

HENRY COUNTY SCHOOLS EMPLOYEE GUIDE

2026



2027



Guide in Effect July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2027

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Introduction

This Employee Guide provides employees with an overview of the Board of Education's policies and associated district-wide procedures, regulations, and expectations that apply to employment in the district. The Henry County School System (also "District", "Henry County Schools", or "HCS"), a political subdivision of the State of Georgia, by and through the Henry County Board of Education (also or collectively "HCBOE"). The terms and conditions of this Guide supersede any contradictory terms or conditions set forth in any division, departmental or school-level guidance. Nothing contained in this Guidebook is intended to be a waiver in any respect whatsoever of the HCBOE's right to assert under any circumstances whatsoever its claims of sovereign, governmental, or official immunity from any liability or damages asserted against it by any natural person or entities created by law. Henry County Schools reserves the right to revise this Employee Guidebook as needed to ensure alignment with operating procedures. Annually, all employees must read this Employee Guide, become familiar with the contents, and sign an acknowledgment verifying the completion of this activity.

AccessHCS provides employees with a self-service portal. The list below indicates which processes are available through AccessHCS. The AccessHCS toolkit provides resources, tools, and training.

- [AccessHCS Toolkit](#) 
- Add or change phone number, email address, physical/mailling address, emergency contact(s)
- Change personal details and demographic information
- Initiate a name change
- View compensation details and pay slips
- Make direct deposit account designations and tax withholding
- View employment information such as job title and pay scale

For documents dated prior to January 7, 2025, use your account at [Etrieve Central](#) to view historical data and documents such as previous pay stubs, tax documents, and teacher contracts. Etrieve does not house any documents dated after January 6, 2025.

Policy, Rules, & Guidelines: Employment

Assignments at Work

Policy Reference: GARE

A contract of employment is with the Henry County Board of Education. Assignments to a specific school site/department are made on the referral of a principal/supervisor to the Human Resource Services Department. The Superintendent may transfer or reassign personnel to another site and/or position at any time during the school year as the need arises. Principal /supervisor may laterally reassign an educator within a school site.

Employees who wish to be considered for transfers to other schools for the next school year will be given the opportunity to do so through the Placement Preference Process facilitated by the Human Resource Services Department. This typically occurs in January.

A supervising administrator shall not be assigned to the same workstation as his or her immediate family member. This restriction shall not be applied to, or enforced against, supervising administrators and spouses employed by the Board and assigned to the same workstation before the year 1988.

At-Will Employment

Except for those with written contracts, all employment with the Henry County Board of Education is at-will employment; that is, an employee is hired at-will and employment may be terminated at the will of either party, for any reason, or no reason at all. Employees under contract may refer to their contract of employment for additional information regarding employment rights.

Background Checks

Policy Reference: GAK (1)

Henry County Schools shall comply with O.C.G.A. § 20-2-211.1, and with any corresponding regulations promulgated by the Georgia Board of Education, regarding requirements to conduct fingerprinting and criminal background checks of personnel. State law also requires employees to authorize the district to conduct periodic criminal and/or driver history record checks for employment. The District may request an Authorization for Release of Criminal Information periodically or at any time.

Certification

It is the responsibility of each certified employee to initiate and complete the application process for a Georgia Educator Certificate, including all forms, transcripts, and other documents that may be required by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC). Human Resource Services staff are available to aid in this process. An educator must have an educator certificate and/or required credentials (such as an Individual Certificate Plan) on file in the Human Resource Services Department no later than 30 days following the effective date of employment. In the event an employee has not completed the certification process for initial certification or renewal of certification, that employee will be paid based on a daily substitute teacher rate until such time as a valid, in-field Georgia Educator Certificate or required credentials are received by the Human Resource Services Department. Questions regarding certification may be answered by visiting the GaPSC website at www.GAPSC.com, or by contacting the Certification Specialist in Human Resource Services at 770-957-6601.

Certification- Clearance Certificate

All educators shall at a minimum, hold a valid Georgia Clearance Certificate. As described in the GaPSC rule 505-2-.42, "The Clearance certificate verifies that an individual employed in Georgia has successfully completed fingerprint and criminal background check requirements and has no convictions of any felony; any crime involving moral turpitude; any other criminal offense involving the manufacture, distribution, trafficking, sale or possession of a controlled substance or marijuana; or any sexual offense; and does not have a certificate or license that is currently revoked or suspended in Georgia or any other state." This certificate must be on file in the Human Resource Services Division within 20 days of employment. For more information, please contact Human Resource Services. Failure to obtain a Clearance Certificate may result in corrective employment action, up to and including termination.

Change of Address/Name

It is important to ensure your contact information is up-to-date in Human Resource Services. Having an incorrect address on file can negatively affect delivery of important materials such as tax documents, legal notices, and the like. To change your address, name, or other contact information, you should sign into the AccessHCS platform and request changes in the Personal Details section.

[AccessHCS Toolkit - Employee Self-Service](#)

Contracts of Employment

Employees under contract receive electronic employment contracts signed by the employee and the Superintendent. Any person who is tendered a contract and who elects to be employed by the Henry County Board of Education (HCBOE) must electronically sign and submit the contract to the Superintendent or designee no later than ten (10) business days from the issuance date on the tendered contract. Failure to sign and return a contract within this time frame voids any employment offer and shall be deemed an acknowledgment of the employee's resignation for the next school year.

Diversity Statement

The district recognizes the value of learning from differences and the benefits of fostering an inclusive work environment where people have a sense of belonging. All school district employees should strive to create and support a work environment representative of the families and children we serve and reflective of the communities within the district.

Drug Testing

Policy Reference: GAMA

Any Board of Education employee may be tested for misuse of alcohol or controlled substances. Such tests may include pre-employment and/or pre-duty testing, reasonable suspicion testing, random testing, post-accident alcohol and controlled-substance testing, and follow-up testing. In addition to testing for alcohol abuse, the Henry County School District reserves the right to test for marijuana, cocaine, opiates, phencyclidine (PCP), amphetamines (including methamphetamines), and all other illegal substances.

Employee Integrity

Employees should exemplify honesty and integrity in employment with the Henry County Board of Education. It is expected that employees will deal honestly, accurately, and responsibly with employment qualifications, work hours and time sheets (signing in and out), financial submissions or representations, leave requests, social media presence, compensation, and all work-related issues. This includes promptly reporting any overpayments in salary or benefits and cooperating fully in resolving such matters. All funds of the Henry County Board of Education and its local schools, regardless of the source, are held in public trust. Therefore, all employees of the Board are expected to approach public monies (including employee compensation payments) as responsible stewards of public funds. An employee who fails to act with integrity may be subject to discipline up to and including termination from employment.

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)

Policy Reference: GAAA

The Henry County Board of Education maintains a policy of equal educational, athletic, and employment opportunity. The Henry County Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, veteran status, genetic information, or age in its programs and activities; and provides equal access to the Scouts BSA and other designated youth groups. The Henry County Board of Education prohibits retaliation against individuals who file complaints or those who assist in the investigations of complaints alleging discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, veteran status, genetic information, or age. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment as result of a person asserting their rights to be free from employment discrimination including harassment.

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Appropriate disciplinary actions shall be imposed for verified acts of retaliation, including, but not limited to, a report to the Professional Standards Commission for certified or licensed staff members.

The Henry County Board of Education believes complaints are best resolved when handled as close to their origin as possible. If students and/or parents have concerns, they should bring such concerns, in writing, to the attention of the principal. If employees have concerns, they should bring such concerns, in writing, to the attention of their immediate supervisor. Please refer to Policy GAAA for information regarding these complaints. For the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act concerns regarding employment, please contact the Chief Human Resources Officer.

The following have been designated to handle inquiries and concerns regarding the district's non-discrimination policies:

Dr. Carl Knowlton
*Chief Human Resources Officer,
Title VII and ADA (Title II)
Coordinator for Employees*
Henry County Schools
33 N. Zack Hinton Pkwy, McDonough, GA 30253
770-957-6601

Summer Cox
*Deputy Superintendent of Staff
and Operational Effectiveness,
Title VI and Title IX Coordinator*
Henry County Schools
33 N. Zack Hinton Pkwy, McDonough, GA 30253
770-957-6601

Megan Sayago
*Chief Officer of Family & Student
Services, IDEA/Section 504, ADA,
Title I and Title II Coordinator for
Students*
Henry County Schools
33 N. Zack Hinton Pkwy, McDonough, GA 30253
770-957-3945

Antonio Mattox
*Chief Leadership Officer,
Sports Equity Coordinator*
Henry County Schools
33 N. Zack Hinton Pkwy, McDonough, GA 30253
770-957-6601

E-Verify

Pursuant to Georgia law, HCS is registered and participates in the federal work authorization program to verify employment eligibility of all newly hired employees O.C.G.A. § 13-10-91.

Hiring/Recruitment

Policy Reference: GBC

The Henry County Board of Education recognizes that the first step in implementing a quality instructional program is the employment of qualified professional personnel. The Board further believes that this can be best accomplished through the implementation of recruitment procedures that utilize all appropriate resources, both in and out of the system, to identify qualified professional personnel for employment.

Recruitment activities shall be conducted to ensure that certification and employment requirements are met by personnel to be employed by the Board. In addition, recruitment shall be conducted in a manner that maintains the Board's position of being an equal opportunity and nondiscriminatory employer.

Job Postings

Announcements of job vacancies will be posted electronically on the online application website, which is accessible on the "[Careers](#)" page of the Henry County Schools website or as part of the AccessHCS platform.

Non-School Employment

Policy Reference: CGPE

Administrators shall not accept any non-school employment unless prior approval has been given by the immediate supervisor and the Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO). The approval shall be based upon assurance that the non-school employment shall not interfere with or affect the individual's effective discharge of district/school related responsibilities. Information provided to the immediate supervisor and CHRO shall include the hours to be worked, schedule, and location of non-school employment.

Approval shall be given for the contract period only and must be obtained each year thereafter. If approval is sought for continuation of a job that was approved the previous year or is to begin at the first of the school year, the request for approval must be filed with the supervisor and CHRO no later than August 1st of each year.

Personnel Records

Information contained in an employee's personnel file is not made public unless required by law or requested by the employee in writing. It is the employee's responsibility to notify the District of any changes to their personal information. Employees must update AccessHCS when any of the following changes occur: name, home address, contact numbers, and emergency contacts. [AccessHCS Toolkit - Employee Self Service](#)

Staff Responsibilities/Duties

Employees must be regularly, predictably, and reliably at work, and present at the physical worksite, unless expressly stated otherwise in an employee's job description or contract. Working in person at the physical worksite is an essential function of the duties of each District employee. For a complete listing of the duties and responsibilities of a position, please see your principal/supervisor for a copy of the job description.

Tax Withholding Allowances

Employees can update their tax withholdings directly in AccessHCS. To do so, navigate to the "ME" tab, click on the "Pay" tile, and select the "Tax Withholding" card. From there, you may submit changes to both your federal and state tax withholdings. [AccessHCS Toolkit - Finance](#)

Policies, Rules, and Guidelines: Benefits and Compensation

Athletic/Activity Passes

Athletic/Activity Passes are issued each year to all full-time, benefits-eligible employees and eligible retirees (upon request). Use of the athletic/activity pass is limited to regularly scheduled Henry County School District activities. The pass is not valid for one-time events or events that are not regularly scheduled, including playoffs and tournaments, regardless of where these events take place. The athletic/activity pass entitles the employee/retiree to gain free admittance for themselves, and one (1) other person provided the employee/retiree accompanies and maintains responsibility for the person. The athletic/activity pass is non-transferable. Retirees may schedule an appointment to obtain a retiree badge and athletic pass at HRBenefitsStaff@henry.k12.ga.us or 770-957-6601. The retiree must be present and provide the pass at the gate to the event. If the pass is utilized by someone other than the retiree, the pass will be collected and the employee benefit will be forfeited.

Affordable Care Act (ACA)

In accordance with the Employer Mandate of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), if a benefits-eligible employee does not enroll in medical coverage through the State Health Benefit Plan within 31 days of hire, then coverage is waived, and the employee's eligibility may be affected for subsidized insurance coverage on the state or federally funded health exchange. Refer to the Affordable Care Act (ACA) Acknowledgment in the Benefits Journey inside of Access HCS or contact the Benefits Department for more information at 770-957- 6601.

Before & Afterschool Enrichment Program (BASE) Employee Discount

Employees of the school system who are full-time, benefits-eligible, may receive a discount toward BASE Program tuition. Please contact the district BASE Office for additional information at 770-957-6601.

Benefits Eligibility and Benefits Options

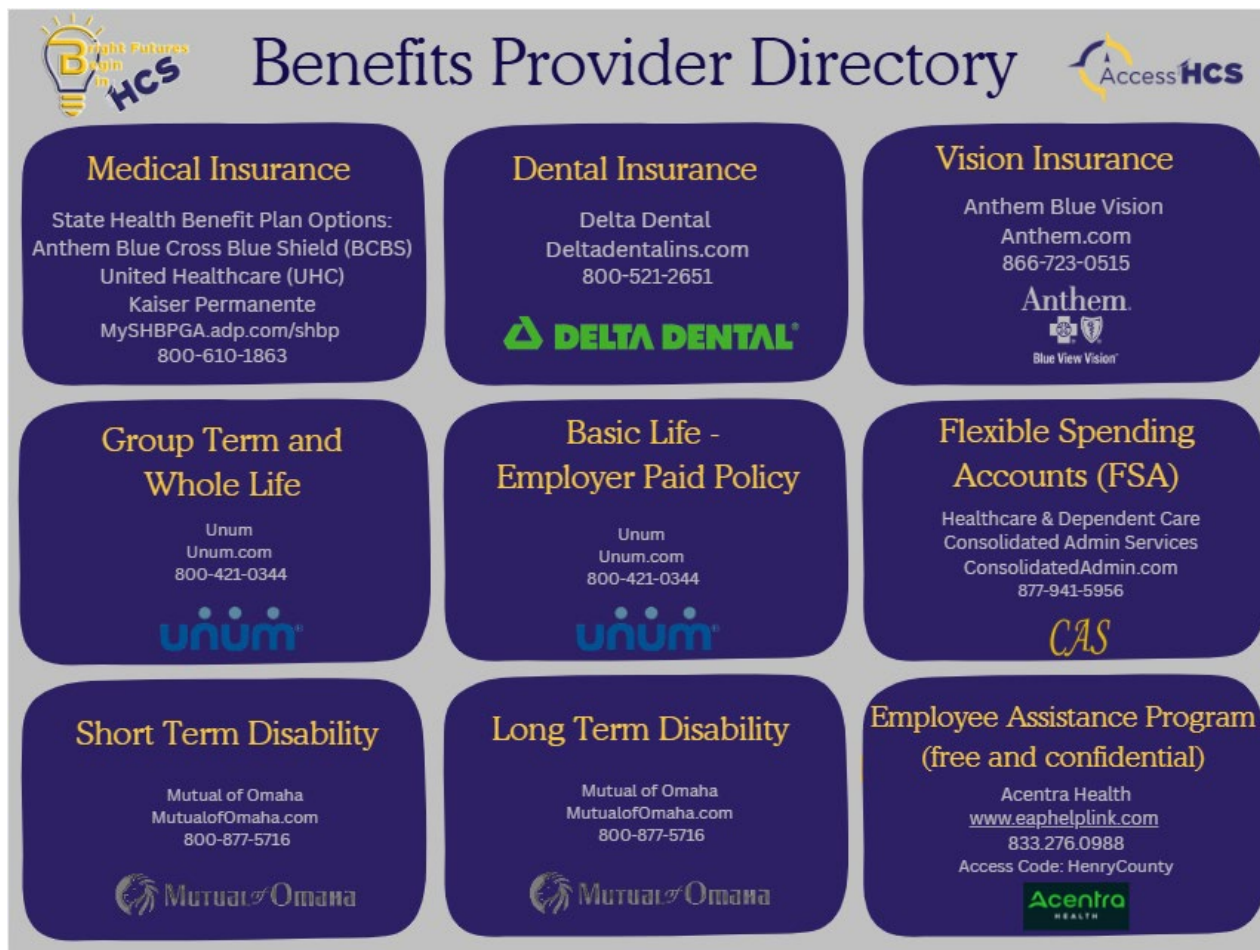
Full-time, benefits-eligible employees may choose to participate in health coverage administered by the State Health Benefit Plan (SHBP). HCS contributes a major portion of the employee health premium, with the remainder of the cost being paid by the employee through payroll deduction. A portfolio of voluntary plan coverages is made available. The employee pays the full premium cost for any elected voluntary plan through payroll deduction. In general, benefit coverages become effective on the 1st of the month following 30 days of initial employment in a benefits-eligible position.

Benefits Enrollment

Benefits enrollment should be completed within the New Hire window (expires 31 days following date of hire). Employees may elect or change coverage annually during Open Enrollment (typically mid-Oct. through early Nov.), or during the plan year if experiencing an approved Life Event (LE). LE's must be reported to the health and voluntary plan administrators within 30 days of the event occurrence. Supporting documents will be requested by

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the plan administrators. Contact SHBP Member Services at 800-610-1863 or the Benefits Support Center at 844-687-2869 for enrollment assistance. The following optional benefits are available to full-time benefit eligible employees to consider. Please visit the HCS Employee Benefits Center for more detailed information: <https://henry.touchpointsonline.com/>.



The graphic is titled "Benefits Provider Directory" and features the HCS logo with the tagline "Bright Futures Begin in HCS" and the "Access HCS" logo. It contains nine purple rounded rectangular boxes, each representing a different benefit category with its provider information and logo.

Benefit Category	Provider Information	Logo
Medical Insurance	State Health Benefit Plan Options: Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS) United Healthcare (UHC) Kaiser Permanente MySHBPGA.adp.com/shbp 800-610-1863	
Dental Insurance	Delta Dental Deltadentalins.com 800-521-2651	DELTA DENTAL
Vision Insurance	Anthem Blue Vision Anthem.com 866-723-0515 Anthem Blue View Vision	Anthem
Group Term and Whole Life	Unum Unum.com 800-421-0344	unum
Basic Life - Employer Paid Policy	Unum Unum.com 800-421-0344	unum
Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA)	Healthcare & Dependent Care Consolidated Admin Services ConsolidatedAdmin.com 877-941-5956	CAS
Short Term Disability	Mutual of Omaha MutualofOmaha.com 800-877-5716	Mutual of Omaha
Long Term Disability	Mutual of Omaha MutualofOmaha.com 800-877-5716	Mutual of Omaha
Employee Assistance Program (free and confidential)	Acentra Health www.eaphelpink.com 833.276.0988 Access Code: HenryCounty	Acentra HEALTH

Bus Driver Referral Incentive

Active employees of HCS earn \$250 for each new bus driver they refer to the District, and when that referred new bus driver successfully completes 30 days of employment. Referring employees must ensure their name is listed on the application of the referred employee for the incentive to be paid.

Deferred Compensation- Supplemental Retirement Plans

The Employees' Retirement System of Georgia (ERSGA) is the plan sponsor for the State of Georgia's 401 (k) and 457 plans, collectively referred to as Peach State Reserves (PSR). PSR offers two defined contribution plans in

compliance with the U.S. Internal Revenue Code Sections 457 and 401(k) enabling participants to save for retirement in a traditional (pre-tax) and/or Roth (after-tax) basis. More information can be found at www.MyHenryBenefits.com under "Supplemental Retirement Plans".

Direct Deposit

HCS encourages all employees to use payroll direct deposit to an individual's account at a banking institution as an expedient way to receive pay into up to four (4) checking or savings accounts. To participate in payroll direct deposit, employees should provide accurate banking information by logging into AccessHCS, selecting the ME tab, then the Pay tile, and then select Payment Methods. Once the direct deposit information has been entered correctly, employees will receive a paper check the first month following the addition or change. Compensation will then be direct deposited unless contacted by the Payroll Department.

[How To Change/Update Direct Deposit Accounts](#)

HCS is not liable for delays or errors in deposits due to incorrect information provided by the employee or issues with the banking system. Employees are encouraged to monitor their bank accounts regularly and make any changes to the account information to help avoid processing errors. HCS is not responsible for any fees, overdrafts, or other charges that may occur as a result of inaccurate or outdated account information, or from the timing of deposits and withdrawals.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Henry County Schools believes the health and well-being of our employees is of critical importance and has created a partnership with Acentra Health, a healthcare network, to provide a suite of supportive tools and resources to positively impact personal concerns that can impact job performance and personal well-being. Acentra EAP is a confidential and complimentary service provided to employees and household members. Confidential work-life services help to resolve a wide range of issues to restore both personal and professional effectiveness.

The EAP offers many services to employees including:

- Face-to-face and remote counseling with Masters-level clinicians for personal, family and work-related concerns.
- Complimentary 1/2-hour consultations with attorney and financial professional then additional services available at discounted rate
- Professional concierge referral services for Eldercare, Relocation, Legal forms and so much more No-cost counseling and referral services (up to eight (8) sessions).
- 24/7/365 access to services

The EAP program is free and confidential for all employees and household members. Available 24 hours a day at www.EAPHelplink.com Access Code: HenryCounty or by phone 833-276-0988.

Employee Compensation

Employees receive their pay through wages and benefits processed by the payroll department. The pay period schedule is available on the [Financial Services Website](#). Henry County Schools is committed to processing payroll accurately and on time. This ensures that employees receive their earned compensation without delay. Each employee is responsible for reviewing their pay slip at the end of every pay period. If there are any concerns about pay, the employee should contact their assigned point of contact to begin the resolution process.

All funds managed by the Henry County Board of Education, including those used for employee compensation, are considered public funds and must be handled with honesty, integrity, and responsibility. As stewards of public monies, employees are expected to deal accurately and ethically with employment qualifications, work hours and time sheets, financial submissions, leave requests, and compensation. The district conducts regular payroll audits, and if a concern is identified—such as irregular payments, findings from audits, or other reviews—Human Resources may contact the employee and instruct them to meet with a Financial Services representative to discuss the issue, including possible repayment options or other corrective actions. Employees who notice an overpayment in salary or benefits, particularly one that is significant or clearly unusual, are required to promptly report it to Human Resources and cooperate fully in resolving the matter. Henry County Schools reserves the right to recoup overpayments, and failure to report a material overpayment may result in an investigation to determine whether the employee has met the ethical standards outlined in the Code of Ethics for Educators established by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (Rule 505-6-0.1). Employees who fail to act with integrity in matters involving public funds may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Also see the information within the Employee Integrity section of this Guidebook.

As a condition of continued employment, any employee who receives any overpayment in funds agrees to repay those amounts immediately. If any employee believes they are unpaid, they must report the issue to Human Resources immediately. Employees who do not report the issue prior to the end of the school year in which the issue arises, agrees to waive any right to seek recovery of the underpaid amounts.

Employee School Choice

Policy Reference: JBCCA-R(1)

Subject to Henry County Board of Education Regulation JBCCA-R(1): Student Assignment to schools procedures, if the Henry County School System employs a child's parent, step-parent, or legal guardian and the person is a benefits-eligible employee, the child or step-child may be enrolled in the appropriate grade level in a Henry County Board of Education school desired by the parent, as long as the child resides with the employed parent/step-parent. Once enrolled, the child will be expected to attend that school for the duration of the school year unless extenuating circumstances warrant reconsideration of the decision, and a school transfer is authorized by the Superintendent or designee.

This option is not contingent upon school capacity; however, approval to remain at the school of choice may be revoked by the Superintendent or designee due to attendance or behavior concerns. The student's parents are responsible for transporting students to and from school if enrolled subject to Employee School Choice. More information can be found at the link here: [JBCCA-R\(1\): Student Assignment to Schools - Procedures](#)

Life Insurance (HCBOE Paid)

The Henry County Board of Education currently provides a \$10,000 life insurance policy for all full-time, benefits-eligible employees. Employees are strongly encouraged to assign a beneficiary to this life policy during the new hire window and periodically review for accuracy through the voluntary benefit enrollment portal, PlanSource. Contact the Benefits Office at 770-957-6601 for additional information.

Overtime

The District complies with the federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), including overtime work rules. Employees classified under the FLSA as "non-exempt" are eligible for overtime for hours worked in excess of 40 hours within a single workweek. Henry County Schools' workweek is defined as Saturday through Friday. Employees classified as "exempt" under the Fair Labor Standards Act are not eligible for overtime pay. Overtime will be paid based on the position worked when the overtime occurred. Overtime will be monitored through the "Web Clock" or similar feature on the AccessHCS platform, where each employee is expected to follow established "Web Clock" expectations and guidelines for each assignment. Supervisors or Human Resources personnel may initiate discussions with the employee about the time entries.

While it is not customary practice, Henry County Schools recognizes that in some instances non-exempt employees may be given permission by current supervisors to work overtime to complete projects, meet job commitments, and/or make up for a staffing shortfall. In response, Henry County Schools expects each employee to adhere to the following:

- To be eligible for overtime, an employee must physically work the full 40 hours in a workweek. If the employee takes leave during the week in which overtime occurred, they may or may not be eligible for overtime depending on the amount of leave the employee takes.
- Overtime hours must be pre-approved.
- Overtime approval must be in writing by a supervisor before the time is worked, not submitted after the fact by an employee. Overtime worked without advance approval may subject the employee to disciplinary action.
- Overtime is earned at a rate of time-and-a-half. Employees working the BASE program will be paid at time-and-a-half of the BASE pay rate.
- Leave used during the work week will not be considered hours worked when calculating overtime.

Pay Schedules

Employees are paid monthly. Salaried employees who begin work after the first scheduled day of their position work calendar are paid a prorated salary. Hourly employees are paid based on work submitted prior to the payroll cut-off dates for the month. For a list of monthly payroll dates, please visit the Financial Services webpage on the Henry County Schools website.

Employees are directly compensated through wages and benefits executed through the payroll process. The payroll process may rely on employee submissions through the "Web Clock" or other features on the AccessHCS platform, where each employee is expected to follow established "Web Clock" expectations and guidelines for each employee assignment. A supervisor or Human Resources representative may initiate discussions with an employee about time entries. Henry County Schools strives to execute payroll efficiently and accurately to remit employees their earned compensation. Each employee should review each issued pay slip at the end of each pay

period. Any employee's compensation concern can be initiated for resolution by submitting an [HR Inquiry form, linked here.](#)

The AccessHCS Web Clock is the **official timekeeping system** for the district and is used to determine all **overtime, hourly wages, and extra assignment pay**. Each employee is solely responsible for their own AccessHCS Web Clock entry. Failure to properly complete and submit your timecard **will result in a delay in pay**. Inaccurate or incomplete timecards will not be processed for payroll until they are corrected and resubmitted by the employee to their supervisor. In such cases, **payment will be deferred to the next pay period**.

Payroll audits are frequently conducted. Should the school district detect concern(s) about an employee's pay slip, whether as a result of an audit, irregular payment, investigation, or other review, the employee may be contacted by a Human Resources Department representative. Human Resources has the discretion to direct any employee to initiate a discussion with a Financial Services representative regarding a payment or remittance, including directing a repayment plan or other remediation. In the event an overpayment has occurred to any employee, particularly where there is a detectable, material difference in the remittance within a pay period(s), the employee is expected to report it to Human Resources. Any material overpayment not reported by an employee may serve as the basis for a Human Resources investigation and evaluation of whether the employee is operating with employee integrity, including but not limited to, within the ethical standards articulated by the Code of Ethics for Educators adopted by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission Rule 505- 6-0.1.

Retirement Plans

Eligible employees must participate in one of the designated retirement systems for their position. Contributions are payroll deducted. Descriptions of the retirement systems are below.

Teachers Retirement System (TRS)

All employees who are employed 50% or more in a covered position with a state school system are enrolled in the Teachers Retirement System of Georgia. The current required employee contribution is 6%. Covered positions currently include, but are not limited to: Teachers, Administrators, Supervisors, Clerical, Paraprofessionals. Visit the TRS website at www.trsga.com.

Public School Employees Retirement System (PSERS)

Permanent employees who are eligible to participate in the PSERS and work at least 60%, but not less than 15 hours per week, are enrolled in the Public-School Employees Retirement System of Georgia. Contribution rates are currently either \$4 or \$10, depending on date of hire. Covered positions include but are not limited to: Bus Drivers, Maintenance, Mechanics, and School Nutrition Assistants, etc. Visit the PSERS website at www.ers.ga.gov/public-school-employees-retirement-system.

Employees' Retirement System (ERS)

Any new employee who is a vested member (10 years of service or more) with Employees' Retirement System of Georgia may elect to remain a member of ERS. The election to stay with ERS must be made in writing, by the employee, to the ERS Board of Trustees no later than 60 days from the first day of employment with the Henry County Board of Education in a position covered by Teachers Retirement. This election is irrevocable. Please contact the Benefits Department for more information. You may also contact Employees' Retirement System at 404- 350-6300 or visit their website at www.ers.ga.gov.

If an employee's hire date is on or after July 1, 2021, and the employee is a member of Employees' Retirement System (ERS), Henry County Schools will report up to 960 hours of sick leave to ERS at the time of retirement. For any sick leave over 960 hours, HCS will pay the employee \$15 per every eight (8) hours.

Returning to Work After Retirement

Returning to work after retirement is subject to salary and service limitations as outlined by Georgia law and TRS, PSERS, and/or ERS policy. Employers must certify and obtain approval from the appropriate retirement system prior to a retiree returning to work. It is strongly advised that retirees contact their retirement system prior to returning to employment to determine if and how their benefits may be affected.

Salary Schedules and Placement

Initial Salary Placement

Salaries for certified employees are determined based on credentials held and approved years of relevant experience. For non-certified employees, salary is contingent on verifiable experience in positions related to the current job classification within the District.

Verification of Employment

It is the employee's responsibility to initiate and obtain verification from employers for service credit. Verification submission for hires between July 1 to August 31:

- For new hires with start dates between July 1 and August 31, verification of previous experience received by Human Resources before September 30 of the fiscal year will be effective from the date of hire. Retroactive payment may be considered.
- Experience received after September 30 will be effective from the date the verification form is received in Human Resources, and no retroactive payment will be awarded.

Verification submission for hires between September 1st and June 30th:

- For new hires with start dates between September 1 and June 30, verification forms must be submitted to Human Resources within 30 days of the date of hire.
- Verified years will be effective from the date of hire.
- For verification forms submitted 30 days after the date of hire, verified years will be effective from the date the form is received in Human Resources.

Contact Information: For any inquiries regarding initial salary placement employees should contact the Compensation team by emailing compensation@henry.k12.ga.us.

Sick Leave Bank

Policy Reference: GARHA: Employee Sick Leave Bank, and Regulation GARHA-R (1): Employee Sick Leave Bank-Administrative Procedures

Employees eligible for sick leave accrual may join the Henry County Schools Sick Leave Bank to apply for additional sick leave after their own accrued leave is exhausted. Employees who elect to become members of the Sick Leave Bank are required to contribute part of their accumulated sick leave to the Bank. Withdrawals from the Sick Leave Bank will be considered only for either personal illness and/or personal temporary disability that are considered

catastrophic in nature, and when all leave time has already been exhausted. Contact your principal/supervisor or the Human Resource Services Department for additional information. Human Resources can be reached at 770-957-6601.

An open enrollment period for the Sick Leave Bank is held every year. An employee may join if they have two (2) days of leave available to contribute on December 31 of the prior year. Sick Leave Bank leave will run concurrently with leave under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

Sick Leave Financial Exchange

The schedule of financial exchange for unused sick leave at the time of the employee's separation from Henry County Schools, for employees who have worked full-time in the school system for a minimum of five (5) years, is as follows:

- Less than 328 hours: Sick leave Exchange is not available.
- 328 to 1,160 hours (inclusive): Eligible for a financial exchange of \$15 per day.

Employees must submit a written request to Human Resource Services at humanresourcesdivision@henry.k12.ga.us to apply for Sick Leave Financial Exchange.

Sick Leave Transfer

Employees who transfer to HCS from another public school system in Georgia may transfer up to 45 days of sick leave earned after July 1, 1978. Georgia law O.C.G.A. § 20-2-850 requires that leave be transferred within one year of separation from the previous position. Any accumulated unused sick leave credited to personnel shall be forfeited if such personnel withdraw from service for a period of 12 or more consecutive months, unless the withdrawal from service is for educational leave to seek a higher level or different field of certification and provided that the withdrawal from service for this purpose is for no longer than 24 consecutive months. Any personnel who forfeits such accumulated sick and personal leave as required under this subsection shall be entitled to regain such accumulated sick and personal leave after such personnel has returned to service for a period of two (2) consecutive years.

[How To Submit Sick Leave Transfer Request](#)

Social Security

All employees are covered by Social Security benefits and are required to participate in this federal payroll tax. The tax is reflected on each employee's paycheck. The Henry County Board of Education pays a matching amount for all employees up to the taxable maximum.

W2 Delivery

Henry County Schools furnishes Form W-2 to employees no later than January 31 each year in accordance with IRS requirements.

By default, employees will receive:

- A printed copy mailed to the home address on file, and

- An online copy available through Employer Self-Service in AccessHCS

To reduce administrative costs, employees are encouraged to elect "Online" delivery. Employees may opt out of receiving a printed copy by updating their delivery preference in AccessHCS or by completing the "W-2 Delivery Preference Consent Form" available from the Payroll Department. Employees who elect electronic-only delivery confirm they have the ability to access and print their Form W-2. Consent may be withdrawn at any time prior to the annual processing deadline. Employees are responsible for ensuring their mailing address and contact information remain current in the system.

[How To Update W2 Document Delivery Preferences](#)

For assistance, please contact the Payroll Department at 770-957-6601.

Policy, Rules, and Guidelines: Leaves and Absences

Administrative or Directed Leave (with pay)

During investigations or other situations, a Human Resource Services representative or an appropriately designated District employee may direct that an employee leaves or remains off work and away from the school building and/or worksite. The Superintendent or his/her designee may relieve any employee from duty if it is determined that the employee's presence could potentially cause harm or disruption to the employee, students, the schools or site, and/or other employees.

Bereavement Leave

Policy Reference: GARH

Bereavement Leave is available for full-time, benefits-eligible employees and may be used for absence due to death in the employee's immediate family. Bereavement Leave must be used or communicated to the supervisor within seven (7) days of the death of the employee's immediate family member. An employee shall be allowed three (3) full days of bereavement leave; this leave shall not be deducted from the employee's accumulated sick leave. For purposes of Bereavement Leave, "immediate family" is defined as:

- Spouse;
- Child;
- Parent;
- Sibling;
- Grandparent;
- Grandchild;
- In-law equivalents of the above;
- Other relatives living in the household of the employee, or any dependents as shown on the employee's recent tax return.

Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

Policy Reference: GBRIG and Regulation GBRIG-R

Employees of the Henry County Board of Education who meet certain criteria are eligible for up to 60 days of unpaid leave per year under the Federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). FMLA helps employees balance

their work and family responsibilities by allowing them to take reasonable unpaid leave for certain, qualified family and medical reasons. Employees are eligible for leave if they have worked for HCS for at least 12 months and for at least 1,250 hours over the past 12 months.

If you meet one of the qualifications and incur three (3) or more days of absence, you may apply for FMLA. In any event, written notice in the form of this application should be submitted by the employee as soon as possible. Failure to submit a completed FMLA application (including supporting documentation such as medical certification) within 15 days of the absence could result in automatic denial of FMLA and possible employment action. FMLA provides attendance, job, and benefit eligibility protection for up to 60 scheduled workdays (hereinafter called 60 days) in a rolling 12-month period. The rolling 12-month period will be measured from the date FMLA leave is first used. Family and Medical Leave runs concurrently with Sick Leave, Vacation, Personal Leave, Sick Leave Bank, Worker's Compensation, and Leave Without Pay, except as otherwise required by law. Employees must use all available paid leave (including sick, paid parental leave, and vacation) while on FMLA, (except as otherwise required by law). For additional information, please see Policy GBRIG and Regulation GBRIG-R. For purposes of FMLA, "Qualifying Family Member" includes: Employee's spouse, child (biological, adopted,

stepchild, foster child, legal ward, or a child of a person standing in loco parentis of the employee). The child must be under the age of 18 or the adult child must 1.) have a disability as defined by ADA, 2.) be incapable of self-care due to that disability, 3.) have a serious health condition, and 4.) need care due to that serious health condition. It is only when all four requirements are met that an eligible employee is entitled to FMLA protected leave for the adult child.

For purposes of military caregiver leave under FMLA, next of kin of a covered service member means the nearest blood relative other than the covered service member's spouse, parent, son, or daughter in the following order of priority: Blood relatives who have been granted legal custody of the covered service member by court decree or statutory provisions, brothers and sisters, grandparents, aunts and uncles, and first cousins unless the covered service member has specially designated in writing another blood relative as his or her nearest blood relative for purposes of military caregiver leave under FMLA.

Note: In-laws, grandparents, siblings, and other extended family members are not covered under FMLA.

FMLA information can be requested from Human Resources, 770-957-6601, or can be found online by following these directions:

Go to <https://www.henry.k12.ga.us/>

Hover over <Divisions>

Click <Human Resource Services>

Click <Family and Medical Leave>

Click <Request FMLA Leave>

Or use the following link for the portal: <https://request.efmla.com/request-ind.tpl?A1=35807c15792H016>

Upon receipt of the FMLA request, a notification of eligibility will be sent to the employee along with a request for any additional required documentation.

HB 235 – Georgia Supporting Living Donor Educators Act Bone Marrow and Organ Donation Leave

Benefits-eligible employees are entitled to receive the following leaves of absence, without loss of pay:

- Bone Marrow Donation for Transplantation - No more than seven days leave for the purpose of bone marrow donation for transplantation, which shall not be charged against or deducted from any annual or sick leave and shall be included as service in computing any retirement or pension benefits.
- Organ Donation for Transplantation - No more than 30 days leave for the purpose of organ donation for transplantation, which shall not be charged against or deducted from any annual or sick leave and shall be included as service in computing any retirement or pension benefits.

A leave of absence for these purposes will only be provided if the employee furnishes a statement from a medical practitioner who is to perform the transplantation procedure or from a hospital administrator where the bone marrow or organ donation procedure is to be performed. The statement shall be furnished to the individual's employer no less than seven (7) days prior to any leave of absence to be scheduled.

Jury Duty, Witness Duty/Subpoenas Leave

Policy Reference: GARH

Absences are not counted as personal leave if they are for jury duty or a lawfully issued subpoena involving work/school-related matters. Any pay received for jury duty shall be retained by the employee. The employee may be required to provide a copy of the summons, court order, process, or subpoena to their supervisor.

Maternal Birth Leave

Employees are eligible for Maternal Birth Leave if, at the time of the qualifying life event, the employee is either (1.) classified as full-time and has had at least six (6) months of continuous employment with the district, or (2.) if employed on an hourly basis, the employee has worked at least 700 hours over the six-month period immediately preceding the requested leave date. A qualifying life event is defined as giving birth to one or more children in a single or multiple pregnancy.

A total of 120 hours of "Maternal Birth leave" is available for the three weeks immediately following the birth of a child(ren). Leave is available only once per eligible employee per year, defined as a rolling 12-month calendar, regardless of the number of qualifying events that occur during such period. The rolling 12-month calendar will be measured from the date of the qualifying event. The leave shall only be taken during the three-week period immediately following the eligible employee's qualifying life event. Maternal Birth Leave under Georgia law shall run concurrently with federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave and shall be subject to HCS Board Policy GBRIG and Regulation GBRIG-(R). Please see this Employee Guidebook section on FMLA for instructions on how to apply. Maternal Birth Leave will precede Paid Parental Leave.

This leave is only available for the three weeks following the birth of a child(ren). The use of leave is only applied for scheduled working days for qualifying employees. Unused paid maternal leave has no cash value.

Military Leave

Policy Reference: GARH

Eligible employees of the Henry County School System shall be entitled to take military leave for "ordered military duty," with full employment and reinstatement rights as provided by law. An employee shall be paid their regular salary for a period or periods of absence while engaged in the performance of ordered military duty, and while going to and returning from such duty, not to exceed a total of 18 days in any one federal fiscal year. The federal fiscal year runs October 1st – September 30th. In the event the Governor declares an emergency and orders an employee to State Active Duty as a member of the Georgia National Guard, such employee shall be paid their regular salary while performing such duty for a period not to exceed 30 days in any one federal fiscal year. A request for military leave should be submitted to the employee's supervisor and Human Resource Services, along with a copy of the official military orders.

Paid Parental Leave (effective July 1, 2024)

Policy Reference: GARH

Employees are eligible for this leave if either (1.) They are defined as full-time and benefits eligible and have had at least six (6) months of continuous employment, or (2.) if an hourly employee, the employee has worked at least 700 hours over the six-month period immediately preceding the requested leave date. "Full-time benefits- eligible" is defined as working at least 50 percent for certified staff members, and at least 60 percent for classified staff members.

A total of 240 hours of "paid parental leave" is available over a rolling 12-month period due to the birth of a child, adoption of a child, or receiving a foster child. Leave is available only once per eligible employee per year regardless of the number of qualifying events that occur during such period. The rolling 12-month period shall be measured from the date of the qualifying event. The leave may be taken as needed in increments of less than eight (8) hours. Unused leave is forfeited after the 12-month period. Any Paid Parental Leave under Georgia law shall run concurrently with federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave and subject to HCS Board Policy GBRIG and Regulation GBRIG-(R). Please see the Employer's Guide section on FMLA for instructions on how to apply.

Personal Leave

Policy Reference: GARH

Personal Leave is deducted directly from your sick leave balance. Employees may use up to five days of sick leave for personal reasons. If an employee does not have sick leave available, then personal leave will not be available. Employees are responsible for securing prior approval from the principal or other supervisor in charge of leave prior to taking any leave; however, the reason for the requested leave does not need to be revealed to the supervisor. Any absence caused by severely inclement weather when the District has not canceled operations will be counted as personal leave. Personal leave will not be approved on a "critical day," as determined by your principal/supervisor and/or the District. Contact your supervisor for additional information.

Professional Leave

The use of school/district professional leave requires prior approval by the employee's principal or immediate supervisor. Approved absences for school/district professional purposes will not affect vacation leave, sick leave, or personal leave days.

Sick Leave

Policy Reference: GARH

In accordance with Georgia law, employees will be entitled to annual sick leave with pay to be accrued at the rate

equivalent of 10 hours for each completed month of employment. An employee's unused sick leave shall be accumulated and rolled over from one fiscal year to the next. Sick leave will be calculated on a prorated basis for those benefits-eligible employees whose daily work schedule is less than an eight-hour day. For the purposes of sick leave, the term "immediate family" is defined as:

- Spouse;
- Child;
- Parent;
- Sibling;
- Grandparent;
- In-law equivalents of the above.

Medical documentation may be required anytime employees are absent due to illness or whenever questions arise concerning approval of requests for sick leave. **Unsubstantiated and/or unapproved leave will be entered as Leave Without Pay (LWOP) and will be investigated for further employment action.**

Sick Leave Donation to Spouse

Policy Reference: GARHA

An employee may donate up to ten (10) sick leave days or 80 hours to his or her spouse if such spouse is also an employee of the Henry County Board of Education, and such donation can be used for the purposes of maternity leave, illness, illness of a family member, or death of a family member. An employee may donate no more than ten (10) days or 80 hours during his or her combined employment with the school system (whether concurrent or not).

Vacation Leave

Policy Reference: GARH

Most 244-day employees earn vacation days at a rate of 10 days or 80 hours per year accrued monthly. Use of vacation leave must be pre-approved through a supervisor. Employees may accrue a maximum of 20 vacation days or 160 hours. Any days over 20 or 160 hours will be forfeited on July 1 of each year. When an employee separates employment with the Henry County School System, there will be a maximum payout of 20 vacation days or 160 hours.

Voting Leave

Polls in Georgia are open from 7am until 7pm, and often, advance voting is available prior to the day of elections. Therefore, it is not likely that time away from work would be necessary to enable an employee to vote. Employees must provide at least two (2) days' notice to their supervisor/principal if time off is needed to vote. That time off shall not exceed two hours per employee. Because the employer may specify the hours during which the employee may absent himself or herself, as provided in O.C.G.A. § 21-2-404, the following hours are specified for any approved voting leave:

- Elementary School-Based Employee Eligible Hours: 3 PM to 5 PM EST
- Middle School-Based Employee Eligible Hours: 5 PM to 7 PM EST
- High School-Based Employee Eligible Hours: 4 PM to 6 PM EST

Workers' Compensation

Employees of the Henry County School System are eligible for the benefits of Workers' Compensation as required by Georgia law. Workers' Compensation is a state-mandated benefits program paid by Henry County Schools. Any employee injured on the job must IMMEDIATELY report the injury to his/her supervisor. If professional medical care is needed for the injury, the law requires the employee to select from an approved physician's panel posted at the school or facility. Should an employee choose to receive medical care from a physician that is not on the approved panel, such care would be considered unauthorized, and the school system would not be responsible for the costs or fees.

The associated injury must arise out of, and occur during, employment during the normal workday or work year. Employees (except for Physical Education (PE) teachers and designated coaching staff) should avoid contact sports and 'rough housing' activities as a safety precaution. This means that employees should not participate in contact activities including, but not limited to, baseball, basketball, dodgeball, kickball, football, soccer, tug-of-war, volleyball, and field day events. Employee participation in the above-mentioned events (which would normally be considered outside of their normal scope of employment responsibilities) will be considered voluntary and will not be covered by Workers' Compensation should an injury occur. Absences related to Workers' Compensation will run concurrently with leave under FMLA.

Return to Work Program

Henry County Schools believes the best way to control the costs associated with accidents is to prevent them from happening in the first place. Henry County Schools is committed to providing a safe and healthful workplace for all our employees. When an accident does occur, it is to the benefit of everyone in the District that the situation be properly managed. Henry County Schools understands that our employees are our greatest asset and we have developed a Return-to-Work Program that will help manage employee injuries and illnesses. The goal of the Return-to-Work Program is to return injured employees to work as soon as is medically possible. For the Return-to-Work Program to be successful, everyone needs to understand their responsibilities in the program.

Supervisors should, in the exercise of their reasoned judgment and discretion:

- Make best efforts to arrange for prompt first aid and medical attention for injured employees.
- Make best efforts to conduct an accident investigation as soon as possible after the accident.
- Assist with evaluating temporary modified work duty opportunities.
- Be supportive of the returning worker and monitor their progress when they return.

Employees shall:

- Report all injuries to their supervisor immediately.
- Cooperate with medical providers and insurance claims personnel.
- Maintain contact with HCS regarding your recovery status.
- Be available for temporary modified duty assignments that meet your medical restrictions. during recovery. Before returning to work, provide physician's medical release form(s).
- Comply with work restrictions during the recovery process until full medical release has been given.

The well-being of our employees is our main goal; however, if an employee is injured, we would like them to return to work as soon as is medically possible.

Policies, Rules, and Guidelines: On the Job/Workplace

Accidents and Emergencies

All employees are responsible for maintaining a safe working environment and should report safety concerns to their supervisor so that corrective action can be taken. In the event of an accident sustained in the performance of job duties, employees should immediately report the injury to their supervisor and complete an Employee Report of Injury Packet with their supervisor. For additional information, please contact Risk Management at 770-957-6601.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

For ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act concerns regarding employment, please contact the Chief Human Resources Officer or designee at 770-957-6601.

Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA) and PUMP for Nursing Mothers Act

In compliance with federal law, HCS will: Provide reasonable accommodations to a worker's known limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. Provide a reasonable amount of break time and a space to express milk as needed by the nursing employee, for up to one year following the birth of the employee's child.

Please contact your immediate supervisor and/or Human Resources for more assistance.

Annual Performance Evaluation

Georgia law requires that all personnel be evaluated annually. If there is a position for which the State of Georgia has not provided an applicable evaluation instrument, the Henry County Schools evaluation instrument will be used.

Appeals-Teacher Evaluation**Policy Reference: GBIA**

Beginning with the 2021-2022 school year, teachers who have accepted a full-time, full school year contract with the Board of Education for the fourth (4th) or subsequent consecutive school year may appeal summative performance ratings of "Unsatisfactory" or "Ineffective" contained in personnel evaluations conducted pursuant to O.C.G.A § 20-2-210, procedural deficiencies on the part of the school system in conducting an evaluation, and job performance.

The appeals process for specific teachers, as set forth in Policy GBIA, is as follows (GBIA-R (1):

- Level One: No more than five (5) school days after the summative evaluation conference, the teacher shall provide a written notice of appeal to the responsible evaluator detailing every factual basis for the appeal. If the principal is the responsible evaluator, the principal shall respond in writing within five (5) school days after the principal receives the appeal; if the responsible evaluator is not the principal, the appeal shall be forwarded to the principal, who shall conduct the first level of review. In either circumstance, a written response shall be provided to the teacher within five (5) school days after the principal receives the appeal. The decision may be hand delivered to the teacher or sent by electronic mail.
- Level Two: If the teacher is dissatisfied with the principal's response, an appeal may be filed within five (5) school days with the certified and TKES (Teacher Keys Evaluation System) trained administrator in the

Central Office in the position of Employee Performance Director within Human Resources (or another designee of the Superintendent). A written response shall be provided to the teacher within five (5) school days of the appeal being received by the designated administrator. The decision may be hand delivered to the teacher or sent by electronic mail. This Level Two decision shall be final.

- The appeal at either level must include a review of the complete evaluation record, including all documentation on the electronic platform, the original appeal, and the response of the principal. In the discretion of the reviewer, a meeting may be scheduled with the teacher and, in the reviewer's discretion, with the principal or original evaluator.

Chain of Command

The school system's chain of command is designed to promote the overall effectiveness of school programs and/or activities. If there is a question or problem to be resolved, staff at the local school level shall follow the chain of command established by their principal. The principal is directly responsible to his or her Assistant Superintendent of School Leadership. The Area Assistant Superintendents are directly responsible to the Chief School Leadership Officer.

Child Abuse Reporting Protocols and Student Injuries

Policy Reference: JGI

All employees have a role in maintaining a safe environment for students. Generally, where an employee believes a student is injured or has suffered injury at school or during a school-sponsored activity, the employee should share the information and/or should direct the student to an administrator, on-site designee, or school health program designee for the medical protocol to commence.

Georgia law O.C.G.A. § 19-7-5, as well as Henry County Board of Education policy, includes mandated procedures for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect to the appropriate officials. Employees are required to follow these procedures. For more information on the reporting of child abuse, contact your principal/supervisor, school counselor, school social worker, or the Student Services Department. If a Henry County Schools employee has reasonable cause to believe that suspected child abuse has occurred, the employee must report their suspicion of abuse to the Georgia Division of Family and Children Services and their school principal or the principal's designee. Reports of suspected child abuse shall be made immediately, but not more than 24 hours from the time there is reasonable cause to believe that suspected child abuse has occurred. Reports may be made orally, by telephone or other oral communication, or a written report may be made by electronic submission or facsimile to the Georgia Department of Family and Children Services and to the school principal or the principal's designee.

For additional information, please see local board Regulation JGI-R (91), Child Abuse or Neglect - Procedures, or contact the Student Services Department. If you need to report suspected child abuse or neglect outside of normal school hours, including during school breaks or summer recess, call Centralized Intake at 1-855-422-4453. A report can be made 24 hours a day and 7 days a week.

Code of Ethics for Educators

All employees of Henry County Schools are expected to adhere to the standards and expectations described in the Code of Ethics for Educators. The Code of Ethics for Educators defines the professional behavior of educators in Georgia and serves as a guide to ethical conduct. The Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GAPSC) has adopted standards that represent the conduct accepted by the education profession. The code defines unethical

conduct justifying disciplinary sanction and provides guidance for protecting the health, safety, and general welfare of students and educators, and assures the citizens of Georgia a degree of accountability within the education profession.

The Code of Ethics for Educators is published by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission and is subject to revision at any time. Please reference the Commission website at www.GAPSC.com for the most current version of the Code of Ethics (GaPSC Rule 505-6-.01).

Complaints and/or Grievances

Policy Reference: GAE

Henry County Board of Education encourages all employees to resolve their complaints informally in a spirit of congeniality where possible. The ability to communicate is an important skill, particularly for purposes of conflict resolution. Reports, concerns, grievances, and/or complaints will be reviewed pursuant to relevant Henry County Board of Education policies, regulations, and/or procedures. Human Resource Services may conduct administrative investigations of internal matters and take appropriate corrective measures when necessary to resolve problems and/or prevent recurrence. Policy GAE and its procedures are available where such efforts do not succeed. Please refer to the local board Policy GAE: Complaints and Grievances and any associated regulations, for detailed definitions, exclusions, disclosures, and procedures relating to employee complaints. In accordance with the provisions of the Act of the Georgia General Assembly of 1992, O.C.G.A. § 20-2-989.5 et seq., and in implementation of the local Board of Education's duty and authority under O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1160, it is the policy of the Henry County Board of Education that certified employees shall have the right to present and resolve complaints relating to certain matters affecting the employment relationship at the lowest organizational level possible.

Employee complaints alleging discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, or age in its employment practices and/or sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates may be provided for under Policy GAAA: Equal Opportunity Employment and any associated regulation. The district will respect the privacy of the complainant(s), the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and the witness(es) as much as possible, consistent with the District's legal obligation to investigate, to take appropriate action, and to conform to any discovery, disclosure, or reporting obligations.

Confidentiality of Information

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

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (20 U.S.C. § 1232g. et seq. and 34 CFR part 99, or "FERPA") is a federal law that protects Personally Identifiable Information (PII) in a student's education records from unauthorized disclosure. It affords parents the right to have access to their children's education records, the right to seek to have the records amended, and the right for parents and eligible students to have some control over the disclosure of PII from education records. FERPA include provisions allowing students' PII from education records to be disclosed without the prior written consent of parents if the disclosure meets the

criteria for one of the permitted consent exceptions. The school official exception allows educational agencies to share PII from education records without consent with contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom an agency or institution has outsourced institutional services or functions if certain additional requirements are met.

What should you do to protect student PII in education records under FERPA? It is important that you take the following steps to protect student privacy:

- Do not disclose the PII to another party (except the School or District). The PII must not be shared with unauthorized users, and it must be protected from inadvertent disclosure due to careless handling.
- Do not use the PII for other purposes. The PII has been provided only for you to perform the service for which the school provided you the information. It should not be used for other purposes.

Note: Other laws may also protect student records from disclosure, such as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.). See Policy JR: Student Records for more information.

Criminal Charges/Self-Reporting

As a condition of continued employment, each employee must immediately notify the Superintendent or designee of any arrest. Further, employees are required to immediately disclose any criminal convictions or pleas of guilty or nolo contendere. The district reserves the right to place any employee on leave while it investigates any disclosures by the employee or reports made about the employee.

The Superintendent/designee shall make an **immediate** written report to the Board of Education upon receiving a written report from any identified school system personnel or parent or custodian of a child enrolled in the school system that a school system employee has committed certain specifically identified crimes.

- Murder, voluntary manslaughter, aggravated assault, aggravated battery, or kidnapping, as defined in Chapter 5 of Title 16;
- Any sexual offense, as provided for in Code Sections 16-6-1 through 16-6-17 or Code Sections 16-6-20 through 16-6-22.2;
- Any sexual exploitation of a minor as provided for in Code Section 16-12-100;
- Any offense involving marijuana or a controlled substance, as provided for in Chapter 13 of Title 16;
- Any offense involving theft, as provided for in Articles 1 and 2 of Chapter 8 of Title 16; or
- Unlawfully operating a motor vehicle after being declared a habitual violator for violating Code Sections 40-5-54, 40-6-391, 40-6-392, or 40-6-394 or any combination of such Code sections.

If it is determined that an investigation is warranted and the employee holds any type of educator certification, the Georgia Professional Standards Commission will be notified. The Superintendent or designee is required to make a written administrative referral to the Professional Standards Commission (PSC).

Failure to timely report criminal arrests, convictions, or pleas may result in corrective employment actions up to and include termination.

District Devices/Use of Technology

Policy Reference: IFBGA: Electronic Communications and IFBG: Internet Acceptable Use

All users of electronics resources belonging to Henry County Schools must comply with Board of Education Policy IFBGA and IFBGA-R (1), Electronic Communications Procedures and IFBG: Internet Acceptable Use. Consult these privileges and restrictions carefully and use appropriate discretion. Employees are not permitted to record conversations, phone calls, images, or organizational meetings with other District employees with any recording device (including but not limited to a cellular telephone, PDA, digital recording device, digital camera, etc.) unless all parties to the conversation give their consent in advance. A violation may result in a corrective action up to and including termination of employment.

Dress Code

The Board expects all staff members to dress professionally. Employees are expected to maintain an appropriate level of personal hygiene and dress appropriately for the school or workplace situation and level of formality. Employees should adhere to all expectations set forth by their supervisor. All employees must always wear a photo identification badge. All employees issued a security access badge must wear it visibly or have it in their possession while on district premises.

Drug-Free Workplace

Policy Reference: GAMA

The Henry County Board of Education recognizes that a drug-free workplace encourages employee productivity and promotes the accomplishment of the school system's mission and goals. The Board hereby declares that the manufacture, distribution, sale, or possession of controlled substances, marijuana and other dangerous drugs in an unlawful manner or being at work under influence of alcohol, controlled substances, marijuana, or other dangerous drugs is a serious threat to public health, safety, and welfare. The Board declares that its workforce must be free of any person who knowingly manufactures, distributes, sells, or possesses a controlled substance, marijuana, or a dangerous drug in an unlawful manner. This prohibition includes the manufacturing, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of all controlled substances or any alcohol in the employee's workplace. This prohibition also includes, but is not limited to, an employee being under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances while on duty. A violation of this policy or a conviction related to the manufacture or distribution of drugs may result in termination of employment.

Harassment of Employees

Policy Reference: GAEB

The District will promptly and equitably investigate all complaints, formal or informal, verbal or written, of harassment. It is the policy of the Henry County Board of Education to maintain an environment that is free from all forms of discrimination and harassment on the basis of sex. The Board does not discriminate on the basis of sex in the education program or activity that it operates. The requirement not to discriminate in the education program or activity extends to admission and employment. The Board does not discriminate against students, employees, or applicants on the basis of current, potential, or past pregnancy or related conditions. Retaliation against individuals who file complaints of alleged sexual harassment or those who assist in the investigation of complaints of alleged sexual harassment is expressly prohibited. It shall be a violation of Policy GAEB for any employee of the Board to engage in sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination.

Inquiries about the application of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. § 1681, et seq.) and its regulations (34 C.F.R. § 106.8) or Title VII of the Civil Rights Act (42 U.S.C. § 2000e, et seq.) should refer to the entirety of Policy GAEB for sex-based harassment and Policy GAAA for sex-based discrimination. Policy GAEB and Policy GAAA contain the definitions for sex-based harassment and sex-based discrimination and direct the grievance procedures that provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any action that would be prohibited by these policies and the referenced laws.

Any employee who believes that he or she has been subjected to conduct that could constitute sex-based discrimination under Title IX, or any other person other than a student or employee who is alleged to have been subjected to conduct that could constitute sex-based harassment under Title IX and who was participating or attempting to participate in the recipient's education program or activity at the time of the alleged sex-based harassment, should immediately report the harassment to one of the Board's Title IX Coordinators. Employees must notify one of the Board's Title IX Coordinators when the employee has information about conduct that reasonably may constitute sex-based harassment or sex-based discrimination under Title IX. The Title IX Coordinators' contact information shall be published annually (i.e., each principal and the Chief of Staff).

Identification Badges, Access Control Cards, and Keys

All employees of Henry County Schools will be issued a picture identification badge, access control card, and a crisis alert system card (Centegix Card). When an employee's employment with the District ends, both badge and access card must be returned to his or her immediate supervisor on the last day of work. Access control cards will be canceled upon separation of employment. If the identification badge or access card is lost or stolen, the employee must report the event immediately to his or her supervisor. This procedure also applies to any facility/office/classroom or other keys issued for Board of Education property or access. Fees associated with reissuing any of these properties are: \$10 security access control card, \$20 crisis alert card/Centegix Card, \$10 each for a facility/office/classroom key, and \$5 picture identification badge.

Illness/Leave

The ability to be regularly, predictably, and reliably at work are performance expectations for all employees and are included in each job description as a primary responsibility. The administrator or his/her designee is to be contacted according to the established procedures at the school/worksites if the employee is too ill to report to work. Medical documentation may be required anytime employees are absent due to illness or whenever questions arise concerning approval of requests for sick leave.

Unsubstantiated and/or unapproved leave will be entered as Leave Without Pay (LWOP) and will be investigated for further employment action.

Employees are prohibited from:

- Failing to report to work as scheduled without proper, acceptable notice to their supervisor.
- Leaving work without permission.
- Arriving late for work on a consistent basis.

Inclement Weather

When schools and the district offices are closed due to inclement weather, announcements will be made on Atlanta-area television and radio stations and on the Henry County Schools website. Principals and district office

administrators will be contacted as soon as a decision is made. Essential employees should contact their supervisor for reporting instructions or may be contacted by their supervisor. To update employee contact information in Infinite Campus, please see the designated contact person in your school or at your worksite.

Job Abandonment

Absences for reasons not approved by the Henry County Board of Education may be considered job abandonment. Employee absences or no show/no calls for three (3) or more days will be reported to the Human Resource Services Employee Relations Department for investigation and may result in termination of employment with Henry County Schools.

Resignations

Certified employees under contract who wish to terminate their contract for the upcoming school year must submit a written request to their principal/supervisor and Human Resource Services prior to June 1 via AccessHCS. Once a resignation is received by the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee, the resignation may not be rescinded. Certified employees who break their contract during the contract period and are not released from their contractual duties may be subject to an ethics referral to the Georgia Professional Standards Commission. Classified employees are asked to submit a resignation letter providing reasonable notice before leaving Henry County Schools. For questions relating to separation of employment, please contact Human Resource Services at 770-957-6601. All personnel who plan to retire or resign should use AccessHCS to submit, in writing, to their immediate supervisor and Human Resources, their intent to retire or resign.

[How To Submit a Resignation/Retirement](#)

Retaliation in Employment Practices

The Equal Employment Opportunity and state laws prohibit public employers from punishing job applicants or public employees for asserting their rights to be free from employment discrimination or preventing such employees from disclosing truthful violations of law. The Henry County Board of Education maintains a policy of equal employment opportunity. The Board of Education prohibits retaliation against individuals who file complaints or those who assist in the investigations of complaints alleging discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, veteran status, genetic information, or age.

Sex-Based Harassment and Discrimination of Students

Policy Reference: JCAC and JAA

It is the policy of the Board to maintain an environment that is free from all forms of discrimination and harassment based on sex. The Henry County Board of Education (the "Board") does not discriminate on the basis sex in the education programs or activities that it operates. The Board is required by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. § 1681, et seq.) and its regulations (34 C.F.R. § 106.8) not to discriminate in such a manner. The requirement not to discriminate in the education programs or activities extends to admission and employment.

Inquiries about the application of Title IX and its regulations to the Board may be referred to the Board's Title IX Coordinators, the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights of the Department of Education, or both. Retaliation against individuals who file complaints of alleged sex-based harassment (formerly sexual harassment) or those who assist in the investigation of complaints of alleged sex-based harassment is expressly prohibited. It shall be a violation of

Policy JCAC for any student or employee of the district to engage in sex-based harassment. Sex-based harassment is a form of sex discrimination.

Any student who is alleged to have been subjected to conduct that could constitute sexual harassment under Title IX, or any parent, guardian, or other authorized legal representative with the legal right to act on behalf of such a student, should immediately report the harassment to one of the Board's Title IX Coordinators. Employees must notify one of the Board's Title IX Coordinators when the employee has information about conduct that reasonably may constitute sexual harassment or sex-based discrimination under Title IX. The Title IX Coordinators' contact information shall be published annually (i.e., principals and the Chief of Staff).

The Board adopts a sexual harassment grievance process to address all formal complaints filed, see Regulation JCAC-R (1): Sexual Harassment Grievance Process. Inquiries about the application of sexual harassment of students should refer to the entirety of Policy JCAC and inquiries about the application of sex-based discrimination of students, and other prohibited forms of discrimination against students, should refer to the entirety of Policy JAA: Equal Educational Opportunities. Policy JCAC and Policy JAA contain the definitions for sexual harassment and sex-based discrimination, respectively, and direct the grievance procedures that provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any action that would be prohibited by these policies and the referenced laws.

Social Media - Acceptable Use of

It is critical that the use of social media meets both the public and professional standards Henry County Schools have set when communicating not only amongst ourselves but particularly with students and parents. Educators and all other employees are strongly cautioned to keep their students or parents to access personal sites and information. It is not appropriate to "friend" or otherwise personally communicate with or share information, texts, photographs, etc. with a student on any digital platform or device.

The following guidelines should be followed:

- Post nothing you would not be completely comfortable sharing with your students, their parents, or your professional colleagues.
- Never use language which may be deemed to be defamatory, obscene, proprietary, libelous and/or as derogatory remarks or characterizations.
- Do not discuss students, parents or coworkers or publicly criticize school system policies or personnel.
- Do not post images or videos of students or school property without prior media consent and/or administrative approval.
- Do not reference your students.
- With every post, consider whether it puts your effectiveness as an educator at risk.

Solicitation of Funds and/or Participation

Policy Reference: KEB and IFBGA

The Henry County Board of Education believes that certain activities conducted for the purpose of soliciting funds from or by employees and/or students are inappropriate and should be prohibited, and that employees should have the freedom to perform their duties in an environment uninterrupted by excessive solicitation.

Solicitation on the part of a business, industry, organization, or individual to sell a product, service, or membership to employees, students or their parents through the students shall be prohibited on school grounds. This prohibition includes the distribution of flyers, cards, or any other items that could constitute advertising by naming or promoting the business, industry, organization, or individual that would profit from such advertising.

Employees entrusted with public funds and property should honor that trust with a high level of honesty, accuracy, and responsibility. Unethical conduct includes misusing funds or property, failing to account for funds collected from students or parents, and/or submitting fraudulent requests for reimbursement of expenses. E-mail accounts and access to the HCS network, intranet or Internet system should not be used for personal gain, personal business activities or to solicit for non-school system business. Broadcasting of unsolicited messages is prohibited.

Staff Political Activities

Policy Reference: GAHB

The Henry County Board of Education recognizes that its employees have the same civic responsibilities and privileges as other citizens, including the privilege of campaigning for and holding public office and actively supporting candidates and causes in the political arena; however, those activities must not interfere or conflict with that employee's job duties or with the purposes and best interests of the school system. No school system resources, including personnel, equipment or computer networks may be used for political activities.

Tobacco-Free Schools

Policy: GAN

In compliance with the Pro-Children Act of 1994 (Title X of Public Law 103-227), the Georgia Smoke-Free Air Act of 2005 (O.C.G.A. § 31-12A-1), and the Georgia Youth Access Law (O.C.G.A. § 16-12-171), smoking and use of tobacco or related tobacco paraphernalia to include electronic cigarettes or smoking (vaping) devices shall be prohibited in use by all school district employees while on Board of Education property, while attending or participating in on-campus or off-campus school activities or events, or while on any school bus.

Vehicle Searches

All vehicles parked on Henry County Board of Education property (including but not limited to student, staff, and visitor vehicles) are **subject to search near a building or on school property, at a school function, or on a bus or other transportation** furnished by the school or site, except to the extent specifically prohibited by law. Failure of any employee to comply with a search conducted by a school authority may subject the employee to corrective employment action up to and including termination. Any illegal, dangerous, or contraband items recovered will be turned over to the proper legal authorities. Employees will be subject to disciplinary action for violation of board policies, board procedures, school rules, and the Code of Ethics for Educators.

Weapons

It is unlawful and a violation of Henry County Schools rules for any person to carry, possess, or have under his/ her control any weapon or explosive compound while at a school. Anyone believed to be violating any law concerning a weapon or explosive compound will be reported to the appropriate authorities for investigation.

Workday/Workweek

Employees must be regularly, predictably, and reliably at work. An employee's workload is defined as those work-related responsibilities assigned to the position and for which the employee is expected to satisfactorily discharge those responsibilities in return for the specified salary. The minimum workday for teachers is defined as eight (8) hours, and the minimum workweek is defined as 40 hours.

Duties for which the base salary is paid include teaching and teaching preparation, staff meetings, parent and student conferences, activities in the community, and other activities such as before and after school duties. All teachers are expected to be available, if needed, before or beyond the scheduled workday for duties related to employment.

The workweek and pay for non-teacher positions is based on the following hours/day and days/year:

- Paraprofessionals: 8 hours per day, 190 days per year;
- Nurses: 8 hours per day, 185 days per year;
- Clinic Aides: 7 hours per day, 185 days per year;
- School Nutrition Assistants: 6 hours per day, 183 days per year;
- School Nutrition Assistant Managers: 8 hours per day, 183 days per year;
- School Nutrition Managers: 8 hours per day, 188 days per year;
- Bus Drivers: 5 hours per day, 178 days per year;
- Clerical Staff: 8 hours per day, number of days per year varies.

Employees should check with their supervisor for their schedule. Principals and administrators may schedule staff in a way that best accommodates their school/building's needs.

