The board recognizes the importance of establishing a clear contractual relationship with teachers employed by the school system. All teacher employment contracts entered into by the board will meet the requirements of state law and State Board of Education policy. Nothing in this policy is intended to grant or confer any employment rights beyond those existing in law.

For the purposes of this policy, the term "teacher" is defined as a person who meets the requirements of G.S. 115C-325.1(6). An individual who is employed under a part-time teacher contract (less than 100%) or employed under a temporary teacher contract does not meet this definition of teacher; however, the board's performance expectations established in this policy apply to such individuals.

A. TEACHER PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

Teachers are responsible for facilitating student learning in a safe and orderly environment in which students become college and career ready. Teachers must be familiar with the current statewide instructional standards for their teaching assignment and able to teach the curriculum effectively. The board expects teachers to meet all performance standards established by the board, the superintendent or designee, state law, and State Board of Education policy and to pursue professional development as provided in policy 1610/7800, Professional and Staff Development. Employment contracts for teaching will be granted or renewed only for individuals of proven ability who strive for excellence.

B. SUPERINTENDENT'S RECOMMENDATION

The board will employ teachers upon the recommendation of the superintendent. The superintendent is expected to be able to substantiate with supporting information any recommendation for a new or renewed contract for an applicant or current teacher. The superintendent's recommendation for a new or renewed contract must include the length of the term of the contract, which must be consistent with state law and board requirements as described in Section C, below. The board will follow a recommendation of the superintendent regarding the length of the contract that is consistent with law and this policy unless specific circumstances justify offering the teacher a contract of a different term. In considering the superintendent's recommendation, the board may review any information that was in the teacher's personnel file at the time of the superintendent's recommendation or was added to the teacher's file, with the proper notice to the teacher, prior to the board's decision.

C. DETERMINATION OF CONTRACT LENGTH

This section applies when the superintendent has decided to recommend that the board offer a teacher a new or renewed contract. For information regarding a decision by the superintendent not to recommend that the board offer a teacher a renewed contract, see policy 7950, Non-Career Status Teachers: Nonrenewal.

For purposes of determining a teacher's years of employment by the board in this section, a year is at least 120 workdays performed as a teacher in a full-time permanent position. If a teacher in a full-time permanent position did not work for at least 120 workdays as a teacher in a year for any reason, including because the teacher was on approved or legally entitled leave, that year will not be deemed to constitute a year of employment for the teacher unless required by law. Furthermore, a year in which a teacher in a full-time permanent position did not work for at least 120 workdays as a teacher because the teacher was on approved or legally entitled leave will not be considered a break in the continuity of employment for the teacher. A suspension will not constitute approved or legally entitled leave for purposes of this policy.

D. CONTRACT TERM OPTIONS (1-year or 4-year)

A new or renewed contract will be for a term of one school year for teachers who have been employed by the board as a teacher for less than three consecutive years.

For teachers who have been employed by the board as a teacher for at least three consecutive years and who are in good standing, a new or renewed contract will be for a term of four school years. A teacher will be considered in good standing for the purposes of this policy if: (1) the teacher received a rating of at least "proficient" on all standards of the teacher evaluation instrument on the two most recent annual evaluations; (2) the teacher is not currently on a monitored or directed growth plan, mandatory improvement plan, or corrective action plan and has not been on any such plan at any time during the current or previous school year; (3) the teacher has not received any of the following during the current or previous school year: a demotion, a suspension without pay, or a written reprimand, warning, or other disciplinary action that is documented in the teacher's official personnel file; and (4) there is no other relevant performance or conduct information in the personnel file that would support a decision to disqualify the teacher from a multi-year contract. If renewed, a contract for a teacher who is not in good standing may be for a term of one year only.

E. DISMISSAL AND NONRENEWAL

This policy is not intended to limit the superintendent's discretion to recommend dismissal, demotion, a shorter contract length, or nonrenewal of any teacher for any basis allowed by law, including but not limited to reduction in force due to school system reorganization, decreased enrollment, reduced funding, or other budgetary issues as described in board policy 7920, Reduction in Force: Teachers and School Administrators.

Any employee who does not meet the performance or other standards of the board, the standards of state law or the State Board of Education, or the terms of the employment contract may be subject to demotion or dismissal, as provided in policy 7930, Professional Employees: Demotion and Dismissal, or to nonrenewal, as provided in policy 7950, Non-

Career Status Teachers: Nonrenewal.

Legal References: G.S. 115C-36, -47(18), -325.1, -325.3 through -325.13; S.L. 2013-360; State Board of Education Policy BENF-009

Cross References: Professional and Staff Development (policy 1610/7800), Hearings Before the Board (policy 2500), Recruitment and Selection of Personnel (policy 7100), Evaluation of Licensed Employees (policy 7810), Reduction in Force: Teachers and School Administrators (policy 7920), Professional Employees: Demotion and Dismissal (policy 7930), Non-Career Status Teachers: Nonrenewal (policy 7950)

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