Northampton County Schools
Employee Handbook
2025-2026

In compliance with Federal Law, Northampton County Schools administers education programs, employment activities and admission without discrimination against any person on the basis of gender, race, color, religion, national origin, age, or disability.

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Dr. Amy Draper	Director of Career & Technical Education
Tameka Robinson	Director of Teaching & Learning

Directory of Schools

Central Elementary School
9742 NC Hwy 305
Jackson, NC 27845
(252) 534-3381
(252) 534-6591 fax
Ashita Harris, Principal

Gaston STEM Leadership Academy
400 Broughton Street
Gaston, NC 27832
(252) 537-2520
(252) 535-5692 fax
Ivory Creecy, Principal

Conway Middle School
400 East Main Street
Conway, NC 27820
(252) 585-0312
(252) 585-0335 fax
Darren Parker, Principal

Northampton County High School
152 Hurricane Drive
Gaston, NC 27832
(252) 537-1910
(252) 537-9028 fax
Dr. John Milliner-Williams, Principal

Northampton County High School Early College
At Halifax Community College
100 College Drive
Weldon, NC 27890
(252) 585-1900
(252) 536-5496 fax
Marilyn Lawrence, Principal

Northampton Virtual Academy
Marilyn Lawrence, Principal

Northampton County Schools

MISSION

To work in partnership with families and communities using a holistic approach to empower students to become responsible and engaged citizens.

DISTRICT GOALS

- Student Achievement
- Health & Wellness
- Fiscal Management & Resource Development
- Governance and Leadership Development
- Human Resource Development and Management
- Communications and Messaging

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Staffing Our Schools

Northampton County School employees are divided into two categories: classified and licensed (also referred to as certified staff interchangeably). Licensed positions include teachers, counselors, media coordinators, principals, assistant principals, psychologists, central office administrators, and other positions requiring licensure by the Department of Public Instruction. Classified positions include clerical personnel, teacher assistants, custodians, child nutrition workers, transportation workers, maintenance workers, bus drivers, some central office positions, and any other positions not requiring licensure by the Department of Public Instruction.

✔ Allotments

Allotments of licensed personnel within the school system are determined by student enrollment, state regulations, and budget resources. Licensed personnel are assigned by the Superintendent to the respective schools in accordance with school board policy, and every effort is made to assign personnel according to the principal's request and the individual's preference. It is the principal's responsibility to make assignments to grade and subject areas.

Application and interview screening is conducted by principals and other hiring supervisors with further screening by the human resources services team. This is to assure selection of the best candidates for positions available in our school system. New hiring processes have been created to ensure that schools are staffed with fidelity and efficiency, in accordance with available position allotments. Upon recommendation by the Superintendent of Schools, the Northampton County School Board approves all recommendations for hire in accordance with all state and federal laws and regulations.

✔ Organizational Chart & Job Descriptions

The Northampton County Schools Organizational Chart can be found on the district's webpage under the "About Us" tab.

Getting Started

✔ On-boarding Procedures

Sign-up procedures have been established to help new employees complete the necessary forms and gain needed employment information. The following items are covered at the sign up appointment and/or new employee orientation:

- General employment information and benefits,
- Salary and pay periods,
- Tax, employment eligibility verification (I-9),
- Retirement, insurance, and health forms.

An employee will not receive a paycheck unless he or she has completed the sign-up process and all necessary forms. Health certificates **must** be on file before a second paycheck can be issued. Employees have 30 days from their start date to submit their health certificate to the human resources office.

✔ Work Week

Conformity to a defined minimum schedule is required of all licensed personnel. Administrative meetings, curriculum development, pupil supervision, assigned duties, parent conferences, group or individual planning, and extracurricular activities may require hours beyond the minimum.

The workweek for classified employees is Monday through Friday. Certain emergency situations may call for a change in the work schedule. The hours of the workday vary with position and employee based upon the school hours and the demands of certain jobs. Classified employees are scheduled to work no more than 40 hours per week. Any time worked beyond 40 hours per week requires the permission/approval of their immediate supervisor in advance, in accordance with Board Policy 7500. Classified employees are not permitted to volunteer in any job alike or similar activity in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act.

(See the appendix for the operational procedures for school dismissals, early closings, and delayed openings.)

Emergency closing announcements can be found on:

Local television and radio stations

Employees and Parents are also notified by Parent Square

***If you have a change in phone number please notify your school office support and HR**

Announcements for school delays/closings are typically made by 5:00 a.m.

Promotions/Transfers/Resignations/Dismissals

✔ Promotions/Transfers

An employee interested in a promotion or transfer should submit, to the Human Resource Department, the request in writing and follow the transfer request procedures provided during the transfer window each spring. The human resources department has created a new transfer form and process that should be completed electronically. During the spring of each year, the HR department will communicate information about the transfer process and timelines.The 2024-2025 transfer form can be accessed here.

The Superintendent or designee may initiate transfers in instances where the best interests of students, employees, and/or the school system dictate the transfer.

Employees in a classroom setting are not transferred during the school year except for unusual circumstances. Policies governing transfers can be found in the Northampton County Board of Education Policy Manual.

Reference: Policy 7440, Assignments/Reassignments/Transfers

✔ Resignations

A new, streamlined process has been created to enhance efficiency. Any employee wishing to separate from employment from Northampton County Schools must complete the NCS Resignation Form. This form is to be used for any type of separation (resignation, retirement, etc.) If an employee desires to schedule an exit interview, they may do so by indicating this on the electronic form. Listed below are the procedures for resignation.

Classified:
A 14-day notice (calendar days) is preferred for all classified resignations.
Employees who wish to resign should:

1. Discuss resignation with immediate supervisor.
2. Complete and submit the official NCS Resignation Form electronically.

Licensed:
All licensed employees are required to give a 30-day notice of resignation, in accordance with their contract.

A licensed employee, who finds it necessary to resign, should contact his/her principal and complete the NCS Resignation Form. All licensed employees are expected to work a 30 calendar day notice as per North Carolina General Statute unless given written release by the Human Resources department. Giving notice of resignation fewer than 30 days prior to the beginning of or during the school year constitutes grounds for revocation (at the discretion of the State Board of Education) of the teacher's license for the remainder of that school year.

Contracted:
All contract employees must adhere to the conditions for resignation as stated in the contract.

Once a resignation is accepted by the Superintendent, Superintendent's designee or Board of Education, the resignation is final and cannot be rescinded, except by request for rescission and approval by the Superintendent or Board of Education in their discretion.

Reference: Policy 7900, Resignation; Policy 7910, Retirement

✔ Reduction in Force (RIF)

Should a Reduction in Force (RIF) become necessary, employees will be informed in advance. In recommending to the Board the employees to be included in a reduction in force, the Superintendent shall consider the following factors (**not in priority order**):

1. performance ratings;
2. areas of licensure;
3. highly qualified;
4. program enrollment
5. service in extra duty positions and ability to fill such positions;
6. length of service, with higher priority given to service in this school system; and
7. degree level

Reference: Policy 7920, Professional Personnel Reduction in Force; Policy 7921, Classified Personnel Reduction

✔ Dismissal

Details on employee dismissal can be found in the Northampton County Board of Education Policy Manual. Termination of teachers and principals will be handled according to G.S. 115C-325.

Reference: Policy 7930, Professional Employees: Demotion and Dismissal; Policy 7940, Classified Personnel: Suspension and Dismissal

✔ Performance Evaluation

Licensed Employees: Each licensed employee is evaluated using the performance appraisal instrument adopted by the Northampton County Board of Education and/or the Department of Public Instruction.

The principal/supervisor may require a performance growth plan whenever an individual's performance indicates that corrective action is needed to avoid a "below standard" or less than "proficient" rating, unless the employee is recommended for dismissal or demotion.

Classified Employees: Employees are evaluated at least once annually.

Evaluations are conducted by the immediate supervisor with copies available for the employee and supervisor. A copy is kept in the employee's personnel file at the central office.

Reference: Policy 7810, Evaluation of Licensed Employees; Policy 7811, Plans for Growth and Improvement of Licensed Employees; Policy 7815, Evaluation of Non-Licensed Employees; State Board Policy EVAL-004

Personnel Records and Information

✔ Personnel Records

All employees have a personnel file in the central office. Whenever any written complaint, commendation, or suggestion is placed in the personnel file, the employee will be notified in writing. The following have access to personnel files: superintendent, immediate supervisor, appropriate director or coordinator, employees in the Human Resources Department, and Board of Education members, if access relates to specific duties of the Board member.

An employee may review his/her personnel record during regular office hours with a member of the Human Resources Department present, provided that three days' notice is given to the Human Resource Department. Pre-employment records are not available to the employee. (Additional details concerning personnel files can be found in section 115C-325(b) of the North Carolina General Statutes).

Reference: Policy 7820, Personnel Files

✔ Updating Personal Information

If your name or address changes for any reason, please notify the Human Resources Department by completing the "name or address change" form.

IMPORTANT: The name on your records should agree with the name on your Social Security card.

Name changes must be reflected on the teaching license. A form for this purpose may be obtained from the Licensure Specialist in the Central Office.

Beneficiaries of your retirement account may be changed at any time by logging on to https://orbit.myncretirement.com and completing the necessary forms.

Each spring, the State Retirement System provides all members with a report of their retirement contributions and years of service. If you have questions about the figures on this report, you should contact the Retirement System at the address on their form.

North Carolina (NC-4) and Federal (W-4) tax forms may be changed at any time by submitting the request to the Human Resource Services office.

If you would like to update any other personal information, please contact the Human Resource Services office.

Teacher Contracts

Teachers are currently categorized as “probationary” or “career.”

✔ **Probationary Teachers**

Probationary teachers are those who did not obtain career status in the Northampton County Schools prior to the 2013-14 school year. Their contracts are for one year only, and those contracts can either be renewed or expire at the end of that one year.

✔ **Career Teachers**

Career teachers are those who have obtained career status (tenure) in the Northampton County Schools, prior to the 2013-14 school year, as provided in the North Carolina General Statutes.

More details on teacher contracts can be found in the Northampton County Board of Education Policy Manual.

Reference: Career Status; N.C. Gen. Stat. §115C-325, -325.3.

Effective January, 2020

- Teachers with less than three (3) years in the LEA are only eligible to receive a one (1)Year contract.

- Teachers with at least three (3) years in the LEA, and who are in good standing, will receive employment contracts for a term of two (2) years.

Reference: Policy Code 7410, Teacher Contracts

Finance Procedures/Salary Determination

Licensed Personnel

Salaries of licensed personnel are determined by the State Salary Schedule and any legislative action pertaining to its implementation. Teachers (including counselors, media specialists, and school psychologists) and assistant principals are placed on the salary schedule according to the level of license and experience shown on the license. Principals have a separate salary schedule, which is based on the average daily membership of the school and school performance data.

✔ **Pay Adjustment for Higher Level License**

When a teacher earns a higher level of licensure, a new salary is determined by the level of license and years of experience according to the North Carolina General Statute.

Pay raises for higher-level licenses are effective with the pay period which begins in the same month as the effective date on the license.

Teachers holding a teaching or student service area beyond the master's, sixth-year, or doctoral level qualifies for placement on the salary schedule at the highest level held. This rule applies for teaching assignments only. (Exception: Licensure at the master's level in JROTC and certain vocational areas which are not based on the completion of approved education programs do not qualify.)

Notwithstanding the above, pursuant to 2013 legislation, no teachers or instructional support personnel, except for certified school nurses and instructional support personnel in positions for which a master's degree is required for licensure, shall be paid on the master's level salary schedule or receive a salary supplement for academic preparation at the six-year degree level or at the doctoral degree level, unless they were paid on that salary schedule or received that salary supplement prior to the 2014-15 school year.

✔ **Pay Adjustment for Increased Experience on Teaching License**

When a certified employee has additional experience added to their teaching license by the Department of Public Instruction for work outside the state of North Carolina, private school, charter school, military service or other applicable experience, the certified employee is responsible to supply the Human Resource Services Department an updated copy of their teaching license for their pay scale to be adjusted.

Pay raises for additional years of experience on teaching licenses are effective with the pay period which begins in the same month as the effective date on the certificate.

✔ **Supplements**

A local supplement is paid to certified staff in December and June. Also, extracurricular activities such as coaching duties are supplemented locally. Coaching supplements are paid at the end of each sporting season and when all equipment and forms are turned in.

Classified Personnel

✔ **Beginning Salaries**

Beginning salaries for classified employees in the Northampton County Schools system are based on State Salary Schedules. Experience credit is given to employees coming to the system with previous North Carolina school system full time experience in similar jobs. Outside of school employment, full time experiences are credited 1 year for every 2 years of service. For example, a new employee who previously worked as a bookkeeper for 12 years at a car dealership would be credited with 6 years of experience as a bookkeeper with the school system.

✔ **Salary Increases**

Each year the North Carolina General Assembly acts to determine the salary of state employees. Legislators may decide to grant pay-level increases, percentage increases, a combination of the two, or no increase at all. As a general rule, salary increases based on legislative decisions are effective July 1st of each year.

✔ **Overtime**

Overtime (time and a half pay or time and a half away from work [compensatory time]) is due any classified employee who works over 40 hours in a workweek. The school system does not allow overtime unless the supervisor gives special advance permission in writing. Compensatory time is to be coordinated with the immediate supervisor or principal of the school. Exempt, certified staff are not eligible for overtime or compensatory time. However, they may be hired on extended employment agreements for work outside their typical job duties.

Classified employees shall submit and certify bi-monthly timesheets reflecting daily work hours.

✔ **Longevity**

Longevity is paid to permanent, full-time or part-time employees (excluding teachers, assistant principals, principals, and instructional support) who have completed ten years of qualifying North Carolina service. This annual payment is a percentage of the yearly base salary, and the percentage increases as years of state service increase. Longevity payments are paid during the pay period following a person's anniversary date. The chart below shows the longevity pay rates:

Years of State Service	Longevity Pay Rate*
10 but less than 15 years	1.50%
15 but less than 20 years	2.25%
20 but less than 25 years	3.25%
25 or more years	4.50%

* The only exception to the above is if the employee has a fraction of a year remaining toward the next higher percentage rate and is separating from a school unit, the payment would be based on the higher rate. For example, if a teacher separates from a school unit and has nineteen (19) years and four (4) months of service, the payment rate would be 3.25% rather than 2.25%. This exception applies only when the employee already has more than ten (10) years of service.

✔ Payday

- All employees and substitute teachers are paid bi-monthly on the 15th and last workday of a calendar month.
- If the pay date falls on the weekend, checks will be released on Friday.
- Longevity checks are paid on the 15th of each month

Exception: All employees will be paid in June at the end of the finance close out date and in November and December on the last workday before the holiday break.

Only ten-month employees can select the 12-month pay option. This must be done prior to the beginning of school. Individuals who select the 12-month option should examine their August check stubs to verify that they are being paid accordingly. (A "Y" in the column called "Escrow" indicates a 12-month option.) An individual on a 12-month option whose payroll status changes during the school year will be taken off the 12-month option. Contracts for coaching and other extracurricular activities will be paid on regular paydays.

All pay for periods worked are deposited directly into the account of the employee or as otherwise approved by the finance department.

Salary schedules are available on the DPI webpage at the schools and in the Finance Department.

✔ Deductions

The finance department will deduct from each employee's check the mandatory deductions for federal and state withholding taxes, social security, and retirement. Other mandatory deductions are tax levies, child support, alimony, bankruptcy, and NC Teacher Assistance Authority payments.

Deductions for voluntary contributions (insurance premiums, tax-sheltered annuities, cafeteria benefits, State Employees Credit Union, etc.) are made as authorized by the employee.

Reference: Policy 7620 Payroll Deductions

✔ Direct Deposit

Direct Deposit is highly recommended.

Reference: Policy 7620, Payroll Deductions

Your Teaching License

✔ Superintendent's Copy

By law, the Superintendent's copy of the teaching license must be on file with the employing school system. Since DPI now uses the Online Licensure platform, an electronic copy is acceptable. Always maintain your individual licensure records for your own files as well.

✔ License Renewal

These are the current licensure renewal requirements:
K-5 Licensure Area- 8 CEUs (3 Subject Area, 3 Literacy, & 2 General)
6-12 Licensure Area- 8 CEUs (4 Subject Area & 4 General)
Student Services Personnel- 8 CEUs (4 Professional Discipline Areas and 4 General)
Administrators- 8 CEUs (4 Executive Role and 4 General)

All continuing licenses have a 5-year renewal cycle during which they must be renewed with 8 units. Licenses are always dated to expire on **June 30th**, and the renewal credit **MUST** be completed by that date. Credit may not be carried from one renewal cycle to the next. Course work may not be repeated within the 5-year cycle and duplications will not be allowed.

Credit must be directly applicable to the license field(s), professional responsibilities, and/or educational goals of the individual, or be directly applicable to school system needs. Renewal credit may be earned in the following ways:

1. College/University Courses - Courses may be at graduate or undergraduate level and may be taken through any accredited college or university, including technical and community colleges. For these courses, 1.5 renewal credits will be awarded for each semester hour and 1.0 renewal credits for each quarter hour. A course which is audited (not taken for college credit) may not be used for renewal credit. Up to 10 semester hours, which equates to 15 units, may be recorded for licensure renewal.

1. Local Courses or Workshops – sponsored by Northampton County Schools.

2. Other Activities - Renewal credit may be awarded for other activities if credit has been established by an entity empowered to determine credit (workshops set up by State Department of Public Instruction; independent study activities; or conferences/seminars set up to award CEUs). Generally speaking, 1.0 renewal credit is awarded for each 10 clock hours.

4. NBPTS – Upon the certification of NBPTS (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards), the employee must submit a copy of their letter of notification to the HR Department. Teachers completing the National Board Certification process may earn all 8 credits for completion of the process and certification. Those who are in the ten-year national board renewal cycle may earn two credits.

✔ Procedure for Receiving Renewal Credit & Submitting CEUs

To receive renewal credit for any activity, participants must submit all documentation to the HR Department so that it can be entered appropriately to track CEUs during the spring of their licensure renewal year. Certified staff should maintain copies of all earned CEUs. The school division is currently revising an online submission process to assist staff members at this time.

Outlined below are procedures to follow for various types of staff development activities.

College/University Courses

1. Courses carrying credit in semester hours, quarter hours, or CEUs may be used for renewal if they are related to one's license areas or professional growth.
1. It is necessary to complete a prior approval form, but the school system reserves the right to deny credit for course work not deemed appropriate. Across the top of the prior approval form, please write "For Credit Only".
2. When you complete the course, attach the ORIGINAL (not a copy) grade report and/or transcript and submit to the Licensure Specialist. We will record up to 10 semester hours, which equals 15.0 units, per 5-year period.

Institutes/Seminars/Workshops NOT Approved by DPI or Other Certifying Entity

1. Prior approval is **required**. Before attending, follow the procedure below:

   A. Complete the prior approval form and submit it with a brochure/flier detailing the event. Get the approval of your principal and then submit to the Director of Curriculum and Instruction for approval before the event.
   B. The request will be approved or denied and your copy of the prior approval form will be returned to you.
   C. When the Institute/Seminar/Workshop is concluded, please keep a copy of the CEU certificate and meeting agenda for your records.

Locally Planned Workshops and Professional Development

1. When you complete a workshop, a Northampton County Schools Certificate of Credit will be issued.
2. Directions for uploading the CEU certificates will be forthcoming but keep a copy of the certificate for your license renewal.

The School System reserves the right to deny credit for any activity not deemed appropriate or not having sufficient documentation of completion.

✔ **Tracking Renewal Progress**

It is the employees' responsibility to monitor and satisfy all requirements for license renewal including logging into the LINQ system the spring prior to renewal and completing the online questionnaire and paying license renewal fee.

Once you have completed requirements for renewal online, you need not do anything else. The Human Resources Department will process the necessary paperwork, and a copy of your new license will be forwarded to your email electronically.

Keeping careful records of your renewal activities will enable you to know your renewal status.

✔ **Provisional Licenses**

Law requires teachers to be licensed for **all** classes they teach. If you are assigned out of field, a provisional license will be necessary. Provisional licenses are issued for one year at a time. They are dated to expire June 30, however, holders of provisional licenses are allowed through July 30 as a "grace" period to complete the number of hours required to extend the license for another year.

✔ **Beginning Teacher Program (BT)**

Teachers who hold initial licenses are assigned a mentor/support team to provide guidance and help during the transition into the profession. Observations and evaluations are conducted on a specified schedule during the three-year period of licensure.

Interim Requirements adopted by the State Board of Education (SBE) are required of each beginning teacher. They are completed and reviewed annually by the principal. The Interim Requirements are:

- Individual Professional Development Plan for the current school year
- 4 observations (3 completed by administrator and one by a peer who is not your mentor) and 1 summative evaluation
- Documentation of professional development from the current school year
- Documentation of beginning teacher/mentor meetings for the current school year

There is not a pass/fail score; however, there is state level review of the Interim Requirements. The review will assess whether:

- Professional development is tied to the PDP, NC Teaching Standards and it is individualized.
- Mentors are meeting regularly with Beginning Teachers.
- Observations are timely and if feedback is given.

- Information on the formal observations is reflected on the Summative.

The Beginning Teacher (BT) does not participate in a five-year renewal cycle until the completion of the probationary period. However, BTs must attend staff development workshops/activities to meet the Interim Requirements to clear initial license status. Beginning with the teacher's fourth year of employment or after successful completion of a Beginning Teacher period, a five-year renewal cycle will begin.

Professional Development

Northampton County Schools is supportive of school improvement and professional development. Comprehensive and ongoing professional development programs focus on the school's goals for improvement as found in the School Improvement Plan for each school. The priorities for the design of professional development programs are based on a careful analysis of student performance data and the school's goals for improving student learning. Professional development activities are aligned with the specific goals and instructional programs of the school and promote a focus on student learning. Our goal is to provide a culture of continuous improvement and learning in the Northampton County Schools.

School based staff development programs share the following components:

- The school's professional development program helps administrators and teachers attain and develop the content knowledge and pedagogical skills necessary to design and deliver high quality curriculum.

- The school's professional development program prepares teachers to use research based teaching strategies to support students' achievement of the essential knowledge and skills for their learning.

- The school's professional development program assists administrators and teachers in using strategies that demonstrate high expectations for all students and the belief that all students can learn.

- The school's professional development program facilitates the development and implementation of school and classroom-based management to maximize student learning and to provide a safe and orderly environment for learning.

- The school's professional development program addresses diversity by providing awareness and training related to the knowledge, skills, and behaviors needed to ensure that an equitable and quality education is provided to all students.

Employee Benefits

Leave Benefits

✔ Holidays

The State Personnel Commission determines the number of legal holidays occurring within the school calendar. Ten-month employees are granted either 9 or 10 holidays yearly, while 12-month employees are granted 10 or 11 holidays. Northampton County Board of Education shall determine when holidays are scheduled.

✔ Vacation (Annual Leave)

Permanent school employees working at least half-time are eligible to earn vacation leave at the same rate as that provided to state employees. Part-time permanent employees working half-time or more earn leave on a pro rata basis equated to their percentage of employment. State regulations and local school system policies govern when vacation leave may be taken. Ten annual leave days are built into the school calendar for 10-month employees.

- Unused vacation leave may be accumulated and on June 30, a maximum of 30 days may be carried to the next fiscal year. Days over 30 will be converted to sick leave.
- Vacation leave will be transferred when a school employee transfers to another NC public school system covered by the State Personnel Act, and it may be transferred to a state agency if the agency is willing to accept the leave. Otherwise, the employee leaving the public schools will be paid for up to 30 days accumulated unused leave.
- In case of death, the employee's estate will receive payment for any accumulated leave.
- The chart below shows the number of days of vacation earned each month **based on years of state service.**

When You Have Worked	**You Are Granted**			
Years of State Service	Days per Month	10-Month Empl.	11-Month Empl.	12-Month Empl.
Less than 5 years	1.17	11.70	12.87	14.00
5 but less than 10 years	1.42	14.20	15.62	17.00
10 but less than 15 years	1.67	16.70	18.37	20.00
15 but less than 20 years	1.92	19.20	21.12	23.00
20 years or more	2.17	21.70	23.87	26.00

✔ Sick Leave

Sick leave may be used for:

a) Any actual period of temporary disability caused by or contributed to by personal illness or injury, which prevents an employee from performing his or her usual duties. Sick leave due to pregnancy, miscarriage, abortion, childbirth, or postnatal recovery must be treated in the same manner as any other temporary disability. Sick leave may be used during the 60-day waiting period for short-term disability or in lieu of short-term disability benefits. Sick leave may also be used in lieu of workers' compensation to maintain 100% salary (see Section 9.2 of the Employee Salary and Benefits Manual).

b) Up to 30 days (unless otherwise directed by a medical professional) of earned sick leave may also be used to care for a newborn child or a child placed with an employee for adoption or foster care. (These days should be consecutive and within the first 12 months following the birth or adoption, unless otherwise agreed upon between the employee and the LEA administration.) Note: the foster care benefit is afforded under FMLA and is not designated in state policy.

c) Medical appointments of the employee.

d) Illness in the immediate family (see Section 1.1.2 of the Employee Salary and Benefits Manual) and medical appointments related to the illness that necessitates the employee's attendance.

e) Death in the immediate family (see Section 1.1.12 of the Employee Salary and Benefits Manual).

f) A medical note will be required for an absence period of 5 days or longer or otherwise as requested by the employee's supervisor.

g) Any medical absence that exceeds 10 consecutive days, human resources should be notified to request a medical leave or apply for Family Medical Leave Act.

✔ Paid Parental Leave

Northampton County Schools adheres to the Family Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA). FMLA allows eligible employees to take up to 8 weeks of leave time to care for a newborn or adopted child within the first year of life or placement in the home. To qualify for FMLA, the employee must have worked with Northampton County Schools for at least 1250 hours the preceding 12-month period. During the 8 weeks, an employee will continue to have insurance coverage paid by the employer (employee only coverage-dependent coverage will still be maintained by the employee) and the employee will have job security. Forms to complete for parental leave can be obtained from Human Resources. If you have questions, contact the Human Resource department.

Regardless of the amount of leave you have accumulated, six weeks after delivery is the time frame allowed for maternity leave. Eight weeks after delivery will be allowed for C-sections. Any additional time requested will require a doctor's statement.

You should notify the Human Resources Department approximately 30 days prior to the projected leave date.

✔Twenty-Day Extended Sick Leave

Extended sick leave is available to classroom teachers and media coordinators who require substitutes if they are absent due to their own personal illness or injury and have exhausted all accumulated paid leave (sick leave, annual vacation leave, and bonus leave). In order to be eligible, the employee must be in a permanent full- or part- time position. Those qualifying are allowed extended sick leave of up to 20 workdays throughout the regular (annual) term of employment. Employees on extended sick leave receive full salary less the required substitute deduction. The deduction is mandatory whether or not a substitute is employed. The standard deduction is $50 per day. **Important:** A teacher on leave when the school year begins is not eligible for the 20 days of extended sick leave. (See 4.2.2. of the Employee Salary and Benefits Manual).

✔ Leave of Absence (Family, Medical, or Educational)

A public school employee, male or female, may be granted a leave of absence without pay for up to one calendar year for the birth or adoption of a child. Teachers may also use accumulated annual leave or personal leave to care for a newborn or a child placed through adoption or foster care during the first 12 months following the arrival of the new child.

Employees may be granted a medical or educational leave of absence without pay for periods determined by the local administrative unit. This leave should be requested in advance. For information on applying for a leave of absence, contact the Human Resources Department.

✔ Family Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA)

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) allows eligible employees to take 12 workweeks of unpaid, job-protected leave for their own serious medical condition or that of an immediate family member. In addition, the FMLA allows eligible employees to take the same job-protected leave for the birth of a child or the placement of a child with the employee through adoption or foster care. Employers must maintain any employer-paid health benefits while the employee is on the FMLA leave.

To be eligible for FMLA benefits, an employee must be employed by the employer for at least 12-months (not necessarily consecutive), and work at least 1,250 hours during the 12-month period immediately preceding the commencement of the leave. Employees wishing more information should contact the Human Resource Services department.

✔ Parental Involvement Leave

Four hours of leave per year will be granted to any full-time employee who is a parent, guardian, or person standing in loco parentis of a school-age child in order that the employee may attend or otherwise be involved in that child's school. Part-time employees, four or more hours per day, will receive leave on a pro rata basis. (For details about parental involvement leave, consult the Board of Education policy manual or the HR department.)

✔Personal Leave

Teachers, excluding Counselors, Media Coordinators and Teachers who do not require a substitute, receive a .2 of a day of personal leave for each month of employment with a $50/day deduction from their salary for the cost of a substitute. A maximum of seven days may be accumulated and may be transferred between school systems. Personal leave is not allowed on the first day of school or the day before or after a holiday or scheduled vacation day. On June 30th days over 5 will be converted to sick leave.

Please note that reason "36" is not promised from the legislature after the 08/09 school year. Personal leave can only be used in half or whole day increments.

"06" - is personal leave with $50 deduction when a non-certified sub is used
"16" - is personal leave with $50 deduction when a certified sub is used
"26" - No $50 deduction – **can only be used optional workdays** – no limit if the employee has the PL balance

Teachers using personal leave receive full salary less the required substitute deduction with the following exceptions:

(a) Teachers using personal leave on teacher workdays shall receive full salary regardless of whether the teacher provides a reason or not.

(b) Teachers may use up to their accrued amount of personal leave on teacher workdays in accordance with paragraphs 5.1.3 a, b, and c above.

(c) Effective November 18, 2021, teachers using personal leave, on days other than teacher workdays, shall receive full salary as long as the teacher provides a reason for that request. If a teacher does not provide a reason for the request, the teacher shall receive full salary less the full cost of hiring a substitute for the teacher.

(d) The local school administrative unit shall determine the full cost of "hiring" the substitute. The full cost may be variable across, and within, the local administrative units.

✔ VOLUNTARY SHARED LEAVE

The purpose of voluntary shared leave is to provide economic relief for employees who are likely to suffer financial hardship because of a prolonged absence or frequent short-term absences caused by a serious medical condition.

Only full-time and part-time permanent employees who have exhausted all available accumulated paid leave (sick leave, annual vacation leave, and bonus leave, if applicable) are eligible to receive donated leave. An employee need not exhaust personal leave and the 20 days of extended sick leave to be eligible for voluntary shared leave. Only employees in permanent (leave earning) status can participate in the voluntary shared leave program.

An employee who is receiving benefits or is eligible to receive benefits from the Disability Income Plan is not eligible to receive donated leave. Voluntary shared leave may be used only during the required waiting period.

The Superintendent or designee shall approve or deny all requests for receipt of donated leave.

Application for Voluntary Shared Leave

An employee who, due to a serious medical condition of self or of his or her immediate family (see Section 1.1.12 of the Employee Salary and Benefits Manual), faces prolonged or frequent absences from work may apply to the superintendent for donated leave. Application may also be made by a third person acting on the employee's behalf, if the employee is unable to make application.

An employee may make application for shared leave at such time as medical evidence is available to support the need for leave beyond the employee's available accumulated leave.

The following items must be included in the application:

a) A doctor's statement, and
b) An authorization for release of medical information signed by the person who is suffering the medical condition (or parent or guardian of a minor). This release may also be signed by any legally authorized party.

✔ Professional Leave

Professional leave may be granted to public school employees who have professional responsibilities or who need to attend professional meetings or staff development activities. Professional leave must be approved in advance by the principal/supervisor.

✔ Jury Duty

When a permanent employee is absent to serve on a jury, no deduction is made from the regular salary. The employee is entitled to regular compensation plus any compensation awarded for serving on jury duty.

✔ Court Attendance

(a) **Attendance by duty or subpoena:** Full-time or part-time public school employees retain full salary for absences from school due to court attendance related to their official duty. The employee also will receive full salary when subpoenaed, except as noted in section (b). Out-of-state subpoenas are not binding on North Carolina residents, unless that and state North Carolina have an interstate subpoena agreement.

Any fees except travel reimbursement received by a school employee serving in an official capacity as a witness shall be returned to the employing school administrative unit to be credited to the same fund from which the employee is paid.

Substitutes employed for these absences shall be paid from the same source of funds as the employee's salary (local, federal, or state).

(b) **Attendance for personal reasons:** Full-time or part-time public school employees who are absent for appearance in court as plaintiffs, defendants, or witnesses for personal matters, even if subpoenaed, shall not be entitled to receive any salary payment for these days, unless they are using appropriate, approved earned leave. (NOTE: School personnel who are responding to subpoenas for civic responsibilities, such as a witness to a crime, are eligible for paid court attendance leave.)

✔Military Leave

Leave with pay is granted to members of reserve components of the U.S. Armed Forces for certain periods of active duty training and for state military duty. Leave with pay is extended to full- or part-time permanent school employees, normally not to exceed 96 hours (15 days) each calendar year for annual training and military maneuvers. Military leave without pay can be granted for one enlistment period of active service. Please review the State Benefits Manual, specifically section 10 to learn more about military leave, leave for military caregivers, etc.

Reference: Policy 7510, Leave; Policy 7520, Family and Medical Leave; Policy 7530, Military Leave; Policy 7540, Voluntary Shared Leave.

Insurance Benefits

✔ Health Insurance

Eligible Northampton County School employees participate in the North Carolina State Health Plan. Northampton County Schools pays a large portion for individual coverage for full-time employees wishing to enroll in the 70/30 Plan and towards the 80/20 plan for employees through the North Carolina State Health Plan. Coverage for dependents, the 80/20 coverage, and part-time employees may be added at the employee's expense through payroll deduction.

Employees who work at least 11 of the workdays in the pay period in which they are terminated will have their coverage continued for one calendar month after the month in which they are terminated. If they work less than 11 workdays, their coverage will end on the last day of the month during which termination occurs.

Employees on approved leave of absence may continue their health insurance by paying the entire premium to Northampton County Schools by the 1st of each month.

✔ Dental Insurance

Dental insurance is available for all permanent full-time and eligible part-time employees. The employee must pay the full amount of the premium for this coverage. Eligible employees may also insure their dependents. Dental insurance must be applied for within 30 days of employment (or during annual enrollment).

Questions concerning health and dental insurance should be directed to the Human Resources Office.

✔ Unemployment Insurance

School employees are entitled to unemployment insurance. Eligibility is determined individually, and benefit amounts are based on a percentage of a person's earnings, up to the allowable limit.

✔ Disability Income

A comprehensive short-term and long-term disability income plan is provided at the employer's expense for permanent employees who are members of the Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System and who meet certain state service requirements. For more information, contact the HR department.

✔ Worker's Compensation

All public school employees are entitled to receive workers' compensation under the North Carolina Workers' Compensation Act. Employees must have suffered an accidental injury or

contracted an occupational disease in the course of employment to be eligible for medical payments, compensation for lost salary, or death benefits under this program.

When an accident occurs, school employees are responsible for notifying his/her principal immediately, and must complete a Form 19. Employees at the central office, transportation, and maintenance services should notify their immediate supervisor. The principal/supervisor is responsible for completing the Report of Injury Form 19, to file a workers' compensation claim. The completed form is then forwarded to the Worker's Compensation Specialist located at the Central Office.

Individuals on workers' compensation continue to earn sick leave and annual leave and can buy retirement time. However, an individual cannot earn teaching experience while on workers' compensation.

Retirement Benefits

✔ Retirement

Permanent full-time employees are covered by the North Carolina Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System. For more information, check out this web address: https://www.nctreasurer.com/Retirement-And-Savings

Service Retirement eligibility (Unreduced Benefits)

- 30 years of creditable service at any age
- Age 65 with 5 years of membership service
- Age 60 with 25 years of creditable service

Early Retirement Eligibility (Reduced Benefits)

- Age 60 with 5 years of membership service
- Age 50 with 20 years of creditable service

Eligibility for Retiree Health Coverage (Non-contributory Plan (70/30 Plan)

Hired prior to October 1, 2006
5+ years of service: you pay 0%

Hired on or after October 1, 2006
5+ < 10 years of service: you pay 100%
10+ < 20 years of service: you pay 50%
20 years of service: you pay 0%

When an employee resigns or is terminated, the accumulated EMPLOYEE contributions, plus any interest earned, may be withdrawn. Members with five or more years of service may leave contributions in the retirement system and receive future retirement benefits.

For additional information on retirement records/change of beneficiary, see section on "Updating Personal Information."

✔ Death Benefit

After one year of membership in the retirement system, employees are automatically covered by a death benefit. Upon death, the beneficiary will receive a lump sum equal to the employee's salary for the previous 12 months, with a minimum of $25,000 and a maximum of $50,000.

✔ Social Security

Employees are members of the Federal Social Security System, and contributions are made by both employee and employer. The contribution rate is 7.65%.

Other Benefits

✔ Flexible Benefits

Permanent full-time and permanent part-time employees are eligible to participate in the Northampton County Schools Flexible Benefits Plan. Under this plan, employees may elect to spend benefit dollars for benefits that meet their needs. **Some** of the pre-tax benefits available are cancer insurance, vision insurance, dental insurance, and medical expense and dependent care reimbursement accounts. Other benefits are available to be payroll deducted after-tax such as life insurance, disability insurance and long term care insurance. This is only a partial list of the benefits available. Additional information can be obtained from the HR Department. The Section 125 Plan year for Northampton County Schools is October through September.

To qualify for reimbursement, expenses must be incurred during the Plan year for which you are requesting reimbursement. The following are examples of qualifying expenses:

1. Unreimbursed Medical Account—can be used for medical expenses for you or your family that are not covered by any other health plan.
   - deductibles/coinsurance
   - certain defined medical, dental and vision services
   - hearing exams or aids

2. Dependent/Child Care Account—reimbursement for care of your child or other tax dependent while you are at work. For reimbursement services at a dependent care center, the center must comply with all state and local laws. Specifications for this account are:

   - your child must be age 12 or under, OR your child or other dependent over the age of 13 must be incapable of self-support and must spend eight hours a day or more in your home

- the individual caring for your child (age 12 and under or other dependent) must not be a tax dependent
- reimbursement cannot exceed $5,000 annually ($2,500 if married filing separate returns) or the earned income of you or your spouse, whichever is less

The Benefits Specialist at the Central Office can answer specific questions about this plan.

✔ **Credit Union**

Permanent public school employees are eligible for membership in the State Employees' Credit Union. In Northampton County, the State Employees' Credit Union is located at 124 E Jefferson Street Jackson, NC. The Credit Union offers savings accounts, checking accounts, credit cards, loan services, and direct deposit of paychecks.

✔ **Deferred Compensation Plans**

Northampton County School employees are allowed to participate in Board approved 403(b), 457(b) and 401(k) deferred compensation plans. Please see the Human Resources Services Department for more information if you are interested in participating.

Policy Highlights

✔**Policy Manual**

Northampton County Schools has an online policy manual that includes policies and procedures adopted by the Board of Education. These policies and procedures are the rules and regulations that govern the employees and students of the school system. The Board policy manual may be found on the Northampton County Schools website.

Employees should be familiar with and are expected to comply with all policies dealing with personnel as contained in the policy manual. Particular attention should be given to the following policies listed below:

✔**Staff Responsibilities (Policy 7300, Staff Responsibilities)**

✔**Employee Grievances (Policy 1750/7220, Grievance Procedure for Employees)**

✔ **Schools and the Community (Policy 5000, Schools and the Community)**

✔ **Solicitation on Behalf of the Schools (Policy 5220 Collections and Solicitations)**

✔**Reporting Child Abuse (Policy 4240/7312, Child Abuse – Reports and Allegations)**

✔**Observance of Copyright Regulations (Policy: 3230/7330 Copyright Compliance)**

✔**Tobacco-free Environment (Policy 5026/7250, Smoking and Tobacco Products)**

✔**Drug-free Workplace Environment (Policy 7240, Drug-Free and Alcohol-Free Workplace)**

✔**Acceptable Use of Electronic Resources (Policy 7335, Employee Use of Social Media and Policy 3225/4312/7320, Technology Acceptable Use)**

✔**Testing (Policy 3410, Testing and Assessment Program)**

✔**Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying (Policy 1710/4021/7230, Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying and Policy 1720/4015/7225, Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Complaint Procedure)**

✔**Equal Educational Opportunities (Policy 4001, Equal Educational Opportunities)**

✔**Communicable Diseases or Conditions (Policy 4230, Communicable Diseases – Students and Policy 7262, Communicable Diseases Staff)**

✔**Bloodborne Pathogens (Policy 7260 Occupational Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens)**

✔**Faculty/Employee Dress (Policy: 7340 Employee Dress and Appearance)**

Appendix 1

Procedures for Inclement Weather

In the event school does not open, opens late or is dismissed early, due to inclement weather or other emergencies, personnel should follow these instructions:

1. When school is announced as closed for students and staff, this means all staff except 12-month employees who are deemed as essential personnel. The student/staff make up days will be set by the district as appropriate.

2. When school is announced as closed for students and staff. Employees have the following options:

   - Take accumulated vacation leave
   - Take accumulated personal leave
   - Take leave without pay
   - Use compensatory leave already accumulated or go into the negative (classified staff only)
   - Make-Up (At a time agreed upon by the employee & the employees' immediate supervisor/principal. This time must be made up by the end of the fiscal year.) Banked time is not allowed.

3. If school is delayed for students, employees are to report on time unless specifically stated in the school closing announcement. (Exceptions should be handled by the employee's immediate supervisor.)

4. If school is dismissed early, instructions will be given to immediate supervisors as to the time employees may leave.

Reference: Policy 7550, Absences Due to Inclement Weather

Appendix 2- NCS Resignation Form

Important Information Regarding Your Resignation

1. **Medical Benefits** (if applicable) will end based on the following rules:

a. If I am an employee who is paid fewer than 12 months in a year, have made contributions for the non-work months, and whose employment terminates at the end of the school year, I will continue to be covered by medical insurance through the end of the period for which I have made premium contributions, with the understanding that if I am not employed by another State-covered employer under this Plan at the beginning of the next work year, I will refund to Northampton County Schools the amount of the employer's cost paid for them during the non-paycheck months;

b. If I am a 10-, 11- or 12-month employee and employment is terminated before the 16th of a calendar month my medical insurance ends at the end of the month; if my employment is terminated on the 16th or later in the month and I have made the required contribution for any coverage in the following month, that coverage will be continued to the end of the calendar month following separation.

c. Medical premium overpayment for the summer months will be refunded in the final payout.

2. **Communication:** You will receive two important notices after your final day of work:

a. **Separation Letter:** detailing the effective date of your separation; notice to return NCS property and advice in the event of transfer to another LEA.

b. **COBRA Notification:** notifying your eligibility to continue certain medical benefits under COBRA.

3. Leave Balances

a. **Leave in Case of Transfer between LEAs**: If you transfer between LEAs or to a state agency, and the new employment is obtained within 31 calendar days from the date of separation, (as reported by the resigning employee), leave balances must be transferred to the hiring school system.

b. **Annual Leave in Case of Transfer to/from Other State Agencies**: Leave may be transferred to and from a state agency or institution, community college, public university, technical institute, or from and organization covered by the State Personnel Act (e.g. some county agencies of mental health, public health, social services, or emergency management) if the agency is willing to accept the transfer. All or any portion of the unused leave may be accepted.

c. **Non-acceptance of Credit:** If the receiving agency refuses to accept credit for unused annual vacation leave or bonus leave, you will be paid in a lump sum for up to 30 days or 240 hours of accumulated annual vacation leave and for the bonus leave.

d. **Banking of Leave:** If you resign and are not immediately rehired in another North Carolina school system, the sick leave and personal leave are kept in a “bank” for 60-63 months (based on your months of service) and payment is made for annual leave days. Reinstatement of sick and personal days must follow the provisions of G.S.115c-336.

e. **Payout of Leave:** Employees who are not employed by another NC LEA or NC State agency will receive a payout of unused annual and bonus leave based on limits provided by law.

f. **Charter Schools:** There is no provision for public school employees to transfer leave to or from charter schools

4. Final Payout

a. **Unused Leave:** You must be paid in a lump sum for accumulated annual vacation leave, not to exceed a maximum of 30 days or 240 hours, upon separation from service. Separation from service includes resignation (unless the employee is transferring to another LEA or state agency), dismissal, reduction-in- force, death, service retirement, beginning long-term disability benefit or change to temporary status.

b. **Timing:** To ensure an accurate final payout of leave balances, the Payroll Department pays out any eligible leave balances the month after your last regular pay date, for example: if you terminate/retire in May, you will receive your leave payout at the end of June. This delay allows time for final reporting of leave usage to be received and processed by Payroll.

c. **Leave Deficit:** If you are overdrawn with respect to leave, a deduction in the appropriate amount must be made from your final payout.

d. **Retirement:** A deduction for retirement must be made from all lump-sum payments of annual vacation leave. Receipt of lump-sum leave payment and retirement benefits is not considered to be dual compensation.

e. **Overpayment and Funds Owed to Northampton County Schools**: Northampton County Schools will deduct any overpayments or funds owed to the district from your final payout as allowed by law.

Appendix # 3

Northampton County Schools Leave Form

Employee Name: _____

	DATES	TIME OFF – Number of Days
Annual Leave		
Sick Leave		
Other (Specify) –		
Professional Development		

Employee Signature: _____ Date: _____

Request for annual leave and other leave should be completed and submitted to the appropriate supervisor prior to the date of the desired leave. Illness should be reported by phone to the supervisor as soon as possible and a request for sick leave submitted immediately upon return to work.

☐ Approved ☐ Disapproved

Supervisor's Signature: _____ Date: _____

The following guidelines are designed to strengthen internal controls in the area of leave accountability and to insure an adequate audit trial. Additionally, these guidelines will insure agreement between the employee and his/her supervisor on the amount and type of leave charged. The resulting documentation will facilitate resolving questions that may arise in subsequent months. These guidelines apply to all Northampton County School employees who earn leave.

1. *A LEAVE REQUEST* must be completed for all leave, signed by the employee and submitted to the appropriate supervisor prior to the desired leave date.
2. The supervisor will approve/disapprove the leave request, sign in the appropriate space and send a copy to the employee.
3. The supervisor will attach the original copy of the form to their copy of the monthly payroll transmittal and retain as part of the official payroll documentation. The records are subject to audit and should be kept current and readily available.

Appendix # 4

NORTHAMPTON COUNTY SCHOOLS EMPLOYEE GRIEVANCE FORM

Grievance Form

In accordance with Northampton County School Board Policy 7220, the following form may be used to file an employee grievance. Please refer to the Board Policy on 7220 on the Northampton County Schools webpage for exact details.

Instructions: Use this form for a standard grievance. Do not use this form if you have disciplinary action, been temporarily laid off, or terminated. Please print or type. Keep a received a copy for your records.

Employee name: _____

Department: _____

Position: _____

Immediate supervisor: _____

Statement of Grievance: (Please include (1) the name of the school system employee or other individual whose decision or action is at issue; (2) the specific decision(s), action(s) or physical condition at issue; (3) any local board policy, state or federal law, state or federal regulation or State Board of Education policy or procedures that the grievant believes has been misapplied, misinterpreted or violated; (4) the specific resolution desired)

_____

Signature of Employee: Date

Reporting Chain:

Immediate Supervisor (Name): _____

Date of discussion with immediate supervisor: _____

Date employee sent written response from immediate supervisor: _____

Human Resources Director (Name): _____

Date grievance form was submitted to Human Resources Director: _____

Date of discussion with Human Resources Director: _____

Date employee sent written response from Human Resources Director: _____

Appendix # 5

CODE OF ETHICS FOR NORTH CAROLINA 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.

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.

Adopted by the State Board of Education June 5, 1997.

.0601 PURPOSE AND APPLICABILITY

The purpose of these rules is to establish and uphold uniform standards of professional conduct for licensed professional educators throughout the State. These rules shall be binding on every person licensed by the SBE, hereinafter referred to as "educator" or "professional educator," and the possible consequences of any willful breach shall include license suspension or revocation.

The prohibition of certain conduct in these rules shall not be interpreted as approval of conduct not specifically cited.

History Note: Authority G.S. 115C-295.3;

Eff. April 1, 1998.

.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 LEA.

(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 LEA 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

(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 is or 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.

(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 or 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 LEA, 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.

History Note: Authority G.S. 115C-295.3;

Eff. May 1, 1998.

Appendix # 6

North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards

Standard I: Teachers demonstrate leadership.

A. Teachers lead in the classroom.
B. Teachers demonstrate leadership in the school.
C. Teachers lead the teaching profession.
D. Teachers advocate for schools and students.
E. Teachers demonstrate high ethical standards.

Standard II: Teachers establish a respectful environment for a diverse population of students.

A. Teachers provide an environment in which each child has a positive, nurturing relationship with caring adults.
B. Teachers embrace diversity in the school community and in the world.
C. Teachers treat students as individuals.
D. Teachers adapt their teaching for the benefit of students with special needs.
E. Teachers work collaboratively with the families and significant adults in the lives of their students.

Standard III: Teachers know the content they teach.

A. Teachers align their instruction with the North Carolina Standard Course of Study.
B. Teachers know the content appropriate to their teaching specialty.
C. Teachers recognize the interconnectedness of content areas/disciplines.
D. Teachers make instruction relevant to students.

Standard IV: Teachers facilitate learning for their students.

A. Teachers know the ways in which learning takes place, and they know the appropriate levels of intellectual, physical, social, and emotional development of their students.
B. Teachers collaborate with their colleagues and use a variety of data sources for short- and long-range planning based on the *North Carolina Standards Course of Study*.
C. Teachers use a variety of instructional methods.
D. Teachers integrate and utilize technology in their instruction.
E. Teachers help students develop critical-thinking and problem-solving skills.
F. Teachers help students work in teams and develop leadership qualities.
G. Teachers communicate effectively.
H. Teachers use a variety of methods to assess what each student has learned.

Standard V: Teachers reflect on their practice.

A. Teachers analyze student learning.
B. Teachers link professional growth to their professional goals.
C. Teachers function effectively in a complex, dynamic environment

Appendix #7

DIGITAL TEACHING & LEARNING

The following Digital Competencies are to be viewed within the context of the current **North Carolina Standards for School Executives** as extensions in relationship with the ways that digital technologies impact and affect schools. School and district administrators should use these competencies to improve their practice, build capacity in their staff, and drive student learning within their schools. Each Focus Area carries with it a subset of competencies that help to explain and 'unpack' the Focus Area.

Throughout *all* of the competencies is the underlying assumption of leadership and excellence with regard to digital citizenship. Administrators should model the behavior they expect from their staff and students and should continually seek to represent their schools and districts with the way they convey themselves both on and offline.

Vision and Strategy Administrators will create and communicate a vision for digital teaching and learning in their schools, embedding into the strategic plan for implementation and execution.
Cultivate and articulate a clear and relevant vision and strategy for digital learning
Advocate for, prioritize, and ensure equitable, sustainable access to available technology resources and encourage full participation of all learners in a digital learning environment (ISTE)
Plan for and use funding effectively to support and sustain vision for digital learning
Facilitate a school improvement planning process that is centered around personalized learning supported by digital learning environments

Content and Instruction Administrators will be the 'lead learners' in their schools, modeling appropriate instructional practices and ensuring content encompasses appropriate digital tools, resources, and pedagogies.
Promote and model positive digital citizenship as well as practical policies for communication and collaboration with stakeholders to ensure responsible, effective digital teaching and learning practices throughout all school processes
Actively advance and promote digital competencies for teachers by increasing access, opportunity, and resources for professional growth and the development or acquisition of instructional materials
Establish and use systems to analyze and share data to guide whole-school and classroom-level continuous improvement
Establish and use systems for the acquisition, vetting, creation, and implementation of digital content as well as evaluation systems for effectiveness

Human Capacity and Culture Administrators will leverage digital tools and resources to further develop a positive culture of learning that seeks continuous improvement among staff and students.
Allocate time, resources, and access to support digital learning efforts, maximize capabilities of the school staff, and ensure ongoing professional growth for self and staff
Provide learner-centered environments equipped with appropriate learning resources, including digital technologies, to meet the diverse needs of all learners
Build technology, pedagogy, and content knowledge capacity in current staff members and create channels for the strategic recruitment of talented new hires
Actively support staff through effective modeling and coaching practices, using relevant digital technologies to facilitate reflective two-way feedback

Personal Growth and Connectedness Administrators will develop a personal learning network and demonstrate a dedication for continued growth and excellence.
Reflect on, share, and model emerging, promising practices regarding effective use of technology for continuous growth, instructional gain and communication with stakeholders
Connect with and learn from educators, administrators, and industry experts locally, nationally, and globally
Evaluate emerging and current technologies for their potential to enhance the learning environment

Community Administrators will engage all stakeholders in the purpose and function of the school, leveraging multiple types and points of connection and communication to ensure the constant, effective flow of information and input.
Model responsible use of technology including, but not limited to, communication, social, ethical, legal, and global issues
Facilitate and leverage effective partnerships between the school and greater community, including local, state, and global communities, to improve the organization and opportunities available to staff and students in support of digital learning
Leverage online communication channels to create and maintain open discourse and collaboration with community stakeholders to establish and meet learning goals

Appendix # 8

DIGITAL TEACHING & LEARNING

About the NC Digital Learning Competencies for Classroom Teachers

The teaching and learning process is a complex balance of content knowledge, pedagogical strategies, and technological resources. The following Digital Competencies, informed by International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE), International Association for K-12 Online Learning (iNACOL), and the NC Professional Teaching Standards, are to be viewed within the context of the current North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards as extensions in relationship with the ways that digital technologies impact and affect schools.

Teachers and administrators should use these competencies to improve their practice and drive student learning within their classrooms. The following four Focus Areas have been loosely aligned to the Professional Teaching Standards with a subset of competencies that help to explain and 'unpack' the Focus Area.

Leadership in Digital Learning Teachers will demonstrate leadership in accelerating their integration of digital teaching and learning pedagogies.
Engage in virtual and face-to-face learning communities to expand mastery of technological applications for professional growth and student learning.
Take initiative with own professional growth to inform practice.
Demonstrate leadership for technology innovation beyond my own classroom.
Engage in peer collaborative problem solving through continuous planning, designing, testing, evaluation, and recalibration of teaching methods using appropriate digital technology.

Digital Citizenship Teachers will model and teach digital citizenship by the ethical, respectful, and safe use of digital tools and resources that support the creation of a positive digital school culture.
Demonstrate understanding of intellectual property rights by abiding by copyright law, intellectual property, and fair use guidelines.
Teach and require the use of copyright law and fair use in student work and creation.
Engage in responsible and professional digital social interaction.
Integrate digital citizenship curriculum into student learning.
Demonstrate global awareness through engaging with other cultures via advanced communication and collaboration tools.
Ensure full, equitable access and participation of all learners through high-quality technology tools and resources.

Digital Content and Instruction Teachers will know and use appropriate digital tools and resources for instruction.
Design technology-enriched learning experiences that encourage all students to pursue their individual interests, preferences, and differences.
Lead all students in becoming active participants in setting educational goals, managing learning, and assessing their progress through digital tools.
Identify, evaluate, and utilize appropriate digital tools and resources to challenge students to create, think critically, solve problems, establish reliability, communicate their ideas, collaborate effectively.
Immerse students in exploring relevant issues and analyze authentic problems through digital tools and resources.
Evaluate and appropriately modify the form and function of the physical learning environment to create a conducive digital learning environment.

Data and Assessment Teachers will use technology to make data more accessible, adjust instruction to better meet the needs of a diverse learner population, and reflect upon their practice through the consistent, effective use of assessment.
Integrate digitally enhanced formative and summative assessments as a part of the teaching and learning process.
Use performance data and digital tools to empower student metacognition for self-assessment & self-monitoring their own learning progress.
Utilize multiple and varied forms of assessment including examples of student work products.
Utilize technology and digital tools to synthesize and apply qualitative and quantitative data to: ● Create individual learner profiles of strengths, weaknesses, interests, skills, gaps, preferences. ● Inform, personalize, and calibrate individual learning experiences. ● Identify specific plans of action related to weaknesses, gaps, and needed skills as identified in the learner profile. ● Reflect and improve upon instructional practice.