

# **WELCOME TO HOKE COUNTY SCHOOLS! 2025-2026**

We're glad you're here!  
We're glad you chose  
Hoke County Schools!



Hoke County Schools  
**Human  
Resources**

# 2025 - 2026

# EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

**EMPOWERING PEOPLE**  
**INSPIRING GROWTH**



# HOKE COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

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## DR. KENNETH SPELLS

SUPERINTENDENT

310 WOOLEY STREET, RAEFORD, NC 28376

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### OUR VISION:

THE HOKE COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM, AS A **TRUSTED COMMUNITY PARTNER**, WILL ENSURE AN **INCLUSIVE AND SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT** THAT PROVIDES **AUTHENTIC LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES** TO PREPARE **FUTURE-READY STUDENTS**.

### OUR MISSION:

HOKE COUNTY SCHOOLS CREATES A **STUDENT-FOCUSED LEARNING COMMUNITY** THAT FOSTERS **HIGH EXPECTATIONS** FOR ALL STAKEHOLDERS, PROMOTES **LIFELONG LEARNING**, PROVIDES **INDIVIDUALIZED SUPPORT**, AND PREPARES STUDENTS FOR **SUCCESS**.

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**INQUIRIES REGARDING INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THIS HANDBOOK SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO:**

ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES  
310 WOOLEY STREET, RAEFORD, NC 28376  
(910) 875-3658

### EQUAL OPPORTUNITY WORKPLACE:

HOKE COUNTY SCHOOLS DOES NOT DISCRIMINATE AGAINST ANYONE DUE TO AGE, RACE, NATIONAL ORIGIN, SEX OR DISABILITY NOT RELATED TO THE PERFORMANCE OF THE POSITION.

All employees of Hoke County Schools may refer to this handbook for information on benefits, laws and policies pertaining to their employment. This handbook is available via physical hard copy, electronically and online on the system's website.

According to board policy 7300 - Staff Responsibilities: It is expected of all employees to understand and abide by all board of education policies.



Employees may find the complete Hoke County Board of Education Policy Manual in the Human Resources Department of Hoke County Schools and online at:

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/10EN9BCNatK5gmk2DU9Vj72Lxsi6P3lg0/edit?usp=drive\\_link&oid=101462174491470221871&rtpof=true&sd=true](https://docs.google.com/document/d/10EN9BCNatK5gmk2DU9Vj72Lxsi6P3lg0/edit?usp=drive_link&oid=101462174491470221871&rtpof=true&sd=true)

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# OUR CORE VALUES

## INNOVATION

Continue to embrace forward thinking and creativity to transform solutions and ideas that will enable responsiveness to the expectations of the entire school community.

## INSPIRATION

Foster an environment that empowers and influences creative thinking, enthusiasm, and motivation to generate new ideas, goals, and actions.

## IMPROVEMENT

Engage in continuous improvement to enhance processes and protocols in order to generate the most effective and efficient organization and ensure long term success.

## INTENTIONAL

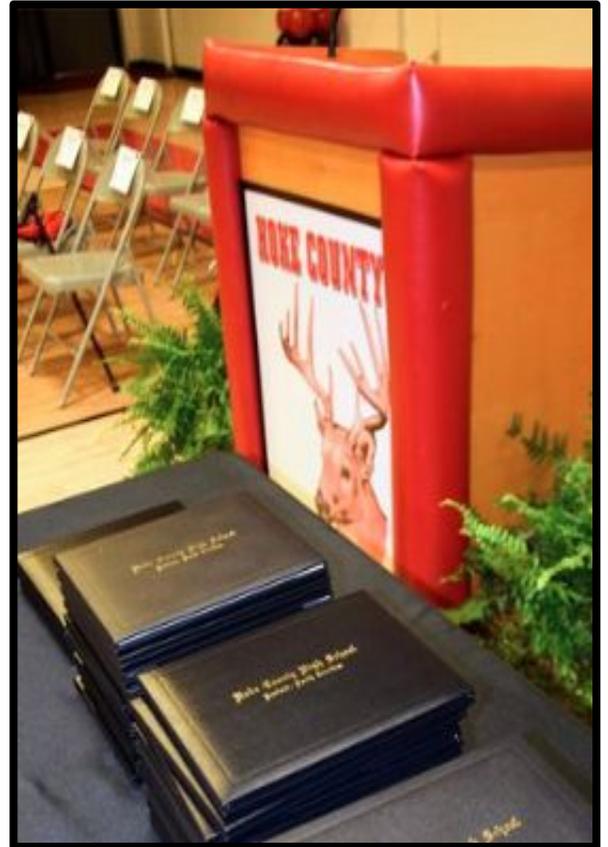
Act with purpose in order to achieve desired goals and outcomes; be deliberate and thoughtful with words, actions, decisions, and work to positively influence the school community.

## INCLUSION

Value people for who they are, nurture diversity, ensure access to opportunities, promote a sense of belonging, and embrace the contributions of all students, families, and staff in order to strengthen the school community.

## INTEGRITY

Communicate and act in a trustworthy manner to build genuine relationships; the school community is committed to being self-aware, accountable, transparent, and responsible.



# STRATEGIC PLAN SUMMARY

## PRIORITIES FOR PERFORMANCE

1

### **STUDENT SUCCESS**

ENSURE THAT EVERY STUDENT IS CHALLENGED AND ENGAGED WHILE PROVIDING MULTIPLE PATHWAYS FOR STUDENT SUCCESS BY BROADENING OPPORTUNITIES, BUILDING SUPPORT SYSTEMS, AND ELIMINATING BARRIERS.

2

### **STUDENT WELL BEING**

CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT THAT FOSTERS THE GROWTH OF THE WHOLE CHILD BY NURTURING STUDENT'S INTELLECTUAL, PHYSICAL, MENTAL, AND SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL GROWTH IN HEALTHY, SAFE, AND SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS.

3

### **MODERN & INNOVATIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT & SYSTEMS**

CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE TECHNOLOGY IS USED TO ENHANCE TEACHING AND LEARNING, AS WELL AS FINANCIAL AND BUSINESS SYSTEMS TO PROVIDE TAILORED SUPPORT TO STUDENTS, PARENTS, AND EDUCATORS.

4

### **EXCELLENT PROFESSIONALS**

RECRUIT, HIRE, SUPPORT, AND INVEST IN HIGH QUALITY AND DIVERSE TEACHERS, LEADERS, AND SUPPORT STAFF.

5

### **COMMUNICATION & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

DEVELOP STRONG CONNECTIONS AMONG SCHOOLS, FAMILIES, AND THE COMMUNITY TO BROADEN OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENT LEARNING, DEVELOPMENT, AND GROWTH.

# SALARY

Hoke County Schools offers the following benefits along with compensation, depending on employee status according to NCDPI-HR's Summary of Benefits for Prospective Employees:

## **SALARY**

Employee salary is in accordance with State Salary Schedule and is dependent upon licensure, years of experience, and degrees held. Salary information is available on the website of North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. Employees may access more information by referring to the most recent release of State Salary Schedules at: [www.ncpublicschools.org/fbs/finance/salary](http://www.ncpublicschools.org/fbs/finance/salary)

## **PAYROLL**

Personnel employed on a twelve (12) month basis will be paid on the last scheduled working day of each month, except for December in which employees will be paid the last working day before the holiday vacation begins for students. Other employees will be paid monthly on a date set by the Board, based on the beginning of the school year. A list of Board approved payroll deductions is located in the [Hoke County Board of Education Policy 7620 - Payroll Deductions](#).

## **LINQ**

LINQ timekeeper is the online payroll management portal for Hoke County Schools. LINQ is loaded with features that streamline data entry, and give immediate access to the information needed regarding timesheets, taxes, deductions, absences as well as leave balances. New employees will need to contact Payroll Personnel in order to get login information. Employees may access more information by referring to Board of Education Policies 7605 /8610 - Payroll Procedures & 7620 - Payroll Deductions on our website at:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1IF\\_orzEjOz9EV610C7tTR91Yo5ChgDaD/view?usp=drive\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1IF_orzEjOz9EV610C7tTR91Yo5ChgDaD/view?usp=drive_link)

## **WORKDAY & OVERTIME**

The length of the school day for licensed and professional staff will be a minimum of seven hours and thirty minutes and will continue until professional responsibilities to the student and school are completed. For purposes of FLSA Compliance, the workweek for school system employees will be 12:00 a.m. Saturday until 11:59 p.m. Friday.

In lieu of overtime compensation, non-exempt employees may receive compensatory time off at a rate of not less than one and one-half hours for each one hour of overtime worked, if such compensatory time (1) is agreed to by the employee before the overtime work is performed and (2) is authorized by the immediate supervisor. Employees may access more information by referring to [Board of Education Policies 7500 - Workday and Overtime](#) & [7600 - Employee Compensation](#)

# SALARY

## 2025-2026 Pay Dates at a Glance

July 31, 2025  
August 30, 2025  
September 30, 2025  
October 31, 2025  
November 25, 2025\*\* + supplement  
December 19, 2025\*\*  
January 23, 2026\*  
February 27, 2026  
March 31, 2026  
April 30, 2026  
May 22, 2026\*\*\* + supplement  
June 19, 2026 \*\*\*11/12 Month & Hourly Employees Only

\*Pay early to help teachers and staff recover from holidays

\*\*Pay early due to holidays

\*\*\*Pay early for closeout of fiscal year

For more information, click on the links below.

[10-Month Pay Calendar](#)

[10-Month Pre-Pay Explanation](#)

[11-Month Pay Calendar](#)

[12-Month Pay Calendar](#)

[Hourly Child Nutrition, PCA, Bus Pay Schedule](#)

[Hourly Teacher Assistant Pay Schedule](#)

[Pay Dates At-A-Glance](#)

[SandHoke Pay Calendar](#)

[Substitute Pay Calendar](#)

# BENEFITS

## **HEALTH INSURANCE**

Hoke County Schools offers coverage through the NC State Health Plan - Blue Cross Blue Shield. The employer pays for the employee's basic premium. The employee pays for any additional premium and for all dependent coverage. Premiums are payroll deducted and are on a pre-tax basis. The State Health Plan offers many health and wellness resources such as gym memberships and other fitness related products at discounted prices. Additional information can be found at:

[www.shpnc.org/new-employee-resources](http://www.shpnc.org/new-employee-resources) and [www.blue365deals.com](http://www.blue365deals.com).

## **RETIREMENT SYSTEM**

The State's retirement system (non-optional participation) is a benefit for permanent full-time (75%-100%) employees, with costs shared by the employee (6%) and the State (set by the Legislature, subject to change). Employees become vested in the retirement system after they have completed a minimum of five years of creditable service. Deductions are on a pre-tax basis. At retirement, employees can receive monthly payments for life (based on salary, age, and years of creditable service) or can receive a contribution refund. Employees can also request a contributions refund upon employment separation. Contributed funds earn 4% interest after five years of employment. Additional information can be located at:

[www.myncretirement.com/documents/files/actives/tsers-handbook/open](http://www.myncretirement.com/documents/files/actives/tsers-handbook/open) and [www.myncretirement.com/non-retirees/current-employees/benefits-current-employees](http://www.myncretirement.com/non-retirees/current-employees/benefits-current-employees)

## **SUPPLEMENTAL RETIREMENT PLANS**

The NC Retirement System also offers two tax-deferred plans, Prudential NC 401 (k) and Prudential NC Deferred Compensation (457), in addition to the State's retirement system. These Plans allow members to contribute towards their retirement and choose their investment portfolio.

Additional information can be found at

[ncplans.prudential.com](http://ncplans.prudential.com)

## **DEATH BENEFIT**

If an employee with at least one year of contributions to the retirement system dies while in active service, his/her beneficiary receives a single lump sum payment based on the employee's salary at the time of death; however, the payment will be no less than \$25,000 and no more than \$50,000. The benefit extends 180 days beyond the last date of employment. Additional information can be found at:

[www.myncretirement.com/benefits-survivors](http://www.myncretirement.com/benefits-survivors)



# BENEFITS

## **DISABILITY INCOME PLAN**

This plan provides income for eligible State employees who become temporarily or permanently disabled for performance of duties prior to retirement. Employees are eligible for short term (one year) benefits after one year of contribution to the retirement system, and for long term (indefinite duration) benefits after five years (must have been on short term disability first). The plan requires a sixty day waiting period before benefits begin. Additional information can be found at:

[www.myncretirement.com/documents/files/actives/disability-income-plan-north-carolina-benefits-handbook/open](http://www.myncretirement.com/documents/files/actives/disability-income-plan-north-carolina-benefits-handbook/open)

## **FLEXIBLE AND SUPPLEMENTAL BENEFITS**

The following supplemental benefits are available to full time employees: a medical spending account, a dependent care spending account, dental options, vision care plan, and accidental death and dismemberment insurance. Life insurance, cancer, accident, Medical Bridge plans, and supplemental disability plans may also be purchased by employees at group rates through payroll deduction. Hoke County Schools provides employees with the option of obtaining a \$5,000 life insurance policy at no cost to the employee. These plans are available through Colonial. Additional information can be found at: [piercегroupbenefits.com/client/hokecountyschools/](http://piercегroupbenefits.com/client/hokecountyschools/)

## **EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE**

Employees may receive reimbursement of tuition expenses and educational leave, provided that they obtain supervisory approval and sufficient funds are available. Educational assistance may only be granted if the education is determined to benefit the department and the employee has permanent status. Reimbursement must be preapproved through the Human Resources department prior to the coursework.



# BENEFITS

## **TUITION AND PRAXIS REIMBURSEMENT FOR TEACHERS AND PROFESSIONALS**

### **ELIGIBILITY**

Reimbursements are made to repay the employee for personal/out-of-pocket expenses made in pursuit of their higher education. Hoke County Schools will provide course reimbursements for the following employees. **Additional, reimbursement is only when the funds are available.**

1. Teacher assistants working towards a 4 year degree in the field of education,
2. Residency model teachers completing coursework, and
3. Teachers and other support personnel working on a graduate, Ed.S, masters or doctorate degree towards certification in the field of education. (Doctoral candidates will only be reimbursed for coursework and ***we will not reimburse for dissertation writing or classes***).

### **REIMBURSABLE EXPENDITURES**

- Employees seeking reimbursement for coursework can be receive up to \$750 per course for the actual costs of their tuition, textbooks and most fees (Excludes parking and late registration fees)
- Employees will only be reimbursed for certification exams required for licensure. Passing test scores are required for reimbursement.
- Hoke County Schools will not reimburse scholarships, grants or educational financial assistance from another source– e.g., GI Bill. However, if the funds from the other source do not cover all of the expenses, the employee will be reimbursed for the difference.
- Praxis and Pearson Test reimbursements are also available to residency model teachers,, provisional teachers, and teachers holding a temporary permit.

### **DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS**

#### **Due WITHIN 30 DAYS PRIOR to course begin date or Praxis/Pearson Exam**

- Employees must submit a completed “Tuition/Praxis Reimbursement Request Form” upon requesting reimbursement. On this form, the employee agrees to repay to the district in full should the employee leave Hoke County Schools within 24 months after receiving reimbursement. This amount will be deducted from the employee’s final paycheck.
- College Plan of Study with initial requests (TAs & Residency)
- Registration or enrollment confirmation indicating your date of registration or enrollment and receipts for coursework, textbooks, and/or examination fees with request form.

#### **Due NO LATER THAN 30 DAYS AFTER course end date or Praxis/Pearson Exam completion**

- Grade report for each course and/or official examination score report Grade Requirements

**PLEASE NOTE:** Undergraduate students must make a minimum grade of “C” or higher to qualify for reimbursement. Graduate, masters, and doctorate certification students must make a minimum grade of “B” or higher to qualify for reimbursement. Reimbursements are made possible through a Federal Grant. When the funding for one school year is depleted, outstanding requests will be paid when the next funding allotment is received. Please allow up to three weeks for processing. Employees may access more information by referring to the Tuition Reimbursement page on our website at:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/12bXBNaW4iSSBT0qgBxtr3hbi0\\_bF2zf0/view?usp=drive\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/12bXBNaW4iSSBT0qgBxtr3hbi0_bF2zf0/view?usp=drive_link)

# BENEFITS

## **STUDENT LOAN FORGIVENESS**

Since several Title 1 schools are located within the Hoke County School System, depending on your student loans service provider, you may be eligible for the federal student loan forgiveness program. For additional information contact the Human Resources Team.

## **STATE EMPLOYEES CREDIT UNION**

Employees may become members of the NC State Employees Credit Union. The Raeford NC State Employees Credit Union branch is located at 1108 Fayetteville Road, NC 28376. Information about State Employees Credit Union and this branch can be found at [locations.ncsecu.org/raeford/1108-fayetteville-rd](https://locations.ncsecu.org/raeford/1108-fayetteville-rd)



## **BUSINESS DISCOUNTS**

Many local businesses give discounts to Hoke County Schools employees. Proof of employment (employee i.d.) will be required. Verizon, Apple, and other large corporations also provide discounts for employees of K-12 school systems.

## **EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE AND WORK/LIFE PROGRAM**

Employees use employee assistance programs for a variety of services, but the primary reason employees use an EAP is the same – to get help solving a problem, relieve a bit of stress, or take care of an issue before it becomes unmanageable, so they can focus on their work. Additional information can be found at: [drive.google.com/drive/folders/1D70rW1uu5cdZvIL-fgvjv-t52s2qP0vZ](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1D70rW1uu5cdZvIL-fgvjv-t52s2qP0vZ) and [oshr.nc.gov/state-employee-resources/employee-relations/employee-assistance-program](https://oshr.nc.gov/state-employee-resources/employee-relations/employee-assistance-program)

# BENEFITS

## ECHO RIDGE APARTMENTS

Echo Ridge Apartments are available exclusively to Hoke County Schools employees. Each unit is suited for family living or a 2 person/roommate setting. The complex also provides a picnic area and beautiful gazebo. Hoke County Schools is proud to offer this unique incentive to becoming an educator in our quaint and local community. Additional information can be found by contacting the Human Resources Team.



### AMENITIES

- 2 Bedrooms
- 2 Full Bathrooms
- Living Room/Dining Area
- Washer/Dryer
- Dishwasher
- Refrigerator
- Stove & Oven
- Picnic Shelter with Grills
- Lawn Care
- Trash pickup
- Pet Friendly
- Security System Allowed



# LEAVE

The Hoke County Board of Education believes that it is important for employees to have leave available to attend to personal, civic, and professional matters, as well as to meet family commitments. This need for leave is to be balanced with the need to provide an effective instructional program for students. No employee may be discharged, demoted, or otherwise subjected to adverse employment action for taking leave in accordance with Board policies and administrative procedures. The information provided in this section is according to Hoke County Board of Education policies on leave.

## **ANNUAL VACATION LEAVE**

The amount of leave earned is based on the length of total State service (full-time employees; prorated for part-time employees). Employees must work at least half the working days in a month to earn leave.

<b>ANNUAL LEAVE ACCRUAL RATE</b>			
<b>YEARS OF STATE SERVICE</b>	<b>MONTHLY ACCRUAL RATE</b>	<b>10 MONTH EMPLOYEES PER YEAR</b>	<b>12 MONTH EMPLOYEES PER YEAR</b>
Less than 5 years	1.17 days (9.33 hours)	11 days (93 hours)	14 days (112 hours)
More than 5 years but less than 10 years	1.42 days (11.33 hours)	14 days (113 hours)	17 days (136 hours)
More than 10 years but less than 15 years	1.67 days (13.33 hours)	16 days (133 hours)	20 days (160 hours)
More than 15 years but less than 20 years	1.92 days (15.33 hours)	19 days (153 hours)	23 days (184 hours)
20 years or more	2.17 days (17.33 hours)	21 days (173 hours)	26 days (208 hours)

\*The above chart is based on the Office of State Human Resources model of an 8-hr/day, 40 hr/week employee. The leave accrual rates are scaled to reflect the appropriate number of annual leave days that the employee can accrue in a month. For example, an employee with less than 5 years of experience who works a 7.5 hour day (35hr/week) would earn 8.78 hours (1.17 days) of annual leave per month. Employees cannot earn more annual leave days than are allowed by state law.

No more than 240 hours of annual leave can be carried over from the end of one calendar year into another. If the employee resigns or retires, payment for accumulated annual leave cannot exceed 240 hours. At the end of the calendar year, any annual ation leave exceeding 240 hours is credited to the employee's sick leave account. Additional information can be found by contacting the Finance Team.

# LEAVE

## **HOLIDAYS**

State Employees normally observe 11 paid holidays each year (12 if Christmas Day falls on a Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday):

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Veterans Day
- Thanksgiving (Thursday and Friday)
- Christmas (2 or 3 days)



## **SICK LEAVE**

For each month in which a full time employee works at least half the working days of the month 8 hours of sick leave is earned (part-time employees/pro-rata basis). Sick leave can accumulate indefinitely and can be used for illness of immediate family members as well as for a death in the immediate family. Accumulated sick leave provides time credited towards retirement (20 days = one month).

## **CONTINUOUS LEAVE OF MORE THAN 5 DAYS**

An employee must comply with the notice and verification requirements provided in Policy 7520 - Family and Medical Leave, for continuous leave of 5 days or more if: (1) the leave also is eligible for leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), defined in Policy 7520, and (2) the leave is designated as FMLA-eligible at the time it is taken or as soon as is feasible thereafter. \*All absences of five days or more must be reported to Human Resources.

## **PERSONAL LEAVE**

Teachers, who require substitutes, earn personal leave at a rate of .20 days for each full month of employment, not to exceed two days per year. Unused personal leave may be carried forward from one year to another and may be accumulated without limitation until June 30 of each year. On June 30, personal leave in excess of five days shall be converted to sick leave so that a maximum of five days of personal leave is carried forward to July 1. At the time of his or her retirement, a teacher may also convert accumulated personal leave to sick leave for creditable service towards retirement. Personal leave must be used in half or whole day units and must be approved in advance.

# LEAVE

## **COMPENSATORY LEAVE**

Employees who are not exempt from the provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act may accrue compensatory time (comp time) at a rate of one and one-half hours for every one hour worked in lieu of receiving overtime pay for each hour worked beyond 40 in a given workweek. For the purpose of compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act, the workweek for school system employees will be from 12:00 a.m. Saturday until 11:59 p.m. Friday. Supervisors shall arrange for employees to take comp time within one pay period following the time it is earned, if possible. An employee must obtain approval from his or her immediate supervisor before taking compensatory leave.

## **LEAVE OF ABSENCE WITHOUT PAY**

With approval of the Hoke County Schools Board of Education, an employee may be granted a leave of absence without pay for the following reasons and for a period of time of up to one calendar year:

1. military leave (see also Policies 7520-Family and Medical Leave and 7530-Military Leave);
2. personal illness in excess of sick leave;
3. family leave (see also Policy 7520);
4. professional leave;
5. and other reasons at the discretion of the superintendent with the approval of the Board.

## **COMMUNITY SERVICE, CIVIL, & MILITARY LEAVE**

Community service leave includes 24-36 hours annually and does not accumulate. Hours earned varies due to service option selected and length of employment. Civil and military leave are available to qualified employees, as needed. Additional information can be shared by contacting the Finance Team or your team bookkeeper.

## **CHILD-SCHOOL INVOLVEMENT LEAVE**

With prior approval, all employees may take up to four hours of paid leave per year to attend or otherwise be involved in the school of a child for whom the employee is a parent, guardian, or person standing in loco parentis.



# LEAVE

## **VOLUNTARY SHARED LEAVE**

Employees may donate earned leave to a fellow employee who has exhausted all earned leave and continues to be absent due to serious medical conditions. Donations made pursuant to this policy are voluntary. No employee should feel pressured or coerced to participate. The donating employee may not receive compensation in any form for the donation of leave.

## **FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (FMLA)**

The FMLA allows eligible employees to take job-protected, unpaid leave, or to substitute appropriate paid leave if the employee has earned or accrued it, for up to a total of 12 workweeks (or 26 workweeks in certain cases) in a rolling 12-month period for certain qualifying conditions or events. To be eligible for FMLA leave, employees must have been employed by the school system for at least 12 months and must have worked at least 1250 hours during the previous 12 months. Qualifying conditions for FMLA leave are as follows:

- the birth and first-year care of a child;
- taking care of a spouse, son, daughter, or parent with a serious medical condition;
- an employee having a serious medical condition of their own;
- a qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that the spouse, son, daughter or parent of the employee has been deployed, or is on notice of an impending deployment to a foreign country as a member of the regular Armed Forces on active duty or as a member of the Reserve components of the Armed Forces under a federal call or order to active duty in support of a contingency operation; or
- to care for a covered service member with a serious illness or injury (“serious injury or illness” and “covered service member” are defined in federal regulation 29 C.F.R.825.127). An employee who is a spouse, son, daughter, parent or next of kin of the service member may take leave for a period of up to 26 workweeks under this provision.



Employees may access more information on leave policies teaching out to the Benefits Specialist on the Human Resources Team.

# EMPLOYEE RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

## **STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES**

All staff members must approach their responsibilities conscientiously, always remembering that the ultimate responsibility of the school district is to create the opportunity and environment where students can learn. The following specific responsibilities are also required of all personnel:

- be familiar with, abide by, support and, where appropriate, enforce Board policies, administrative procedures, school rules and applicable laws;
- attend to the safety and welfare of students, including the need to ensure that students are supervised at all times;
- demonstrate integrity, respect, and commitment to the truth through attitudes, behavior and dress;
- address or appropriately direct any complaints concerning the schools, the school program or school operation; and
- support and encourage good school-community relations in all interactions with students, parents, and members of the community.

Employees may access more information by referring to [Board of Education Policy 7300 - Staff Responsibilities](#)



## **PERSONNEL FILES**

Personnel files, which may consist of paper or electronic records, will be maintained in the Human Resources office for all employees as provided by law. Employees will be provided with all procedural protections as provided by law. Pre-employment information, criminal record checks, medical information, and complaints/reports of harassment or discrimination must all be kept separate from the employee's personal general information.

Application forms, employee academic records, professional licenses and other records or reports are also maintained in a separate location from the employee's personal general information. An employee may petition the Board to remove any information from his or her personnel file that the employee deems invalid, irrelevant, or outdated.

Employees may access more information by referring to [Board of Education Policy 7820 - Personnel Files](#)

# EMPLOYEE RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

## **DUAL EMPLOYMENT**

The Board of Education may enter into an agreement with a classified employee to create a “dual employment position” whereby the employee serves a dual role during the school day (such as teacher assistant/bus driver, custodian/bus driver, etc.). When an employee enters into such an agreement for a position, failure to maintain appropriate licensure or certification, failure to fully perform or any refusal to fully perform the assigned duties in either of the areas will result in dismissal or a leave of absence without pay for both components of the dual position. An employee may not resign one portion of the agreed upon position without resigning the other portion, unless special permission is granted by the superintendent.

The Hoke County Board of Education recognizes the importance of providing adequate transportation for the children and youth of this county. It is the responsibility of the Hoke County Schools Transportation Department to maintain an adequate number of substitute bus drivers for the effective and efficient operation of the bus transportation system. All classified employees not serving as a permanent bus driver are required to maintain appropriate licensure or certification to operate a school bus. Serving as a substitute bus driver is an essential job function of the dual employment position. Three refusals to drive as a substitute bus driver when requested to do so will result in dismissal of the employee. Failure to drive all routes will result in the same. Employees may access more information by referring to [Board of Education Policy 7450 - Dual Employment Positions](#)

## **PROFESSIONAL AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT**

The goal of professional and staff development programs and opportunities for licensed professional employees and support staff is to improve the instructional program and create a safe learning environment for all students by improving and expanding the skills of the professional staff and support personnel. Professional and staff development must be provided, at the system or school level, on the effective delivery of the required curriculum.

Licensed employees are expected to engage in self-directed activities to improve their professional skills. These employees are encouraged to seek information and training through professional development programs as well as other opportunities in order to meet this responsibility. Supervisors and principals also may require licensed employees to enter into plans, including mandatory improvement plans established by state law and individual, monitored and/or directed growth plans established by the State Board of Education, for professional growth and improving performance. The school system will not bear the responsibility of the cost of training taken solely for the purposes of licensure renewal.

Employees may access more information by referring to [Board of Education Policy 7800 - Professional & Staff Development](#)

# EMPLOYEE RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

## **STAFF-STUDENT RELATIONS**

The Hoke County Board of Education expects all employees to maintain the highest professional, moral, and ethical standards in their interactions with students. Employees are required to provide an atmosphere conducive to learning through consistently and fairly applied discipline and established and maintained professional boundaries. All employees are prohibited from dating, courting, or entering into a romantic relationship or having sexual contact with any student enrolled in the school system regardless of the student's age. Employees engaging in such inappropriate conduct will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, and may be subject to criminal action as provided in G.S. 14-202.4 and 14-27.32.

Employees may access more information by referring to [Board of Education Policy 7310 - Staff-Student Relations](#)

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Employees have an absolute duty to maintain the confidentiality of records as required by law. Employees, by the nature of their occupation, are exposed to confidential information which should not be repeated or discussed except with those recognized by law as having a right to the information. Any employee who is not sure whether particular information may be protected by state or federal confidentiality laws should seek clarification from his or her immediate supervisor or Human Resources. Where violations occur, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken, up to, and including, dismissal.

## **STUDENT INFORMATION**

All student records must be current and maintained with appropriate measures of security and confidentiality. The principal is responsible for complying with all legal requirements pertaining to the maintenance, review, and release of records retained at the school. Directory information is the only form of information that may be released. If any other form of information is released to any party without the approval of the student's parent or proper legal authority, disciplinary actions will be taken.

Employees may access more information by referring to [Board of Education Policy 4700 - Student Records](#)

## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

All employees are expected to refrain from engaging in or having a financial interest, directly or indirectly, in any activity that conflicts with duties and responsibilities in the school system. Conflicts of interest relating to financial interests or receipts of gifts are stated in Board policy. Conflict of interests relating to non-School employment is also stated in Board policy. Employees may access more information by referring to [Board of Education Policy 7730 - Employee Conflict of Interest](#)

# EMPLOYEE RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

## **RESPONSIBLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY**

The use of school system technological resources, including access to the Internet, is a privilege, not a right. Individual users of the school system's technological resources are responsible for their behavior and communications when using those resources. Responsible use of school system technological resources is use that is: ethical, respectful, academically honest, and supportive of student learning. Each user has the responsibility to respect others in the school community and on the Internet. Users are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. Employee behavior standards, including those prescribed in applicable Board policies, and other regulations and school rules, apply to use of the Internet and other school technological resources. Acceptable uses of such technological resources are limited to responsible, efficient, and legal activities that support learning and teaching.

No right of privacy exists in the use of technological resources. Users should not assume that files or communications created or transmitted using school system technological resources or stored on services or hard drives of individual computers will be private. School system administrators or individuals designated by the superintendent may review files, monitor all communication, and intercept e-mail messages to maintain system integrity and to ensure compliance with Board policy and applicable laws and regulations. School system personnel shall monitor online activities of individuals who access the Internet via a school-owned computer.

Employees may access more information by referring to [Board of Education Policy 7320 - Technology Responsible Use](#)

## **EMPLOYEE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

As practicable, the Hoke County Board of Education will provide access to secure social media tools and Board approved technologies for use during instructional time and for school-sponsored activities in accordance with Policies 3220 - Technology in the Educational Program and 3225/4312/7320 - Technology Responsible Use. School employees who use social media for personal purposes must be mindful that they are responsible for their public conduct even when not acting in their capacities as school system employees. All school employees, including student teachers and independent contractors, shall comply with the requirements of this policy when using electronic social media for personal purposes. In addition, all school employees must comply with Policy 4040/7310-Staff-Student Relations when communicating with individual students through other electronic means, such as voice, email, or text messaging. Employees may access more information by referring to [Board of Education Policy 7335 - Employee Use of Social Media](#)

# EMPLOYEE RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES



## **MONEY COLLECTION**

Each officer, employee, and agent of the school district or individual school whose duty it is to collect or receive any taxes or other monies will deposit daily his or her collections and receipts. Regardless of the amount on hand, all funds will be deposited within 24 hours of receipt.

Employees may access more information by referring to [Board of Education Policy 8325 - Daily Deposits](#)

## **POLITICAL ACTIVITY**

The employee's right of citizenship involving registering, discussing political issues, voting, campaigning for candidates or issues, running for or serving in public office, and participating on a committee or board which seeks to serve the welfare of the community, will not be infringed upon due to employment in the school district. These political activities will not:

- take place during school time;
- involve school monies or materials; or
- make use of an official school position to encourage or to coerce students or other employees of the district to support in any way a political party, candidate or issue.

Employees may access more information by referring to [Board of Education Policy 7720 - Employee Political Activities](#)

## **RESIGNATIONS AND RETIREMENT**

**RESIGNATIONS:** Professional employees who intend to resign for any reason are encouraged to indicate their plans in writing at as early a date in the school year as possible, such as when plans become firm and/or the decision to leave the school system is made. A resignation becomes effective at the end of the school year in which it is submitted. A resignation for any other time requires 30 days' notice unless the superintendent consents to a shorter notice period. Letters of resignation must be submitted to the superintendent.

**RETIREMENT:** Any employee who anticipates retirement will notify the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources at least 90 days prior to his or her intended retirement date, except in cases where health or other extenuating circumstances make shorter notices necessary. No employee will be required to retire at any age.

Employees may access more information by referring to [Board of Education Policies 7900 - Resignation](#) & [7910 - Retirement](#)

# EMPLOYEE RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

## **EVALUATION OF NON-CERTIFIED EMPLOYEES**

All non-certified employees should be evaluated at least once by May 1st of each school year. All employees in the same job must be evaluated on the same competencies. The HR Department should be contacted if an employee shows evidence of an extreme violation or consistently below standard performance. Employees who score below standard should be provided a plan of assistance to improve performance. A copy of the signed evaluation should be given to the employee and a copy should be placed in the employee's personnel file.

## **COPYRIGHT**

All Hoke County Schools employees are strictly prohibited from infringing on the property rights of any copyright owner. Duplication of copyrighted materials is strictly prohibited by employees and students unless usage of said material is upheld by the "fair use" standard sanctioned by the United States Congress. Employees and students are expected to adhere to all copyright laws.

The Hoke County Board of Education Policy Manual states that fair use is based on the following standards:

- the purpose and character of the use, including whether such use is of a commercial nature or is for nonprofit educational purposes;
- the nature of the copyrighted work;
- the amount of and the substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole; and
- the effect of the use upon the potential market for, or value of, the copyrighted work.

Employees may access more information by referring to [Board of Education Policy 3230/7330 - Copyright Compliance](#)



## **SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS**

Classroom teachers in Hoke County Schools are expected and encouraged to maintain good attendance so that learning is optimal for students. However, effective and capable substitute teachers are employed on an 'as needed' basis to assist learning for students when certified teachers must be absent from school.

# EMPLOYEE RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

## **BEGINNING TEACHER SUPPORT PROGRAM**

The Hoke County Schools Beginning Teacher Support Program provides comprehensive support for teachers within their first three teaching years. Hoke County Schools will provide efficient management of the Beginning Teacher Support Program by employing Personnel Support Coordinators and Licensure Specialists. The Beginning Teacher Support Program will be monitored by the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources in collaboration with the Personnel Support Coordinators. The program shall consist of the following:

- New teacher orientation,
- Training in the North Carolina Teaching Standards,
- Training in the NC Educator Evaluation System,
- Paid school level mentors assigned to every beginning teacher
- Collaboration with the principal and other central office departments including Curriculum and Instruction, Exceptional Children, Federal Programs, and Testing and Accountability,
- Analysis of the Teacher Working Condition Survey data, and
- Continuous monitoring of the Beginning Teacher Support Program.

Employees may access more information by referring to the Beginning Teacher Support Plan on our website at:

<https://www.dpi.nc.gov/educators/recruitment-support/beginning-teacher-support/bt-support-program>

## **EXTRACURRICULAR AND NON INSTRUCTIONAL DUTIES**

The Hoke County Board of Education acknowledges that instructing students is the primary mission of the school system. Generally, in order to carry out the responsibilities of the school system, teachers, and other employees may also be required to perform certain non-instructional and extracurricular duties. Assigned additional duties are considered part of all employees' responsibilities. Initially licensed teachers and teachers with 27 or more years' experience (exempt teachers) may not be assigned extracurricular duties unless they request the assignments in writing. Employees may access more information by referring to [Board of Education Policy 7405 - Extracurricular and Non-Instructional Duties](#)

## **LICENSURE**

Except as otherwise permitted by the State Board of Education or state law, a person employed in a professional educator position must hold, at all times, a valid North Carolina professional educator's license appropriate to his or her position. Licensure renewal is the responsibility of the individual, not of the school system. Any employee who allows a license to expire must have it reinstated prior to the beginning of the next school year. A teacher whose license has expired is subject to dismissal. Employees may access more information by referring to [Board of Education Policy 7130 - Licensure](#)

# EMPLOYEE RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

## **TEACHERS - DUTIES OF AND GROUNDS FOR DISMISSAL**

Duties of teachers as stated in North Carolina General Statute 115C-307:

- To Maintain Order and Discipline,
- To Provide for the General Well-Being of Students,
- To Provide Some Medical Care to Students,
- To Teach the Students,
- To Enter into the Superintendent's Plans for Professional Growth,
- To Discourage Nonattendance,
- To Make Required Reports, and,
- To Take Care of School Buildings.

Grounds for Dismissal as stated in Hoke County Board of Education Policy

- inadequate performance, as defined by the applicable state statute;
- immorality;
- insubordination;
- neglect of duty;
- physical or mental incapacity;
- habitual or excessive use of alcohol or nonmedical use of a controlled substance as defined in Article 5, Chapter 90 of the General Statutes;
- conviction of a felony or a crime involving moral turpitude;
- advocating the overthrow of the government of the United States or of the state of North Carolina by force, violence, or other unlawful means;
- failure to fulfill the duties and responsibilities imposed upon teachers or school administrators by the General Statutes;
- failure to comply with such reasonable requirements as the Board may prescribe;
- any cause that constitutes grounds for the revocation of an employee's teaching or school administrator license;
- a justifiable decrease in the number of positions due to school system reorganization, decreased enrollment, or decreased funding, provided that there is full compliance with other statutory requirements;
- failure to maintain one's license in current status;
- failure to repay money owed to the state in accordance with the provisions of Article 60, Chapter 143 of the General Statutes; and
- providing false information or knowingly omitting a material fact on an application for employment or in response to a pre-employment inquiry.



Employees may access more information by referring to HCS [Board of Education Policy 7930 - Professional Employees: Demotion and Dismissal](#)

# SAFETY

## **DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, AND BULLYING**

The Hoke County Board of Education acknowledges the dignity and worth of all students and employees and strives to create a safe, orderly, caring and inviting school environment to facilitate student learning and achievement. Hoke County Schools strictly prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age.

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

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

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

Employees may access more information by referring to Board of Education Policies 1710/4021/7230 Prohibition against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying at:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1QraDmJgTHyy-WGLmGIQd2EwVwBF83LXf/view?usp=drive\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1QraDmJgTHyy-WGLmGIQd2EwVwBF83LXf/view?usp=drive_link)

Employees who wish to voice a complaint should refer to Board of Education Policies 1720/4015/7225 - Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Complaint Procedure at:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1C\\_XFZ1NTBwWG3y1o2sHM7esS50KVbjAO/view?usp=drive\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1C_XFZ1NTBwWG3y1o2sHM7esS50KVbjAO/view?usp=drive_link)

## **SCHOOL SAFETY**

Safe schools are critical to creating a learning environment in which students can succeed. Staff and students share the responsibility for taking reasonable precautions and following established safety measures to create and maintain safe schools. All employees are expected to perform the following safety measures:

- Supervision of students while in the care and custody of the school system,
- Supervision of visitors to school campuses,
- Prevention of unsafe conditions by taking care of school buildings and grounds and identification of any personal hazards,
- Awareness and reporting of situations and or hazards that may pose a threat to the safety of students, employees, or visitors on school property, at school events, or in other situations in which the students are under the authority of school employees.

Employees may access more information by referring to Board of Education Policy 7270 - School Safety on our website at:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mCHBtDxk7aLUME3WAtPj8MtlRzjkbuJ\\_/view?usp=drive\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mCHBtDxk7aLUME3WAtPj8MtlRzjkbuJ_/view?usp=drive_link)

# SAFETY

## **HEALTH EXAMINATION CERTIFICATE**

The [Health Examination Certificate](#) is included in the New Hire Paperwork. Health certificates are a condition of employment with Hoke County Schools. North Carolina state law mandates the completion and submission of health certificates. Per Policy 115C-323, *"Any person initially employed in a public school or reemployed in a public school after an absence of more than one school year shall provide to the superintendent a certificate certifying that the person does not have any physical or mental disease, including tuberculosis in the communicable form or other communicable disease, that would impair the person's ability to perform his or her duties effectively."* The health certificate must be completed before the employee's first day of work and returned to Human Resources.

- TB skin tests and physical examinations are considered current only if they've been completed within the past year.
- If the employee is coming from another NC PSU and has not been separated from public school employment for more than one school year, the employee may request a copy of their health certificate from their previous NC PSU.
- Out-of-State applicants may have their certificate completed by a health care provider with an out-of-state unrestricted license or registration.
- If the employee does not have a regular physician, First Health Center in Raeford (910-904-2350) and the Simple Clinic in Fayetteville (910-491-4530) offers both the TB skin test and physical to HCS Employees. Please call for pricing.

Employees may access more information by referring to [Board of Education Policy 7120– Employee Health Certificate](#)



# SAFETY

## **WEAPONS AND EXPLOSIVES**

Employees, students, visitors, and other persons are prohibited from possessing, carrying, using, threatening to use, or encouraging another person to possess, carry, use, or threaten to use, weapons or explosives on school property or while attending curricular or extracurricular activities sponsored by the school system. This policy applies to weapons or explosives carried openly or concealed. Any employee who violates this policy will be subject to immediate termination. Any visitor or other person who violates this policy will be escorted from the premises and/or school activity immediately. Any employee who is aware that a weapon or explosive is present on school property or at a school event in violation of this policy must immediately report this information to the principal or designee or the school resource officer as appropriate. Employees may access exclusions and more information by referring to [Board of Education Policy 7275 - Weapons and Explosive Prohibited](#)



## **BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS AND THE UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS**

Employees are required to forego training with Student Support Services to learn about Blood-borne Pathogens and the Universal Precautions for Body Fluid and Blood-borne Pathogens. If an employee feels that he/she has been exposed to blood or bodily fluids, they should immediately contact a School Nurse. If a School Nurse is unavailable, the employee should contact Hoke County Schools' Human Resources Department. Employees may access more information by referring to [Board of Education Policy 7260 - Occupational Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens](#)

# SAFETY

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER PROCEDURES**

As per Hoke County Board of Education Policy, on a day that employees have the option to report for a workday, but pupils are not required to attend school due to inclement weather, employees may have the following options based on the superintendent's determination:

- report to work;
- take accumulated annual (vacation) leave;
- take accumulated personal leave, if available (teachers only);
- take leave without pay;
- use compensatory leave already accumulated; or
- make up the time missed.

If an employee elects to make up time, it must be at a mutually agreed upon time between the Employee and the immediate supervisor. For 10-month employees, it must be within the regular 10-month employment. Employees may access more information by referring to [Board of Education Policy 7550 - Absences due to Inclement Weather](#)

## **DRUG, TOBACCO, AND ALCOHOL FREE WORKPLACE ENVIRONMENT**

The Hoke County Board of Education recognizes that eliminating drug and alcohol abuse in the workplace improves the safety, health, and productivity of employees. It is the policy of the Board of Education that a drug-free, tobacco-free and alcohol-free workplace must be maintained. All employees of Hoke County Schools are prohibited from possessing or using drugs, alcohol or illegal substances of any kind on school campuses. As a condition of employment with Hoke County Schools, employees must accept and agree to all of the conditions outlined in Hoke County Board of Education Policy 7240-E. Employees are subject to a pre-employment urine drug test, and must willingly supply a urine sample for testing to determine the presence or absence of illegal drugs or alcohol in their bodies at any time. Employees may access more information by referring to [Board of Education Policies 7240 - Alcohol-Free Workplace, 7240-E - Drug-Free And Alcohol-Free Workplace](#), and [5026/7250- Smoking and Tobacco Products](#)



# TITLE IX

## TITLE IX SEXUAL HARASSMENT – PROHIBITED CONDUCT AND REPORTING PROCESS

Policy Code: 1725/4035/7236

The board acknowledges the dignity and worth of all students and employees and strives to create a safe, orderly, caring, and inviting school environment to facilitate student learning and achievement. As provided in policy 1720/4030/7235, Title IX Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex, the board will not tolerate sexual harassment in the education program and activities of the school system. The board takes seriously all reports and formal complaints of sexual harassment.

This Title IX sexual harassment policy specifically prohibits sexual harassment as that term is defined under Title IX. It provides a process for students, employees, and others to report such sexual harassment for response by school officials. All incidents of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment under this policy are to be reported and treated in accordance with this policy, whether or not the incidents may also constitute violations of other board policies or standards of conduct.

Individuals who believe they have been subjected to sexual harassment prohibited by this policy or who have witnessed or have reliable information that another person has been subjected to sexual harassment prohibited by this policy should use the process provided in Section C of this policy to report such violations.

The board also provides a grievance process for those who believe they have been victims of sexual harassment that is designed to achieve prompt and equitable resolution of formal complaints of sexual harassment through a formal investigation and adjudication of the allegations in the complaint or through informal resolution processes. The grievance process is provided in policy 1726/4036/7237, Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Process. Affected individuals are encouraged to report sexual harassment in accordance with the process provided in Section C of this policy before filing a formal complaint to initiate the grievance process.

### A. PROHIBITED BEHAVIOR

Students, school system employees, volunteers, and visitors are expected to behave in a civil and respectful manner. The board expressly prohibits sexual harassment by students, employees, board members, volunteers, or visitors. “Visitors” includes parents and other family members and individuals from the community, as well as vendors, contractors, and other persons doing business with or performing services for the school system.

Sexual harassment prohibited under Title IX and by this policy is conduct *on the basis of sex* occurring in a school system education program or activity that satisfies one or more of the following:

1. an employee of the school system conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the school system on an individual’s participation in unwelcome sexual conduct;
2. unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the school system’s education program or activities. This determination requires consideration of all the facts and circumstances, including, but not limited to, the ages and disability statuses of the harasser and the victim and the number of individuals involved and their authority;

# TITLE IX

3. sexual assault including rape, statutory rape, fondling, and incest;
4. dating violence;
5. domestic violence; or
6. stalking.

Sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking will be defined in accordance with applicable law and the definitions will be incorporated into an administrative regulation developed by the superintendent.

Conduct that satisfies this standard is not sexual harassment for purposes of this policy if the conduct occurred (1) outside the United States or (2) under circumstances in which the school system did not have substantial control over both the harasser and the context in which the harassment occurred.

All references to “sexual harassment” in this policy mean sexual harassment that meets this definition.

Examples of conduct on the basis of sex that would be considered sexual harassment if the conduct satisfies the criteria above include, but are not limited to: unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, such as deliberate, unwelcome touching that has sexual connotations or is of a sexual nature; suggestions or demands for sexual involvement accompanied by implied or overt promises of preferential treatment or threats; pressure for sexual activity; continued or repeated offensive sexual flirtations, advances, or propositions; continued or repeated verbal remarks about an individual’s body; sexually degrading words used toward an individual or to describe an individual; sexual assault; sexual violence; the display of sexually suggestive drawings, objects, pictures, or written materials; posting sexually suggestive pictures of a person without the person’s consent; and forwarding pornographic material depicting a classmate or other member of the school community. Acts of verbal, nonverbal, or physical aggression, intimidation, or hostility based on sex or sex stereotyping but not involving conduct of a sexual nature may also constitute sexual harassment.

Conduct that is determined not to meet the definition above may violate other board policies or established standards of conduct and will be treated accordingly. For example, conduct that does not meet the definition of Title IX sexual harassment above may nevertheless violate other board policies, including:

- policy 4329/7311, Bullying and Harassing Behavior Prohibited, prohibiting all forms of bullying and harassing conduct, including when it consists of unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature;
- policy 7232, Discrimination and Harassment in the Workplace, prohibiting harassment in the workplace; or
- policy 4040/7310, Staff-Student Relations, prohibiting romantic or sexual relationships between employees and students.

Nothing in this policy is intended to limit discipline for violation of other board policies when appropriate and consistent with law.

# TITLE IX

## B. DEFINITIONS

The following additional definitions apply in this policy.

### 1. Report

A report is an oral or written notification that an individual is an alleged or suspected perpetrator or victim of sexual harassment.

Making a report initiates the interactive process with the complainant described in Section D.1, below. No disciplinary action will be taken against a respondent for sexual harassment based on a report alone.

### 2. Formal Complaint

A formal complaint is a document signed and filed with the Title IX coordinator by a complainant or signed by the Title IX coordinator alleging sexual harassment against a respondent and requesting that school officials investigate the allegation(s). Filing a formal complaint initiates the grievance process set forth in policy 1726/4036/7237, Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Process.

At the time of filing a formal complaint, a complainant must be participating in or attempting to participate in the education program or activities of the school system.

### 3. Complainant

The complainant is the individual(s) who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

### 4. Respondent

The respondent is the individual(s) who has been reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

### 5. Grievance Process

Grievance process means the process for investigating and reaching a final determination of responsibility for a formal complaint of sexual harassment. The sexual harassment grievance process is set out in policy 1726/4036/7237.

### 6. Title IX Coordinator

The Title IX coordinator is a school official who is designated to coordinate the school system's response to sexual harassment and allegations of sexual harassment. Contact information for the Title IX coordinator is posted on the school system's website and listed in policy 1720/4030/7235, Title IX Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex.

# TITLE IX

## 7. Supportive Measures

Supportive measures are non-disciplinary, non-punitive individualized services offered as appropriate, as reasonably available, and without fee or charge to the complainant or the respondent before or after the filing of a formal complaint or where no formal complaint has been filed. Such measures are designed to restore or preserve equal access to the school system's education program and activities

without unreasonably burdening the other party, including measures designed to protect the safety of all parties or the school system's educational environment, or deter sexual harassment.

Supportive measures available to the parties include, but are not limited to, counseling, mental health services referral, extensions of deadlines or other course related adjustments, modifications of work or class schedules, escort services, mutual restrictions on contact between the parties, changes in work locations, leaves of absence, increased security and monitoring, and other similar measures determined by school officials to be necessary to protect the safety or educational or employment activities of a party.

## 8. Days

Days are calendar days unless specified otherwise.

## 9. Student(s)

"Student(s)" means the student and/or the student's parent or legal guardian unless the context clearly indicates otherwise. When the complainant or respondent is a student, references to those terms also include the student's parent or legal guardian unless the context clearly indicates otherwise.

## 10. Actual Knowledge

"Actual knowledge" means a school employee has notice of sexual harassment or allegations of sexual harassment.

## C. REPORTING SEXUAL HARASSMENT

### 1. Student Reports

Any student who believes he or she is a victim of sexual harassment occurring in the school system's education programs or activities is encouraged to report the matter to the student's principal or to the Title IX coordinator. Reports may also be made to a teacher, counselor, assistant principal, teacher assistant, or any other school employee. Middle and high school students may also report sexual harassment through the anonymous tip line, but school officials may be limited in their ability to respond if the report does not identify the complainant.

### 2. Mandatory Reporting by School Employees and Board Members

Any employee or member of the board of education who has actual knowledge of sexual harassment or allegations of sexual harassment occurring in the education program or any activity of the school system must report that information immediately to the Title IX coordinator.

# TITLE IX

Any of the following confers “actual knowledge” and must be reported immediately:

- a. a report of sexual harassment from a student or other person;
- b. the employee or board member witnesses conduct that is or reasonably could be sexual harassment;  
or
- c. the employee or board member discovers evidence of sexual harassment, such as sexualized graffiti on school property, or otherwise has reliable information or reason to believe that a student, employee, or other individual may have been sexually harassed in violation of this policy, even if no one has reported the sexual harassment.

Employees who observe an incident of harassment are expected to intervene to stop the conduct in situations in which they have supervisory control over the perpetrator, and it is safe to do so. An employee with actual knowledge of possible sexual harassment in violation of this policy who does not promptly report the conduct and/or take proper action as required by this subsection, or who knowingly provides false information about the incident, will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Any doubt about whether particular conduct is possible sexual harassment must be resolved in favor of reporting the conduct.

The mandatory reporting required by this section is in addition to required reporting under policies 4040/7310, Student-Staff Relations, and 4240/7312, Child Abuse and Related Threats to Child Safety, where the conduct at issue requires a report under either of those policies.

### 3. Reporting by Others

All other members of the school community are strongly encouraged to report any act that may constitute an incident of sexual harassment in violation of this policy to the school principal, the Title IX coordinator, or the superintendent.

### 4. Content of the Report

To the extent possible, reports should be sufficient to put school officials on notice of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment. Employees making mandatory reports should provide as much detail about the alleged sexual harassment as is known, unless such disclosure would violate law or standards of professional ethics. Reports, other than mandatory reports by employees, may be made anonymously, but anonymous reports may limit the school system’s ability to respond fully if the alleged victim is not identified.

### 5. Time Period for Making a Report

Reports by students and third parties can be made at any time. During non-business hours, reports can be made by using the contact information for the Title IX coordinator provided on the school system’s website and in policy 1720/4030/7235, Title IX Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex. A report should be made as soon as possible after disclosure or discovery of the facts giving rise to the report. Delays in reporting may impair the ability of school officials to investigate and respond to any subsequent formal complaint.

# TITLE IX

School employees and board members with actual knowledge of sexual harassment must report that information immediately, as provided in subsection C.2 above.

## D. SCHOOL OFFICIALS' RESPONSE TO ACTUAL KNOWLEDGE OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

As required to meet the school system's obligations under Title IX, school officials shall respond promptly and impartially to actual knowledge of alleged sexual harassment in a manner that is not deliberately indifferent. A response that is not deliberately indifferent is one that is not clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances and includes, at a minimum, the provision of supportive measures to the complainant, as described in this section.

Consistent with this duty, school officials shall respond to all reports of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment in accordance with this section. However, a report alleging conduct that is not sexual harassment as defined in this policy is not subject to this policy but may be referred to appropriate school officials as a possible violation of other board policies.

### 1. Title IX Coordinator Initiates Interactive Process with Complainant

Upon receiving a report of alleged sexual harassment, the Title IX coordinator shall promptly contact the complainant and the complainant's parent or guardian confidentially. This contact must occur within three days, excluding weekends, absent extenuating circumstances. The Title IX coordinator shall also notify the principal of the report and, if an employee is the complainant or respondent, the senior human resources official or designee.

When contacting the complainant and parent or guardian, the Title IX coordinator shall do all of the following during the contact and shall document the same:

- a. offer supportive measures;
- b. consider the complainant's wishes with respect to supportive measures;
- c. explain that supportive measures are available with or without the filing of a formal complaint; and
- d. explain the process for filing a formal complaint with the Title IX coordinator and the response required of the school system when a complaint is filed, including all the following:
  - i. that a formal complaint will initiate the grievance process described in policy 1726/4036/7237, Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Process;
  - ii. that a formal complaint may be filed with the Title IX coordinator in person, by mail, or by electronic mail;

# TITLE IX

- iii. the major steps in the grievance process, including (1) a notice of the allegations that will be provided to the respondent that includes identification of the complainant and the allegations made; (2) an investigation of the allegations of sexual harassment in which both parties will have opportunity to have an advisor, present witnesses, review evidence, pose written questions of the other party, and receive a copy of the investigative report; (3) a decision on responsibility in which a decision-maker objectively evaluates all relevant evidence and determines whether the respondent engaged in the alleged sexual harassment in violation of this policy; and (4) the opportunity for either party to appeal the decision;
- iv. the approximate time frame for concluding the grievance process;
- v. that school officials will treat both parties equitably by (1) providing remedies to the complainant if the respondent is found responsible, and (2) by not imposing disciplinary sanctions on the respondent without first following the grievance process set forth in policy 1726/4036/7237;
- vi. the circumstances under which a formal complaint might be consolidated with other formal complaints or dismissed; and
- vii. that the Title IX coordinator may have an obligation to initiate the grievance process in the absence of a formal complaint filed by the complainant and the time frame in which that decision will be made.

## 2. Title IX Coordinator Arranges Implementation of Supportive Measures

After considering the complainant's wishes, the Title IX coordinator shall arrange the effective implementation of appropriate supportive measures unless, in the exercise of good judgment, the Title IX coordinator determines that supportive measures should not be provided. If supportive measures are not provided to the complainant, the Title IX coordinator shall document why supportive measures were not provided and why not providing supportive measures is not deliberately indifferent to known sexual harassment.

If the complainant is a student with a disability, the Title IX coordinator may need to consult with appropriate school personnel to determine whether adjustments to the student's IEP or Section 504 plan are needed to implement any supportive measures to be provided and/or whether the student's plan necessitates any adjustment to the proposed supportive measures.

## 3. Title IX Coordinator Determines Whether to Sign a Formal Complaint

If the complainant declined to file a formal complaint within the designated time period following the interactive process described above, the Title IX coordinator shall determine on a case-by-case basis whether to sign, i.e., file, a formal complaint to initiate the grievance process.

The Title IX coordinator should file a formal complaint (1) if the respondent is a school employee and the complainant is a student; and (2) in other cases where, in the exercise of good judgment and in consultation with the school attorney as appropriate, the coordinator determines that a grievance

# TITLE IX

process is necessary to comply with the obligation not to be deliberately indifferent to known allegations of sexual harassment. Credibility or merit of the complaint shall not be considered in making the determination.

A decision by the Title IX coordinator to sign a formal complaint is not to be construed as supportive of the complainant or in opposition to the respondent or as an indication of whether the allegations are credible or have merit, or whether there is evidence sufficient to determine responsibility. Signing a formal complaint does not make the Title IX coordinator a complainant or party to the complaint nor relieve the Title IX coordinator from any responsibilities under this policy.

The Title IX coordinator shall document the decision of whether to sign a complaint and the reasons for that decision.

## 4. Presumption of Non-responsibility of Respondent and Bar on Disciplinary Sanctions without Due Process

The respondent identified in any report alleging sexual harassment under this policy will be presumed not responsible for the alleged conduct until the respondent's responsibility is conclusively established through the grievance process outlined in policy 1726/4036/7237, Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Process.

No disciplinary sanction or other action that is not a supportive measure, including but not limited to (1) short or long-term suspension, expulsion, or transfer to an alternative school or program for student-respondents and (2) suspension, demotion, or dismissal for employee-respondents, may be imposed for a violation of this policy unless the respondent agrees to a specific disciplinary sanction or action in an informal resolution or has been determined to be responsible for the sexual harassment at the conclusion of a grievance process that complies with the process in policy 1726/4036/7237. An employee-respondent, however, may be placed on administrative leave during the pendency of the grievance process if consistent with applicable state and federal laws.

Notwithstanding the limitation just described, respondents are subject to emergency removal as described in the next paragraph.

## 5. Emergency Removal of Respondent from School or Employment

Any respondent is subject to removal from the school system's education program and activities, or any part of the program or activities, on an emergency basis if a school-based threat assessment team conducts an individualized safety and risk analysis and determines that removal is justified because the person poses an immediate health or safety threat to any person arising from the allegations of sexual harassment. A removal under this subsection includes a transfer of a student to an alternative education program consistent with policy 3470/4305, Alternative Learning Programs/Schools. A schedule change, and/or removing a student from an extracurricular activity is also considered a removal under this subsection where such action would not otherwise constitute a supportive measure.

The emergency removal may take place regardless of whether a formal complaint has been filed. However, any such removal must be consistent with federal and state law, including any applicable law protecting the rights of individuals with disabilities. The respondent shall receive notice of the removal and an opportunity to challenge the decision in an informal hearing with the superintendent or designee immediately following the removal.

# TITLE IX

An employee may be placed on administrative leave with or without pay during the pendency of the grievance process set out in policy 1726/4036/7237, Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Process, if consistent with state law and in accordance with any applicable requirements of state law.

The superintendent or designee shall document all emergency removal decisions under this subsection, including the immediate threat to health or safety that justified the removal.

## 6. Supportive Measures

Supportive measures will be available to both the complainant and respondent before or after the filing of a formal complaint or where no formal complaint has been filed. Supportive measures will remain confidential to the extent that maintaining such confidentiality does not impair the ability to provide the supportive measures. The Title IX coordinator is responsible for coordinating the effective implementation of supportive measures.

## E. GRIEVANCE PROCESS FOR FORMAL COMPLAINTS

The grievance process for formal complaints of sexual harassment under this policy is set out in policy 1726/4036/7237, Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Process. The policy also provides an informal resolution process for complainants who seek an alternate means of resolution to their complaint.

As described in subsection D.3 above, the Title IX coordinator may also initiate the grievance process, as needed.

## F. RECORDS

The Title IX coordinator shall create and maintain for a period of seven years records of all reports and formal complaints of sexual harassment. For each report or formal complaint, the coordinator shall document the following:

1. any actions, including any supportive measures, taken in response to the report or formal complaint
2. that school officials have taken measures that are designed to restore or preserve equal access to the school system's education program and activities;
3. why school officials believe their response to the report or complaint was not deliberately indifferent; and
4. if supportive measures were not provided to the complainant, why that was not clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances.

In conjunction with the superintendent, the Title IX coordinator shall also maintain for seven years all materials used to train the Title IX coordinator, investigators, decision-makers, and any person who facilitates an informal resolution process. These materials will be made publicly available on the school system's website.

# TITLE IX

Legal References: Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972, 20 U.S.C. 1681 *et seq.*, 34 C.F.R. pt. 106; *Gebser v. Lago Vista Independent School District*, 524 U.S. 274 (1998); G.S. 115C 335.5; *Davis v. Monroe County Board of Education*, 526 U.S. 629 (1999); *Q&A on Campus Sexual Misconduct*, U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (2017), available at <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/qa-title-ix-201709.pdf>; *Dear Colleague Letter* (Title IX Coordinator) and *Title IX Resource Guide*, U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (2015), both available at <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/rights/guid/ocr/title-ix/coordinators.html>; *Revised Sexual Harassment Guidance: Harassment of Students by School Employees, Other Students, or Third Parties*, U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (2001), available at <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/shguide.html>

Cross References: Title IX Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex (policy 1720/4030/7235), Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Process (policy 1726/4036/7237), Alternative Learning Programs/Schools (policy 3470/4305), Staff-Student Relations (policy 4040/7310), Child Abuse and Related Threats to Child Safety (policy 4240/7312), Bullying and Harassing Behavior Prohibited (policy 4329/7311), Discrimination and Harassment in the Workplace (policy 7232)

Adopted: August 11, 2020

# CODE OF ETHICS FOR NC EDUCATORS

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

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

To uphold these commitments, the educator:

## I. Commitment to the Student.

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

## II. Commitment to the School and School System

- A. Utilizes available resources to provide a classroom climate conducive to learning and to promote learning to the maximum possible extent.
- B. Acknowledges the diverse views of students, parents and legal guardians, and colleagues as they work collaboratively to shape educational goals, policies, and decisions; does not proselytize for personal viewpoints that are outside the scope of professional practice.
- C. Signs a contract in good faith and does not abandon contracted professional duties without a substantive reason.
- D. Participates actively in professional decision-making processes and supports the expression of professional opinions and judgments by colleagues in decision-making processes or due process proceedings.

# CODE OF ETHICS FOR NC EDUCATORS

## E. When acting in an administrative capacity:

1. Acts fairly, consistently, and prudently in the exercise of authority with colleagues, subordinates, students, and parents and legal guardians.
2. Evaluates the work of other educators using appropriate procedures and established statutes and regulations.
3. Protects the rights of others in the educational setting, and does not retaliate, coerce, or intentionally intimidate others in the exercise of rights protected by law.
4. Recommend persons for employment, promotion, or transfer according to their professional qualifications, the needs and policies of the LEA, and according to the law.

## III. Commitment to the Profession

A. Provides accurate credentials and information regarding licensure or employment and does not knowingly assist others in providing untruthful information.

B. Takes action to remedy an observed violation of the Code of Ethics for North Carolina Educators and promotes understanding of the principles of professional ethics.

C. Pursues growth and development in the practice of the profession and uses that knowledge in improving the educational opportunities, experiences, and performance of students and colleagues.

## .0602 STANDARDS OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

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

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

(1) Generally recognized professional standards. The educator shall practice the professional standards of federal, state, and local governing bodies.

(2) Personal conduct. The educator shall serve as a positive role model for students, parents, and the community. Because the educator is entrusted with the care and education of small children and adolescents, the educator shall demonstrate a high standard of personal character and conduct.

(3) Honesty. The educator shall not engage in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation in the performance of professional duties including the following

(A) statement of professional qualifications;

(B) application or recommendation for professional employment, promotion, or licensure;

(C) application or recommendation for college or university admission, scholarship, grant, academic award, or similar benefit;

(D) representation of completion of college or staff development credit;

(E) evaluation or grading of students or personnel;

(F) submission of financial or program compliance reports submitted to state, federal, or other governmental agencies;

(G) submission of information in the course of an official inquiry by the employing PSU or the SBE related to facts of unprofessional conduct, provided, however, that an educator shall be given adequate notice of the allegations and may be represented by legal counsel; and

# CODE OF ETHICS FOR NC EDUCATORS

(H) submission of information in the course of an investigation by a law enforcement agency, child protective services, or any other agency with the right to investigate, regarding school-related criminal activity; provided, however, that an educator shall be entitled to decline to give evidence to law enforcement if such evidence may tend to incriminate the educator as that term is defined by the Fifth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

(4) Proper remunerative conduct. The educator shall not solicit current students or parents of students to purchase equipment, supplies, or services from the educator in a private remunerative capacity. An educator shall not tutor for remuneration students currently assigned to the educator's classes, unless approved by the local superintendent. An educator shall not accept any compensation, benefit, or thing of value other than the educator's regular compensation for the performance of any service that the educator is required to render in the course and scope of the educator's employment. This Rule shall not restrict performance of any overtime or supplemental services at the request of the LEA; nor shall it apply to or restrict the acceptance of gifts or tokens of minimal value offered and accepted openly from students, parents, or other persons in recognition or appreciation of service.

(5) Conduct with students. The educator shall treat all students with respect. The educator shall not commit any abusive act or sexual exploitation with, to, or in the presence of a student, whether or not that student has been under the care or supervision of that educator, as defined below.

(A) any use of language that is considered profane, vulgar, or demeaning;

(B) any sexual act;

(C) any solicitation of a sexual act, whether written, verbal, or physical;

(D) any act of child abuse, as defined by law;

(E) any act of sexual harassment, as defined by law; and

(F) any intentional solicitation, encouragement, or consummation of a romantic or physical relationship with a student, or any sexual contact with a student. The term "romantic relationship" shall include dating any student.

(6) Confidential information. The educator shall keep in confidence personally identifiable information regarding students or their family members that has been obtained in the course of professional service, unless disclosure is required or permitted by law or professional standards, or is necessary for the personal safety of the student or others.

(7) Rights of others. The educator shall not willfully or maliciously violate the constitutional or civil rights of a student, parent/legal guardian, or colleague.

(8) Required reports. The educator shall make all reports required by Chapter 115C of the North Carolina General Statutes.

(9) Alcohol or controlled substance abuse. The educator shall not:

(A) be under the influence of, possess, use, or consume on school premises or at a school sponsored activity a controlled substance as defined by N.C. Gen. Stat. § 90-95, the Controlled Substances Act, without a prescription authorizing such use;

(B) be under the influence of, possess, use, or consume an alcoholic beverage or a controlled substance on school premises or at a school-sponsored activity involving students; or

(C) furnish alcohol or a controlled substance to any student except as indicated in the professional duties of administering legally prescribed medications.

# CODE OF ETHICS FOR NC EDUCATORS

(10) Compliance with criminal laws. The educator shall not commit any act referred to in G.S. 115C-332 and any felony under the laws of the United States or of any state.

(11) Public funds and property. The educator shall not misuse public funds or property, funds of a school-related organization, or colleague's funds. The educator shall account for funds collected from students, colleagues, or parents/legal guardians. The educator shall not submit fraudulent requests for reimbursement, expenses, or pay.

(12) Scope of professional practice. The educator shall not perform any act as an employee in a position for which licensure is required by the rules of the SBE or by Chapter 115C of the North Carolina General Statutes during any period in which the educator's license has been suspended or revoked.

(13) Conduct related to ethical violations. The educator shall not directly or indirectly use or threaten to use any official authority or influence in any manner that tends to discourage, restrain, interfere with, coerce, or discriminate against any subordinate or any licensee who in good faith reports, discloses, divulges, or otherwise brings to the attention of an PSU, the SBE, or any other public agency authorized to take remedial action, any facts or information relative to actual or suspected violation of any law regulating the duties of persons serving in the public school system, including but not limited to these Rules.



# NC TESTING CODE OF ETHICS

- (a) This Rule shall apply to all public school unit (PSU) employees or agents while they are administering the Annual Testing Program defined in Rule .0307(c) of this Section.
- (b) The PSU shall develop local policies and procedures to ensure maximum test security in coordination with the policies and procedures developed by the test publisher.
- (c) The PSU shall require all testing coordinators, school test coordinators, test administrators and proctors to be trained as required in Rule .0308 of this Section.
- (d) The PSU shall designate the personnel who are authorized to have access to secure test materials. "Access" to test materials by school personnel means handling the materials but does not include reviewing tests or analyzing test items.
- (1) Persons who have access to secure test materials shall not use those materials for any purpose other than test administration.
  - (2) No person shall copy, reproduce, or paraphrase the test materials without the express written consent of the test publisher.
- (e) The principal shall store test materials in a locked facility to which only the principal has access. The principal shall not allow anyone access to the test materials except as necessary for administration.
- (f) When PSU personnel discover loss of materials, failure to account for materials, or any evidence of unauthorized access to the materials, they shall report the discovery without delay to the principal, school test coordinator, school system (LEA) test coordinator, or charter school director.
- (g) PSUs shall ensure that test coordinators:
- (1) plan and implement training for school test coordinators, test administrators, and proctors;
  - (2) ensure each school test coordinator and test administrator is trained in accordance with Rule .0308 of this Section; and
  - (3) in conjunction with program administrators, ensure test accommodations to students entitled to testing accommodations as defined in 16 NCAC 06G .0315; are documented and provided.
- (h) The principal or the principal's designee shall serve as school test coordinator.
- (i) The principal shall ensure the school test coordinator maintains test security and accountability of test materials, including taking the following actions:
- (1) before each test administration, the school test coordinator shall count and distribute test materials;
  - (2) after each test administration, the school test coordinator shall without delay collect, count, and return all test materials to the locked storage facility;
  - (3) establishes procedures to assure all students participating in the Annual Testing Program have an equal opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge on the test; and
  - (4) identifies and trains personnel, proctors, and backup personnel for test administrations.
- (j) Teachers may help students improve test-taking skills by:
- (1) helping students become familiar with test formats using curricular content;
  - (2) teaching students test-taking strategies and providing practice sessions;
  - (3) helping students learn ways of preparing to take tests; and
  - (4) using resource materials such as test questions from test item banks and linking documents in instruction and test preparation.

# NC TESTING CODE OF ETHICS

(k) With respect to test administration, PSUs shall:

- (1) assure each school establishes procedures to ensure all test administrators comply with test publisher guidelines;
- (2) inform the local board of education of any breach of this code of ethics; and
- (3) inform test coordinators and principals of their responsibilities.

(l) The school test coordinator shall:

- (1) assure school personnel know the content of rules in this Section and local testing policies;
- (2) implement the school system and local testing policies and procedures to assure all students participating in the Annual Testing Program have an equal opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge on the test;
- (3) ensure proctors are trained; and
- (4) ensure all violations of rules in this Section and local testing policies are reported to the school system (LEA) test coordinator.

(m) Test administrators shall:

- (1) administer tests according to the directions in the assessment guide and any subsequent updates developed by the test publisher.
- (2) administer tests to all students enrolled in a grade or course that requires a test in the Annual Testing Program;
- (3) report all violations of rules in this Section and local testing policies to the school test coordinator; and

(n) Proctors shall serve as additional monitors to help the test administrator assure that students have an equal opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge on the test.

(o) Scoring. The school system test coordinator shall:

- (1) ensure each test is scored according to the procedures and guidelines defined for the test by the test publisher;
- (2) maintain quality control during the entire scoring process, which consists of handling and editing documents, scanning answer documents, and producing electronic files and reports. Quality control shall address scoring accuracy and scoring consistency.
- (3) maintain security of tests and data files at all times, including:
  - (A) protecting the confidentiality of students at all times when publicizing test results; and
  - (B) maintaining test security of answer keys and item-specific scoring rubrics.

(p) Educators shall use test scores as one piece of information to be interpreted together with other scores and indicators when determining a student's grade. The PSU shall ensure that school personnel analyze and report test data within the limitations described in this Paragraph.

- (1) Educators shall maintain the confidentiality of individual students. PSU personnel shall not publicize test scores or any written material containing personally identifiable information from the student's educational records except as permitted under the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, 20 U.S.C. 1232g and regulations adopted pursuant thereto.
- (2) Staff development relating to testing must enable school personnel to respond knowledgeably to questions related to testing, including the tests, scores, scoring procedures, and other interpretive materials.

# NC TESTING CODE OF ETHICS

(q) Unethical testing practices include the following practices:

- (1) encouraging students to be absent the day of testing;
- (2) encouraging students not to do their best;
- (3) using secure test items or modified secure test items for instruction;
- (4) changing student responses at any time;
- (5) interpreting, explaining, or paraphrasing the test directions or the test items;
- (6) classifying students for the purpose of avoiding State testing;
- (7) not testing all students enrolled in a grade or course that requires a test in the Annual Testing Program;
- (8) failing to provide required accommodations during testing to students entitled to testing accommodations as defined in 16 NCAC 06G .0315;
- (9) modifying scoring programs including answer keys, equating files, and lookup tables;
- (10) modifying student records for the purpose of raising test scores;
- (11) using a single test score to place a student in a grade or a course; and
- (12) providing inaccurate test results and interpretations to the public.

(r) In the event of a violation of this Rule, the State Board of Education may impose any one or more of the following sanctions:

- (1) withhold any monetary incentive awards;
- (2) file a civil action against the person or persons responsible for the violation for copyright infringement or for any other available cause of action;
- (3) seek criminal prosecution of the person or persons responsible for the violation; and
- (4) in accordance with the provisions of 16 NCAC 06C .0312, suspend or revoke the professional license of the person or persons responsible for the violation.

*History Note: Authority G.S. 115C-12(9); 115C-174.11; 115C-174.12; 115C-218.85(a)(3);  
Emergency Adoption Eff. August 20, 2019; Eff. August 23, 2022.*

# TRADITIONAL CALENDAR

## HCS Academic Calendar - 2025/2026 - Traditional

July 2025						
S	M	T	W	R	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

August 2025						
S	M	T	W	R	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

September 2025						
S	M	T	W	R	F	S
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

October 2025						
S	M	T	W	R	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

November 2025						
S	M	T	W	R	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29

December 2025						
S	M	T	W	R	F	S
30	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

January 2026						
S	M	T	W	R	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

February 2026						
S	M	T	W	R	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

March 2026						
S	M	T	W	R	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

April 2026						
S	M	T	W	R	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

May 2026						
S	M	T	W	R	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

June 2026						
S	M	T	W	R	F	S
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

- Holiday (Schools/District Closed)
- Annual Leave (Schools/District Closed)
- Mandatory Workday (No School for Students)
- Optional Workday (No School for Students)
- Parent/Teacher Conference Day (No School for Students)
- Grading Period Begins
- Grading Period Ends
- Half day for Students (Elementary 11:30PM, Middle/High 12:30PM)

All workdays should be considered possible inclement weather make-up days.

# SANDHOKE EARLY COLLEGE CALENDAR

## HCS Academic Calendar - 2025/2026 - SHEC

July 2025						
S	M	T	W	R	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

August 2025						
S	M	T	W	R	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

September 2025						
S	M	T	W	R	F	S
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

October 2025						
S	M	T	W	R	F	S
		1	2	3	4	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

November 2025						
S	M	T	W	R	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29

December 2025						
S	M	T	W	R	F	S
30	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

January 2026						
S	M	T	W	R	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

February 2026						
S	M	T	W	R	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

March 2026						
S	M	T	W	R	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

April 2026						
S	M	T	W	R	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

May 2026						
S	M	T	W	R	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

June 2026						
S	M	T	W	R	F	S
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

- Holiday (Schools/District Closed)
- Annual Leave (Schools/District Closed)
- Mandatory Workday (No School for Students)
- Optional Workday (No School for Students)
- Parent/Teacher Conference Day (No School for Students)
- Grading Period Begins
- Grading Period Ends
- Early Release for Students (Elementary 12:30PM, Middle/High 1:30PM)

All workdays should be considered possible inclement weather make-up days.

# SCHOOL LISTINGS

<p><b>DON STEED ELEMENTARY SCHOOL</b> 800 Phillipi Church Road Raeford, NC 28376 Phone: 910-875-1125 Fax: 910-875-2274 Principal: Haley Hall</p>	<p><b>HAWK EYE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL</b> 4321 Old Maxton Road Red Springs, NC 28377 Phone: 910-875-2470 Fax: 910-875-2005 Principal: Dacia Bullard</p>	<p><b>MCLAUCHLIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL</b> 326 N. Main Street Raeford, NC 28376 Phone: 910-875-8721 Fax: 910-904-6868 Principal: David Renninger</p>
<p><b>ROCKFISH HOKE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL</b> 6251 Rockfish Road Raeford, NC 28376 Phone: 910-875-9343 Fax: 910-875-3761 Principal: Pam O'Brien</p>	<p><b>SANDY GROVE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL</b> 8452 North Old Wire Road Lumber Bridge, NC 28357 Phone: 910-875-6008 Fax: 910-875-8498 Principal: Heather Brower</p>	<p><b>SCURLOCK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL</b> 775 Rockfish Road Raeford, NC 28376 Phone: 910-875-4182 Fax: 910-875-0292 Principal: Demarious McNeill</p>
<p><b>UPCHURCH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL</b> 730 Turnpike Road Raeford, NC 28376 Phone: 910-875-1574 Fax: 910-904-0624 Principal: Angel Baker</p>	<p><b>WEST HOKE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL</b> 6050 Turnpike Road Raeford, NC 28376 Phone: 910-875-2584 Fax: 910-875-7312 Principal: Sherika Atkinson</p>	<p><b>EAST HOKE MIDDLE SCHOOL</b> 4702 Fayetteville Road Raeford, NC 28376 Phone: 910-875-5048 Fax: 910-875-9307 Principal: Dr. Katrenna Rich</p>
<p><b>SANDY GROVE MIDDLE SCHOOL</b> 300 Chason Road Lumber Bridge, NC 28357 Phone: 910-875-3559 Fax: 910-875-3632 Principal: Dr. Franklin Bowden</p>	<p><b>WEST HOKE MIDDLE SCHOOL</b> 200 NC 211 West Raeford, NC 28376 Phone: 910-875-3411 Fax: 910-875-0332 Principal: Deidre Gales</p>	<p><b>HOKE COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL</b> 505 South Bethel Road Raeford, NC 28376 Phone: 910-875-2156 Fax: 910-904-1644 Principal: Colleen Pegram-Wike</p>
<p><b>SANDHOKE EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL</b> 1110 East Central Avenue Raeford, NC 28376 Phone: 910-878-5806 Fax: 910-878-5807 Principal: Leslie Neal</p>	<p><b>TURLINGTON ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL</b> 116 W. Prospect Avenue Raeford, NC 28376 Phone: 910-875-2583 Fax: 910-875-3012 Principal: Gerald Puckett</p>	



## FOR MORE INFORMATION:

All Hoke County Board of Education Policies are available on our website at:

<https://www.hcs.k12.nc.us/board-of-education/board-policy-manual>

The policies, procedures and standard practices described in this manual are not conditions of employment and do not represent the HCS policies in their entirety. This manual does not create an expressed or implied contract between Hoke County Schools and any of its employees.