth, or Miscarriage	Up to 8 weeks
Male Employees	Birth, Stillbirth, or Miscarriage	Up to 2 weeks
Primary Parent (Adoption)	Adoption of a child age ≤ 3	Up to 8 weeks
Secondary Parent (Adoption)	Adoption of a child (if both parents are eligible)	2 weeks

IV. Request Procedure

Employees must adhere to the following procedure when requesting Paid Parental Leave:

1. Submit a formal written request to the Payroll Department.
2. Include the anticipated start and end dates of the leave.
3. Specify the qualifying reason for the leave.
4. Indicate any additional leave to be used in conjunction with Paid Parental Leave.
5. Submit a written leave plan to the Board of Education for review and approval.
6. Provide all required documentation no fewer than 30 days in advance of the requested leave date, unless extenuating circumstances apply.
7. Sign a *Return to Work Agreement* confirming the intent to return to employment for a minimum of eight (8) weeks following the conclusion of the leave.

V. Administration

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure consistent implementation of this policy in collaboration with the Human Resources department. All documentation and correspondence related to Paid Parental Leave shall be securely maintained.

VI. Inquiries

Questions regarding eligibility, documentation, or procedural requirements should be directed to: ELIZABETH.SCOTT@SCCBOE.ORG

SICK BANK

A “Sick Leave Bank” plan for full-time certified and classified employees is hereby established in accordance with applicable provisions of state law. A Sick Leave Bank Committee will be established to oversee the operations of the Sick Leave Bank in accordance with state law and the following provisions:

- a. *Sick Leave Bank Committee* – The Sick Leave Bank Committee will be composed of one member representing the Board and four members representing participating members of the sick leave bank.

Board Representative – The Member representing the Board will be appointed by the Superintendent, subject to Board approval.

Participant Representatives – The participant representatives will be selected by the sick leave bank members.
- b. *Procedures for Selecting Employee Representatives on Committee*
 1. *Nomination* – Before each election of participant representatives, the Board will hold an open nomination period. Any employee who is eligible to participate in the sick leave bank may be nominated for one of the participant representative positions. Nominations must be written and must be received in the Human Resources Department by the deadline specified in a notice to be provided by the Superintendent or his designee through Board publications and other means of communication that are generally used for such purposes.
 2. *Voting* – Each eligible nominee will be placed on the Sick Leave Bank Committee ballot. Voting will take place by ballot at Board facilities at the time specified or as may otherwise be provided by the Board. Supervision of voting will be by local facility personnel. Voting members will be required to verify their ballot by signing the Board’s voter record. Votes will be forwarded to the Human Resources Department for final tabulation. The four candidates receiving the highest number of votes will serve as participant representatives on the Sick Leave Bank Committee.
- c. *Term of Committee Members* – Sick Leave Bank Committee members will serve for a term of one year and may not serve for more than five years.

- d. *Chairman of the Sick Leave Bank Committee* – The Sick Leave Bank Committee will elect a chairman from among its representatives at its first annual meeting. The chairman will be responsible for recording organizational minutes, for conducting meetings, and for organizing meetings as necessary.
Meetings – The Sick Leave Bank Committee will meet at least annually following each enrollment period. The Committee will also meet as necessary in its discretion.
- e. *Sick Leave Bank Committee Duties* – The Sick Leave Bank Committee will develop proposed rules and regulations for the Sick Leave Bank, to be submitted to participating members for approval. At a minimum, said rules and regulations must include those terms and provisions that are required by statute. The Committee has the authority to review both participation in the Bank and requests for leave to ensure compliance with state law, Board policy, and such rules and regulations as may be adopted by the Sick Leave Bank Committee.
- f. *Employee Participation* – Participation in the Sick Leave Bank is voluntary and open to all full-time employees of the Board. However, employee participation is subject to such rules and regulations regarding enrollment procedures, deposits, withdrawals, and participation as may be developed by the Committee.

[Reference: ALA. CODE §16-22-9 (1975)]

UNPAID LEAVE

Employees that miss work and are unpaid must complete the form “unpaid leave” in TalentEd. An employee must exhaust all personal/vacation leave before requesting unpaid leave. The form should be completed as soon as the employee returns to work. The Superintendent reviews all these absences. Disciplinary action may be taken for employees that are away from work without approved leave.

VACATION TIME

Vacation - All twelve-month, full-time employees shall earn vacation leave at the rate of one (1) day per month for each month worked beginning July 1 and ending June 30 of each school year and may carry over up to thirty (30) days of unused vacation leave from one scholastic year to the following scholastic year. Any accrued but unused vacation leave in excess of thirty (30) days shall be forfeited after the close of business on June 30 of each year.

Vacation leave shall be earned monthly and must be earned before it can be used. Vacation leave may not be bought, sold, or donated.

Vacation leave must be requested and approved in advance by the employee’s principal or supervisor in accordance with such procedures as may be established by the Superintendent or the Board. The principal or supervisor should take into consideration whether the request for vacation leave, if approved, will interfere with the school system’s ability to operate in an efficient and effective way. When school is in session, vacation leave will not be allowed during peak employment times of a specific job classification (except in cases of unusual circumstances as approved by the Superintendent).

Accumulated, unused vacation leave will be paid at the employee’s daily rate of pay upon resignation, retirement, or death. A retiring employee shall provide a thirty (30) day notice of the intent to retire, which notice requirement may be waived by the Superintendent.

PAYROLL INFORMATION AND PROCEDURES

CHANGE OF CONTRACT

Employees that have a change of contract must sign a document stating they understand what the change in contract means to their case and how the benefits change from the original position to the new position. Any support employees changing to certified employees will be paid any comp time they have accumulated. A Change of Contract Form can be found in TalentEd.

DIRECT DEPOSIT

Direct deposit is required for all employees.

MANDATORY SALARY DEDUCTIONS

The St. Clair County Board of Education will make salary deductions which are required by law, including federal income tax, state income tax, Social Security, Medicare, retirement, and other deductions in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. The Board may make certain other salary deductions when 75 employees properly request such deductions. The deductions shall be made from salaries earned in at least nine (9) different pay periods and shall be remitted to the appropriate recipient as specified by the employee within ten (10) days following each deduction. Deductions made for membership dues and voluntary contributions shall be made based upon membership lists and forms provided by the respective organizations. New authorization for payroll deductions may be added or terminated/revoked during open enrollment for that specific deduction. Upon termination, amounts owed under the authorization of an employee shall be deducted from an employee's final pay. When amounts have been correctly deducted and remitted by the Board, the St. Clair County Board of Education shall bear no further responsibility or liability for further transactions. The Board shall not be liable for any error while acting

in good faith to make the subject deductions. Questions regarding payroll deductions should be directed to the Payroll Department. **See section, BENEFITS.**

OVERTIME/COMPENSATORY TIME

For computing overtime pay in a workweek, any time taken as sick leave, annual leave, other paid leaves, and other time already compensated at an overtime rate do not count toward hours worked.

Non-exempt employees who work more than contract hours during a workweek will be:

- Paid at the overtime rate of their hourly rate of pay for hours worked more than required contract hours for the week or one- and one-half times their regular rate of pay for hours more than 40 hours in a week OR
- Granted compensatory time off at the rate their hourly rate of pay for hours worked more than required contract hours but less than 40 hours in a week or at the rate of one- and one-half times the number of hours worked over 40. Employees may choose to accrue and use compensatory time off in lieu of pay for overtime hours worked. The business needs of departments will dictate the use of compensatory time. To provide this form of compensation, the employee must complete the overtime/compensatory time approval form and indicate compensatory time on the form. If comp time is indicated on the form, the employee will be granted compensatory time instead of cash compensation. Such an agreement or understanding must be reached prior to the performance of work and must be entered into voluntarily by the employee.

Compensatory time is subject to the following provisions:

1. Compensatory time must be credited to the employee at the rate straight time for all hours worked more than contract but not over 40 hours and a rate of time and one-half times all hours worked over 40 in a workweek, accrued compensatory time may not exceed 240 hours.
2. When an employee has reached the maximum accrual of 240 hours compensatory time, all

additional overtime hours worked must be **paid** at the overtime rate.

3. Upon termination of employment or at retirement, compensatory time must be paid in a lump sum and may not be used as a creditable service or in adjusting the last day worked by an employee.

The board of education offers non-exempt employees the choice of being compensated for any overtime hours they work either by monetary compensation or by compensatory time off. Non-exempt employees will elect each year which option they desire for that school year. They may elect to receive compensatory time off or to receive monetary compensation. Once the choice has been made and the agreement has been signed, the agreement will be in effect for the school year until new forms are provided for the next year. If the compensatory time off agreement is not received by the payroll department, the employee will receive monetary compensation for all overtime worked. Support employees that have a 2nd employment position, are required to be paid overtime. Any change of position may result in comp time being paid.

Compensatory time may be accrued only for overtime which is worked and documented on employee time records. It will be recorded on the employee payroll record as hours or increments thereof.

The establishment of and changes in employee work schedules are the responsibility of departmental supervisors and managers – not staff employees. Non-exempt employees should not work overtime without the prior knowledge and approval of the appropriate supervisors and/or managers. Hourly paid employees should not start working before the beginning of their scheduled time and should not work beyond the ending of their scheduled time without management's prior approval. Also, hourly paid employees should not be allowed to continue to work at their workstations while having lunch.

It is important for supervisors and/or managers to monitor overtime and compensatory time violations. If staff employees fail to adhere to overtime and compensatory time guidelines, disciplinary action should be taken. However, all overtime worked must be compensated, regardless of whether it was approved.

Local schools are responsible for comp time earned by employees. The school will be invoiced for all comp time paid to employees. Comp time is paid when: the employee separates from employment; when the employee transfers to another school; or when the maximum allowable balance, as stated above, has been reached.

Specific questions regarding completion of time records for non-exempt employees should be directed to the Payroll Office. It is the responsibility of the Payroll Office to make the final determination on how to accurately record hours worked.

A work week is defined as 12:00 AM Sunday through 11:59 PM Saturday.

The board has the discretion to pay down comp time if the systems need so requires.

PAYDAYS

All payroll checks are submitted for direct deposit and are available to employees on the last workday of the month. Questions related to salary matters should be directed to the Payroll Office at payroll@sccboe.org.

RETIREMENT/RESIGNATION

Talent Ed forms should be initiated by the employee to start the process of resignation and retirement. Employees must complete the "exit process" before the last check will be issued. The checkout process includes completing a checklist and checking in all items that have been issued to the employee and completing the final task.

Advanced Degrees

If an employee receives a high degree during the middle of the school year, the change in pay will happen the month after the state recognizes the certificate. If an employee receives a higher degree in April or May and ¹the state does not recognize the certificate until June, the higher degree will be recognized in September at the start ²³of the new school year.

SALARIES

All regular personnel shall be paid in accordance with salary or hourly wage schedules as adopted by the St. Clair County Board of Education, provided the salary schedule for certified staff is no less than 100 percent of the State Minimum Salary Schedule. All teaching/administrative experience gained in all public elementary and secondary schools and/or state, or regionally accredited public institutions of higher learning shall be approved as credit for placement on the salary schedule. No teaching/administrative experience gained in private elementary and secondary schools shall be considered for credit for placement on the salary schedule.

Any employee subject to the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1988, as amended, and who is required to work more than forty (40) hours in any work week, shall be compensated for the hours more than forty (40) as provided in the FLSA of 1988 at the rate of one and one-half (1½) times the regular rate of pay for the service performed. Any St. Clair County School System employee working beyond his/her designated total weekly hours without prior permission of the Superintendent through the principal or supervisor may be subject to disciplinary action.

TIME KEEPING RECORDS

All employees (exempt and nonexempt) are required to use the time clock system to record their hours worked. Nonexempt employees are required to clock in and out for payroll and attendance purposes. Exempt employees are required to clock in. The time clock records will be used to track attendance for exempt employees.

Clocking Procedures

Support Staff: You must use the timekeeping system to clock in and out each workday. For pay purposes, your "clock in" and "clock out" punches will be rounded according to a seven-minute grace period with a fifteen-minute round. Support Staff should clock in no sooner than 7 minutes before or after the scheduled shift and clock out no later than 7 minutes before or after the scheduled shift. If taking an unencumbered lunch break, employees are required to clock in and out for lunch also.

Certified Staff: Must clock in after arriving at designated workplace and at the scheduled work time. It is not necessary for certified staff to clock out. The system will automatically clock you out.

All Staff: Principals/supervisors may change the established workday or shift according to the business needs of the school or department. All schedule changes must be approved by your principal/supervisor. If an employee misses a punch, the employee must enter their time in the KRONOS system. Employees who repeatedly miss time clock entries will be subject to disciplinary action.

Prohibited Time Clock Actions

Employees may not clock in or out for anyone else. No one is allowed to clock in or out for any other person. Clocking in when not physically on the school campus is prohibited unless prior approval from supervisor is given. Disciplinary action may be taken up to and including termination for those who do. Requesting leave that is not in compliance with board policies/procedures is prohibited.

Lost or Damaged Fobs

Employees who have lost a fob must report the lost badge to the payroll department. The employee will be issued a new fob. Employees will be charged \$3 for lost fobs.

Unexcused Absences and Missed Punches

Any unexcused absence or missed punch that is not resolved before payroll is submitted at the beginning of each month for the prior month will be considered unpaid leave. If an employee was unable to make a correction and is subsequently docked an appeal may be made within 30 days of the payroll date in which the employee is docked. A written explanation signed by the employee and the immediate supervisor must be submitted to the finance department. If accepted, the funds will be reimbursed to the employee no later than the next scheduled payroll date.

Overtime

Nonexempt employees are permitted to work overtime only with prior authorization from their supervisors. Overtime includes clocking in early or late or working through the scheduled lunch period. Nonexempt employees who work overtime without prior authorization will be subject to disciplinary procedures.

Worked Hours

All Employees must observe the attendance rules regarding hours of work. You are in "pay status" when working or when on authorized paid leave. The normal work week for most Employees is eight hours a day, Monday through Friday. However, the beginning and ending work hours may vary in some schools/locations. Every Employee is expected to comply with established work hours. If an employee's work time along with their authorized paid leave is less than their scheduled work hours for the week, he/she must put in what type leave they want to use to make up the shortfall.

Tardiness and Absenteeism

Tardiness and absenteeism disrupt work schedules and place an added burden on fellow employees and supervisors and may result in disciplinary action. Punctual regular attendance is an essential job function of every job and position and employees are expected to report to work when scheduled to work and to remain at work each working day. An incident of no-call, no-show occurs when an employee both fails to report for work at the start of a scheduled work shift and fails to notify the supervisor or designated person within 30 minutes of the start of work. No-call/no-show may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. Employees who are chronically unable or unwilling to report to work on time present a hardship to other employees and students. Employees receiving corrective action under this policy are expected to improve their attendance/punctuality. Failure to improve and/or

sustain improvement shall result in the employee receiving additional disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Approving Timecards

Employees are required to approve their timecard by Tuesday of the following week. Timecard should be reviewed to discern that all time and/or leave is entered correctly. Any discrepancy should be resolved before the timecard is approved.

Leave

All leave requests should be entered into Will Sub unless otherwise directed. All leave, except for sick, must be approved by the immediate supervisor prior to the absence.

Mobile App

Some employees may be assigned a mobile application to use for recording their work time. The request for the mobile app must come from the employee but approved by the Supervisor. Commute time is only paid during travel to and from a function; business outside of district with supervisor approval or travel during nonworking hours where an employee has been called into work with supervisor approval. A GPS location is recorded every time the mobile app is used to clock in/out. Random audits are performed periodically. The request to use a mobile app must be made each year.

TIME SCHEDULES

Time Schedules for Certified Personnel

Time schedules for certified personnel may be designated by the Superintendent and/or the immediate supervisor of said personnel. All administrative and supervisory personnel shall normally observe an eight (8) hour workday, unless otherwise assigned by the Superintendent. Local school administrators shall be on duty no less than thirty (30) minutes prior to the time fixed for school to open and thirty (30) minutes after the close of school. Certified teaching personnel are generally required to be on duty 15 minutes before students arrive and 15 minutes after students leave. In most cases this will be from 7:30-3:30, and the necessary time to transact faculty meetings, school business, and safe orderly dismissal of students, etc.

Time Schedules for Non-Certified Personnel

Time schedules for non-certified personnel may be designated by the Superintendent or the immediate supervisor of said personnel. In all cases, the Superintendent and/or supervisor in charge shall have the right to establish time schedules to encompass said employee's workday. Said work schedules shall follow the Fair Labor Standards Act.

SAFETY POLICIES

IDENTIFICATION BADGES

All employees of the St. Clair County Board of Education will be issued photo badges. The first badge is issued to an employee at no charge. An additional or replacement badge may be obtained for a nominal fee paid by the employee. The ID badge is to always be worn while performing assigned duties on school property during a normal school day. The badge is the property of the St. Clair County Board of Education and must be surrendered upon termination of employment. The ID badge may be used for admittance to sport events within the school district unless it is a state playoff.

DEADLY WEAPONS

Possession of a deadly weapon on St. Clair County School System property or on a school bus with the intention to do bodily harm is a Class C felony. The terms "deadly weapon" and "dangerous instruments" include but are not limited to explosives,

incendiary devices, tasers, projectiles, knives with a blade length of more than two (2) inches, archery equipment, devices designed to expel projectiles at a high rate of speed, any device so classified under state or federal law, and any device either used or intended to be used in such manner as to inflict bodily harm, provided that the terms “deadly weapon” and “dangerous instruments” will exclude, to the extent permitted by law, devices and equipment that are used for the purpose of and in connection with school or Board sanctioned educational, team, or competitive activities.

- a. *Penalties for Violations* – In addition to any criminal penalties that may be imposed, the following penalties will be imposed for unauthorized possession of deadly weapons or dangerous instruments:
 1. *Students* – Students will be disciplined in accordance with the Board’s Code of Student Conduct.
 2. *Employees* – Employees will be subject to adverse personnel action, which may include termination.
 3. *Other Persons* – Other persons may be denied re-entry to school property.
- b. *Notification of Law Enforcement* – The appropriate law enforcement authority, which may include the city police, county sheriff, and the local district attorney, will be notified by the principal of violations of this policy.

[Reference: ALA. CODE §16-1-24.1 (1975); Ala. Admin. Code 290-3-1-.02(1)(b)]

The St. Clair County Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent or designee to immediately and automatically suspend, terminate, or separate from service in accordance with Board policy any employee found in possession of a deadly weapon.

EMERGENCY CLOSING OF SCHOOLS

Schools will be closed when, in the opinion of the Superintendent or designee, weather conditions or other emergency situations prevent the safe operation of schools or that render meaningful instruction impossible. Decisions about the closing of school will be released to the news media at the appropriate time. In addition, personnel may be called to work by the Superintendent. Personnel who find it impossible to come to work must notify their supervisor or principal. The Superintendent will determine whether such days are considered as excused or not.

- Inclement weather or unforeseen occurrence resulting in school closing will be counted as an absence during an FMLA.

SCHOOL SAFETY

- All personnel are encouraged to be safety conscious and to establish

classroom practices and procedures that insure the protection of students and other staff members. It is the responsibility of classroom teachers to provide for the safety of students assigned to them. In cases where the activity may be hazardous, it is important that students are instructed in measures that ensure their safety. Safety hazards are to be reported in writing to the principal. All personnel are asked to assist with this important activity.

- School exit doors are not to be propped open

· Employees should make every effort possible to ensure outside School doors and all classroom doors remain closed and locked while students are on campus . No devices should ever be used to prop open a door or manipulate the lock in any way

· During any crisis or emergency, only appointed staff is to communicate to parents or the public. No post on social media, emails, calls or conversations are to be initiated except by the proper authorities or school officials.

TECHNOLOGY

TECHNOLOGY DATA GOVERNANCE

DATA GOVERNANCE DO'S AND DON'TS

This Data Governance establishes the framework for managing data as a strategic asset. It ensures data is accurate, secure, accessible, and used responsibly. Defines why the document exists and what it aims to achieve, such as ensuring data quality, security, compliance, and effective data use across the organization.

Full Data Governance Policy can be accessed via the following URL: Documents - St Clair Co School District

Do's

- Ensure all software and hardware purchases are approved by the Data Governance Committee.
- Use only approved software and cloud services that comply with privacy laws and licensing agreements.
- Maintain accurate inventory records for all technological systems.
- Wipe all data from devices before disposal and use approved vendors for disposal.
- Use antivirus and malware protection systems as configured by the Technology Department.
- Use only SCCBOE-supported accounts for official communications.
- Store PII and confidential data securely and only in approved cloud storage.

- Use secure methods for transferring sensitive data and maintain MOAs (Memorandum of Agreement) where required.

- Follow proper procedures for accessing and using student and staff data.

- Participate in State mandated phishing awareness training and follow email security protocols.

Don'ts

- Don't install or use unapproved software or cloud services.

- Don't share user IDs or passwords with others.

- Don't store PII or confidential data on unsecured devices or locations.

- Don't dispose of technological equipment in the trash.

- Don't disable or circumvent antivirus or security/filtering systems.

- Don't use social networking platforms to communicate PII or student progress.

- Don't leave devices logged in and unattended.

- Don't access or attempt to access data without proper authorization.

- Don't use any personal accounts for school related communications.

- Don't print or download sensitive data indiscriminately or leave it unattended.

- Don't keep your password easily accessible such as a sticky note on your laptop and/or device.

Protecting our students' and staff's privacy is an important priority, and St. Clair County Schools is committed to maintaining strong and meaningful privacy and security protections. The privacy and security of this information is a significant responsibility, and we value the trust of our students, parents, and staff.

It is the policy of St. Clair County Schools that data or information in all its forms--written, electronic, or printed--are protected from accidental or intentional unauthorized modification, destruction, or disclosure throughout its life cycle. This protection includes an appropriate level of security over the equipment, software and practices used to process, store, and transmit data or information. All this policy was written with "Need to Know" in mind.

This policy applies to all forms of St. Clair County Schools' data and information, including but not limited to:

- Speech, spoken face to face, or oral communication by phone or any current and future

- technologies.
- Hard copy data printed or written.
- Communications sent by post/courier, fax, electronic mail, text, chat and or any form of social media, etc.
- Data stored and/or processed by servers, PCs, laptops, tablets, mobile devices, etc.
- Data stored on any type of internal, external, or removable media or cloud-based services.
- F. Software, hardware and any peripherals used to access or store data.

The district will abide by any law, statutory, regulatory, or contractual obligations affecting its data systems. St. Clair County Schools complies with all applicable regulatory acts including but not limited to the following:

- Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA)
- Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA)
- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
- Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)
- Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCIDSS)
- Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)

FERPA: The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, applies to all institutions that are recipients of federal aid administered by the Secretary of Education. This regulation protects student information and accords student’s specific rights with respect to their data.

Please review the entire Data Governance policy for detailed information. The entire policy can be found in the St Clair County Board of Education Policy Manual Chapter 8.00

TECHNOLOGY SECURITY/INTERNET ACCESS AGREEMENT

Computers and computing resources are important tools for furthering the St. Clair County School District’s educational mission. The Board’s goal in providing these resources to teachers and students is to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication. Using these resources is a privilege not a right. Appropriate use regulations are provided herein to insure you are aware of the responsibilities you have acquired.

In general, computer users are responsible for the following:

- Reporting policy violations promptly
- Cooperating with system administrators when policy violations are suspected or confirmed
- Behaving courteously, ethically, and legally in Internet and email

Students, teachers, and other employees will have access to the following:

- Electronic mail communication with people all over the world
- Information and news from research institutions
- Public domain software and software of various types
- Discussion groups on a variety of topics, including blogs and wikis

- Access to many virtual libraries in the state and country

The internet use policy can be found in section 4.10 of the St. Clair County Policy manual.

SECURITY

Appropriate security precautions must be taken when using school resources to post online content. Publishing student's personal information, including telephone numbers, addresses, schedules, IM screen names, or other information that could be used to identify or locate students is prohibited. Before posting student pictures on your class website, ensure that their parents granted permission for you to do so.

Users may not authorize anyone, including family members, to use their account(s) or log in information for any reason. Users are responsible for all activity on accounts assigned to them and must take all

reasonable precautions, including password maintenance and file protection measures, to prevent use of their accounts by unauthorized persons.

In addition to the responsibilities associated with the use of online technologies, employees of the St. Clair County School System must also understand the importance of keeping network resources secure. Network and wireless passwords must only be shared with authorized staff (never students or nonemployees) unless granted permission by the district technology department. Employee passwords should be changed every six weeks and kept secure. A student must never be logged on with an employee account/password.

EMAIL

Administrators, teachers, and school employees are REQUIRED to check their sccboe.org email daily. This form of communication will be used by central office employees to provide information in a timely manner. Remember, this is a professional e-mail address to be used for work-related communication. Emails will be retained for a minimum period of the beginning of a school year until the beginning of the next calendar year. Backups of all Emails sent and received on the sccboe.org server will be backed up and stored on removable drives or other electronic storage systems and stored in a secure place determined by the technology director.

When employees are communicating, via email, with students and their parents, they are required to use the school system provided email accounts. If employees communicate via email to students, it must be sent to the students email account provided by the school system. Employee should not communicate via email with students or parents from a personal email account, nor should they send an email message to a student's personal account.

UNACCEPTABLE EMAIL AND INTERNET USE

Any communication that would be improper or illegal on any other medium in a school environment are equally so on a computer network. Inappropriate behaviors include but are not limited to:

- Offensive content of any kind including pornographic material or sites
- Promoting discrimination
- Threatening, violent behavior or profane or offensive language
- Illegal activities
- Commercial Messages
- Messages of a political or racial nature
- Gambling
- Sports entertainment, gaming (this does not include necessary use for athletic departments)
- Personal financial gain
- Personal email (AOL, Hotmail, Yahoo)
- Forwarding email chains
- Sending material or information about students or other employees that could compromise the safety or well-being of the student or other employee
- Spamming email
- Unnecessary “reply to all” or blast group emails that are unsolicited
- Material protected under copyright laws

SUPERVISION

Students using technology must be always supervised. This is an active process that may require walking

around computers to view student screens as much as possible. Teachers must never leave their students unattended if they are utilizing technology.

SOFTWARE AND LICENSING

Software piracy occurs when one installs and/or uses software for which proper payment has not been made. Protected software may not be copied into, from, or by any St. Clair County facility or system, except by license. Users authorized to install software are expected to consult the SCCBOE Technology staff when considering purchasing or installing software to certify doing so will comply with vendor licensing agreements. Copying software between school and home computer is prohibited.

The Director of Technology and the Data Governance Committee are responsible for ensuring that the computers are fully compliant with vendor licensing agreements. All school owned software licenses acquired by donations, departmental or grade level purchases, or promotional programs must be registered with the Technology Department. School owned software may not be copied to personally owned computers.

COPYRIGHT INFRINGEMENT

The St. Clair County School District’s computing facilities may not be used to steal content owned or copyrighted by others. Fair use laws regarding copyright apply; in

general, a single copy made for person uses falls within fair use laws, while multiple copies do not.

USING SHARED RESOURCES

Users of SCCBOE technologies, Internet connections, and e-mail have no right to expect privacy with respect to such usage. The St. Clair County Board of Education has the right, but not the duty, to monitor all communications and downloads that pass through its facilities, at its sole discretion, to ensure proper system performance, management and maintenance functions, policy compliance, and system security. The St. Clair County School District owns all data stored on school-owned equipment, including but not limited to data network, computers, mobile storage devices, and all connected peripherals. It is inadvisable to use school- owned computer for conducting sensitive or confidential personal business or storing such data. When monitoring reveals possible Acceptable Use Policy violations, system personnel may provide this data to school and/or district administrators

Any attempt to deliberately degrade or disrupt system performance or to interfere with the work of others is a breach of this policy. Limits may be set on certain computing resources such as disk storage space, printing access, bandwidth priority for specific applications, computer login time, etc. Users may not attempt to bypass these limitations.

Damage to computers, computer systems, or computer networks (including changing workstation and printer configurations when not authorized, unauthorized streaming, and use of proxies, etc.) is expressly prohibited.

PERSONAL DEVICES

The Board reserves the right to place conditions on, restrict, or prohibit the use of personally owned technology resources on its property. **Unauthorized use of cell phones/personal devices are restricted and may not be authorized, except during established break times. They may not be used during instructional time except by those in a supervisory position.**

SOCIAL MEDIA

SCCBOE recognizes the value of social media, both for personal and professional use. However, professionalism is expected when educators use social media. Please use wisdom and common sense when engaging in social media.

DATA STORAGE

It is the responsibility of the employee to back up their own crucial data created on their laptop or desktop computers. While the SCCBOE does backup servers on regular basis, the employee should perform their own backup and the SCCBOE backup should only be counted on as a last resort to restoring personal files.

Internet Safety and Use of Technology

Adoption of Rules and Regulations — The Superintendent is authorized to develop for Board approval additional or more specific rules and regulations regarding access to and use of its technology resources and to require adherence to such rules and regulations through such means as the “Acceptable Use Agreement,” the Code of Conduct, and application of appropriate disciplinary policies and procedures.

Those rules and regulations should incorporate the requirements of the federal Child Internet Protection Act and Alabama’s Freeing our Classrooms of Unnecessary Screen for Safety Act including, but not limited to:

1. Measures to block or filter internet access to pictures that are obscene, that constitute child pornography, or that are harmful to minors;
2. Restriction of access by minors to inappropriate and harmful material on the Internet;
3. Limiting Internet access by students to only age-appropriate subject matters and materials;
4. Providing specific procedures and other protections that prioritize the safety and security of students when using email, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communication;
5. Prevention of “hacking” and other forms of unauthorized use of or access to computer or Internet files, sites, databases, or equipment;
6. Unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal information regarding minors;
7. Educating minors about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms and cyberbullying awareness and response;
8. Prohibiting access by students to unlawfully obtained data or information, including “hacking,” and other unlawful online activity by students;
9. Prohibiting access to websites, web applications, or software that exposes students to the disclosure, use, or dissemination of their personal information; and
10. Prohibiting students from accessing social media platforms, unless expressly directed by a teacher for educational purposes.

[Reference: 47 U.S.C. §254(h) and (l); Ala. Act 2025-386]

5.10 Teachers' Bill Of Rights

The Teachers' Bill of Rights requires teachers to have an approved classroom management plan and affords teachers the right to exclude disruptive students from their classrooms in limited circumstances if they follow that plan. The purpose of this policy is to outline the standards applicable to the development and approval of required classroom management plans; the standards applicable to the removal of a student from the classroom by a teacher; and the appeal process available to a teacher if a student is returned to the classroom by the principal in limited circumstances.

For purposes of this policy, the term principal also includes assistant principal, vice principal, or his or her designee.

5.10.1 Classroom Management Plans –

- a. *Development of Classroom Management Plans* – To be eligible to use the exclusion procedures outlined in this policy, a teacher must develop a classroom management plan for his or her classroom that is age and developmentally appropriate for the grade(s) served. The classroom management plan must align with the Student Code of Conduct; local school or school system behavior management policies, plans, and procedures; and any Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports or other behavior management systems adopted by the local school or school system. To comply with these limitations, implementation of an approved classroom management plan may preclude student exclusion for instances of behavior listed below. The Superintendent or designee is authorized to develop model classroom management plans that a teacher may adopt or use for the development of his or her plan.

- b. *Approval of Classroom Management Plans* – Each classroom management plan must be approved by the principal before the tenth day of instruction for students during each academic year. Principals are authorized to set a deadline for submission of classroom management plans by teachers that provides them with ample time to review and approve plans and seek revisions.

5.10.2 Exclusion of Student from Classroom by Teacher – A teacher may exclude any student from his or her classroom due to their behavior under this policy if:

- The student has:
 - Engaged in disorderly conduct, which is defined as any conduct that intentionally disrupts, disturbs, or interferes with the teaching of students or disturbs the peace, order, or discipline at any school;
 - Behaved in a manner that obstructs the teaching or learning process of others in the classroom;
 - Threatened, abused, intimidated, or attempted to intimidate an education employee or another student;
 - Willfully disobeyed an education employee; or
 - Used abusive or profane language directed at an education employee.
- The referring teacher followed his or her approved classroom management plan before excluding the student from the classroom; and
- The referring teacher completes any required referral form and submits it to the principal or his or her designee when the student is excluded and referred to the school administration.

Nothing in this policy shall prohibit teachers from otherwise disciplining students as they deem appropriate consistent with local policies, procedures, and state law.

5.10.3 Principal Review and Decision – The Superintendent shall develop guidance and procedures for principals to handle instances of student exclusion pursuant to this policy and consistent with Alabama law.

5.10.4 Appeal – An appeal may be filed by a teacher if (1) a principal refuses to allow a student to be excluded from the classroom under this policy, or (2) a teacher believes the principal has prematurely ended the exclusion of a student from the classroom under this policy.

The appeal process available under this policy may not be invoked to challenge or seek review or reconsideration of disciplinary or placement decisions if:

- The decision to not exclude a student from the classroom or to return a student to the classroom results from a decision reached at the end of a school disciplinary hearing required by the Code of Student Conduct or state or federal law;
 - A 504 or IEP team or another legally authorized person or entity determines that a student with a disability has the right to remain in or return to the classroom under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; or
 - The student is otherwise legally entitled to remain in or return to the classroom.
- a. *Filing of Appeal* – The teacher must complete and submit the approved appeal form to the Superintendent within one (1) school day of the principal’s refusal to exclude the student from the classroom or the return of the student to the teacher’s classroom. The appeal form must be completed in full and signed by the teacher.
- b. *Status of Student During Appeal* – During the pendency of any appeal, the decision of the principal regarding the placement of the student, if any, will remain in effect. This placement may include the student remaining in the appealing teacher’s classroom until the appeal decision has been reached.
- c. *Administrative Review* – Upon receipt of a timely appeal, the Superintendent or designee shall start an investigation of the appeal. The investigation may include interviews of the teacher, the principal, and/or witnesses; obtaining or reviewing written statements, classroom management plans, or other pertinent documents; holding administrative conferences, and any other lawful action deemed necessary to reach a just disposition of the appeal at the discretion of the investigator.

Upon completion of the investigation, the Superintendent or designee shall prepare a written recommendation regarding the issues raised in the appeal. If the recommendation is made by the Superintendent’s designee, the Superintendent may adopt, reject, or modify the recommendation based on his or her review of the evidence. If the recommendation includes disciplinary action that entitles a student to a disciplinary hearing and/or manifestation determination and it has not been held, the disciplinary action will be treated as a recommendation subject to the outcome of the hearing or manifestation determination

process.

The written recommendation of the Superintendent should be made and mailed or transmitted to the teacher within five (5) work days of the date on which the appeal is filed, unless more time is reasonably needed based on the particular circumstances of the appeal, as determined by the Superintendent. Should the Superintendent need such additional time to issue a written decision, the teacher shall be notified of same in writing and advised of when the decision will be issued.

- d. *Appeal to Board of Education* – A teacher dissatisfied with the decision of the Superintendent or designee may appeal the decision to the Board of Education by filing a written notice of appeal with the Superintendent within three (3) school days of receipt of the Superintendent's written decision.

The Superintendent shall transmit to Board Members for their review a copy of the written appeal, the decision, and all statements, recommendations, documents, recordings, transcripts, or other written or tangible evidence filed, submitted, or considered at any stage of the administrative review process.

Following receipt of the notice of appeal from the Superintendent, the Board shall place the appeal on the next Board agenda. After consideration of the appeal and administrative record, the Board may, by majority vote:

- Affirm the decision of the Superintendent;
- Reverse the Superintendent's decision; or
- Defer final action until a Board hearing is held on the appeal.

- e. Hearing Process – If a hearing is requested by a majority of the Board, the hearing shall be set within fourteen (14) calendar days, unless more time is reasonably needed based on the particular circumstances of the appeal, as determined by the Superintendent or Board President. Written notice of the hearing date shall be given to the person who filed the appeal. The hearing shall be closed to the public.

The appropriate hearing procedures shall be determined by the Board. A final Board decision on the appeal shall be issued within five (5) calendar days after the hearing ends. The Board shall give written notice of its final decision to the teacher who filed the appeal.

- f. Board's Decision – The Board's decision will be final, and the Superintendent will take steps to implement the decision, provided, however, that if the Board votes for disciplinary action that entitles a

student to a disciplinary hearing and/or manifestation determination and it has not been held, the disciplinary action will be treated as a recommendation subject to the outcome of the hearing or manifestation determination process.