



Dodge County High School



DODGE COUNTY MIDDLE SCHOOL



Dodge County Elementary School



Dodge County Primary School



DAC

## **Dodge County Schools**

### **Mr. Wade Burnette, Superintendent**

720 College Street  
Eastman, Georgia 31023  
478-374-3783  
[www.dodge.k12.ga.us](http://www.dodge.k12.ga.us)

# 2026-2027



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## FORWARD

This handbook has been designed and produced for the purpose of providing useful information to professional personnel. It is accessible online at <http://www.dodge.k12.ga.us> by clicking the **Staff** link. It is requested that you keep it accessible. Please consult your handbook prior to making decisions which concern policy related information. If the desired information is not in this handbook, please consult the system policy manual; or the school administration can be contacted if additional information is needed. Your comments and suggestions are welcome as relative to the improvement of this handbook. Feel free to offer such to the superintendent's office at any time during the course of the school term. We hope that you have a great year!

## TITLE IX-NON-DISCRIMINATION

There will be no discrimination on the basis of race, creed, religion, color, national origin, sex, marital status, disability, or age in the educational programs, activities, or employment practices in this system.

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYMENT

It is the policy of the Dodge County Board of Education not to discriminate on the basis of race, creed, religion, color, national origin, sex, marital status, disability, or age in employment and educational program.

## BOARD MEMBERS

|            |                   |
|------------|-------------------|
| District 1 | Sonya Bundick     |
| District 2 | Cindy Screws      |
| District 3 | Dena Barrows      |
| District 4 | Michelle Wahl     |
| District 5 | Susan Southerland |
| District 6 |                   |
| District 7 | LeNiece Green     |

## CENTRAL OFFICE PERSONNEL

|                                                   |                      |
|---------------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Superintendent                                    | Wade Burnette        |
| Human Resources                                   | Misty Selph          |
| Chief Financial Officer                           | Georgette Evans      |
| Accounts Payable                                  | Karen Fordham        |
| Payroll                                           | Tonya Taylor         |
| Director of Curriculum/Professional Development   | Dr. Mariella Douglas |
| Purchasing/Curriculum Secretary                   | Donna Wesley         |
| Federal Programs/Safety/Student Services Director | Dr. Patricia Connell |
| Federal Program Secretary                         |                      |
| District Social Worker                            | Jodi Brewer          |
| District Mental Health Worker                     | Valarie Rose         |
| Special Education Director                        | Tonya Brown          |
| MTSS Director                                     | Maradith Sheffield   |
| System Psychologist                               | Kelly Childers       |
| Special Education Parent Mentor                   | Kathy Simmons        |
| Special Education Secretary                       | Natalie Aro          |
| School Food Service Director                      | Marlene Williams     |
| School Food Service Bookkeeper                    |                      |
| Technology Director                               | Jennifer Lee         |
| Technology Specialist                             | Zachery Henderson    |
| Technology Specialist                             | Clay Hall            |
| Transportation Director                           | David Orange         |
| Maintenance Director                              | Brad Bowen           |

## PRINCIPALS AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

|                                |                                                                                                                                            |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Dodge County High School       | Marcie Jones, Principal<br>Brande Vaughn, Assistant Principal/CTAE Director<br>Wayne Cadwell, Assistant Principal<br>, Assistant Principal |
| Dodge County Middle School     | Dr. Jennifer Bellflower, Principal<br>Dr. Julie Kight, Assistant Principal<br>, Assistant Principal                                        |
| Dodge Achievement Center       | Mrs. Kati Mincey, Director                                                                                                                 |
| Dodge County Primary School    | Russell Bazemore, Principal<br>Dana Brown, Assistant Principal<br>Darla Faulk, Pre-K Director                                              |
| Dodge County Elementary School | Dr. Sheila Honeycutt, Principal<br>Miranda Stewart, Assistant Principal                                                                    |

### **Mission**

Making a Difference: Every Student. Every Day.

### **Vision**

Educating today's students to succeed in tomorrow's world.

## PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL ETHICS

The Dodge County Board of Education believes that there should be established criteria for professional practices in the area of ethical and professional performance.

### Commitment to the Student

In fulfilling his obligation to the student, the educator

1. shall not, without just cause, restrain the student from independent action in his pursuit of learning, and shall not, without just cause, deny the student access to varying points of view;
2. shall not deliberately suppress or distort subject matter for which he bears responsibility;
3. shall make a reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to learning or to health and safety;
4. shall conduct professional business in such a way that he does not expose the student to unnecessary embarrassment or disparagement;
5. shall not on the grounds of race, color, creed, religion, or national origin exclude any student from participation in or deny him benefits under any program, nor grant any discriminatory consideration or advantage;
6. shall not use professional relationships with students for private advantage;
7. shall keep in confidence information that has been obtained in the course of professional service, unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law;
8. shall not tutor for remuneration students assigned to his classes, unless no other qualified teacher is reasonably available.

### Commitment to the Public

In fulfilling his obligation to the public, the educator

1. shall not misrepresent an institution or organization with which he is affiliated, and shall take adequate precautions to distinguish between his personal and institutional or organizational views;
2. shall not knowingly distort or misrepresent the facts concerning educational matters in direct and indirect public expressions;
3. shall not interfere with a colleague's exercise of political and citizenship rights and responsibilities;
4. shall not use institutional privileges for private gain or to promote political candidates or partisan political activities;
5. shall accept no gratuities, gifts or favors that might impair or appear to impair professional judgment, nor offer any favor, service or things of value to obtain special advantage.

### **Commitment to the Profession**

In fulfilling his obligation to the profession, the educator

1. shall not discriminate on grounds of race, color, creed or national origin for membership in professional organizations, nor interfere with the free participation of colleagues in the affairs of their association;
2. shall accord just and equitable treatment to all members of the profession in the exercise of their professional rights and responsibilities;
3. shall not use coercive means nor promise special treatment in order to influence professional decisions of colleagues;
4. shall withhold and safeguard information acquired about colleagues in the course of employment, unless disclosure serves professional purposes;
5. shall not refuse to participate in a professional inquiry when requested by an appropriate professional association;
6. shall afford the aggrieved party upon request the opportunity to discuss in private the specific reason for recommendations that lead to the denial of increments, significant changes in employment, or termination of employment;
7. shall not misrepresent his professional qualifications;
8. shall not knowingly distort evaluations of colleagues.

### **Commitment to Professional Employment Practices**

In fulfilling his obligation to professional employment practices, the educator:

1. shall apply for, accept, offer, or assign a position or responsibility on the basis of professional preparation and legal qualifications;
2. shall apply for a specific position only when it is known to be vacant, and shall refrain from underbidding or commenting adversely about other candidates;
3. shall not knowingly withhold information from an applicant regarding a position, nor misrepresent an assignment or conditions of employment;
4. shall give prompt notice to the employing agency of any change in availability of service, and the employing agent shall also give prompt notice of change in availability or nature of a position;
5. shall not accept a position when so requested by the appropriate professional organization;
6. shall adhere to the terms of a contract or appointment, unless these terms have been legally terminated, falsely represented, or substantially altered by unilateral action of the employing agency;
7. shall not delegate assigned tasks to unqualified personnel;
8. shall permit no commercial exploitation of his professional positions;
9. shall use time granted for the purpose for which it is intended.

## **505-6-.01 THE CODE OF ETHICS FOR EDUCATORS**

### **(1) Introduction.**

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 has adopted standards that represent the conduct generally 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 assuring the citizens of Georgia a degree of accountability within the education profession.

### **(2) Definitions**

- (a) "Breach of contract" occurs when an educator fails to honor a signed contract for employment with a school/school system by resigning in a manner that does not meet the guidelines established by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission.
- (b) "Certificate" refers to any teaching, service, or leadership certificate, license, or permit issued by authority of the Professional Standards Commission.
- (c) "Child endangerment" occurs when an educator disregards a substantial and/or unjustifiable risk of bodily harm to the student.
- (d) "Educator" is a teacher, school or school system administrator, or other education personnel who holds a certificate issued by the Professional Standards Commission and persons who have applied for but have not yet received a certificate. For the purposes of the Code of Ethics for Educators, "educator" also refers to paraprofessionals, aides, and substitute teachers.
- (e) "Student" is any individual enrolled in the state's public or private schools from preschool through grade 12 or any individual under the age of 18. For the purposes of the Code of Ethics for Educators, the enrollment period for a

graduating student ends on August 31 of the school year of graduation.

(f) "Complaint" is any written and signed statement from a local board, the state board, or one or more individual residents of this state filed with the Professional Standards Commission alleging that an educator has breached one or more of the standards in the Code of Ethics for Educators. A "complaint" will be deemed a request to investigate.

(g) "Revocation" is the invalidation of any certificate held by the educator.

(h) "Denial" is the refusal to grant initial certification to an applicant for a certificate.

(i) "Suspension" is the temporary invalidation of any certificate for a period of time specified by the Professional Standards Commission.

(j) "Reprimand" admonishes the certificate holder for his or her conduct. The reprimand cautions that further unethical conduct will lead to a more severe action.

(k) "Warning" warns the certificate holder that his or her conduct is unethical. The warning cautions that further unethical conduct will lead to a more severe action.

(l) "Monitoring" is the quarterly appraisal of the educator's conduct by the Professional Standards Commission through contact with the educator and his or her employer. As a condition of monitoring, an educator may be required to submit a criminal background check (GCIC). The Commission specifies the length of the monitoring period.

(m) "No Probable Cause" is a determination by the Professional Standards Commission that, after a preliminary investigation, either no further action need be taken or no cause exists to recommend disciplinary action.

### **(3) Standards- Authority O.C.G.A. § 20-2-200**

**(a) Standard 1: Legal Compliance** - An educator shall abide by federal, state, and local laws and statutes. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to the commission or conviction of a felony or of any crime involving moral turpitude; of any other criminal offense involving the manufacture, distribution, trafficking, sale, or possession of a controlled substance or marijuana as provided for in Chapter 13 of Title 16; or of any other sexual offense as provided for in Code Section 16-6-1 through 16-6-17, 16-6-20, 16-6-22.2, or 16-12-100; or any other laws applicable to the profession. As used herein, conviction includes a finding or verdict of guilty, or a plea of nolo contendere, regardless of whether an appeal of the conviction has been sought; a situation where first offender treatment without adjudication of guilt pursuant to the charge was granted; and a situation where an adjudication of guilt or sentence was otherwise withheld or not entered on the charge or the charge was otherwise disposed of in a similar manner in any jurisdiction.

**(b) Standard 2: Conduct with Students** - An educator shall always maintain a professional relationship with all students, both in and outside the classroom. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. Committing any act of child abuse, including physical and verbal abuse;
2. Committing any act of cruelty to children or any act of child endangerment;
3. Committing any sexual act with a student or soliciting such from a student;
4. Engaging in or permitting harassment of or misconduct toward a student;
5. Soliciting, encouraging, or consummating an inappropriate written, verbal, electronic, or physical relationship with a student;
6. Furnishing tobacco, alcohol, or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any student; or
7. Failing to prevent the use of alcohol or illegal or unauthorized drugs by students under the educator's supervision (including but not limited to at the educator's residence or any other private setting).

**(c) Standard 3: Alcohol or Drugs** - An educator shall refrain from the use of alcohol or illegal or unauthorized drugs during the course of professional practice. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. Being on school or Local Unit of Administration (LUA)/school district premises or at a school or a LUA/school district-related activity while under the influence of, possessing, using, or consuming illegal or unauthorized drugs; and
  2. Being on school or LUA/school district premises or at a school-related activity involving students while under the influence of, possessing, or consuming alcohol. A school-related activity includes, but is not limited to, any activity sponsored by the school or school system (booster clubs, parent-teacher organizations, or any activity designed to enhance the school curriculum i.e. Foreign Language trips, etc).
- (i) For the purposes of this standard, an educator shall be considered "under the influence" if the educator exhibits one or more of the following indicators, including but not limited to: slurred speech, enlarged pupils, bloodshot eyes, general personality changes, lack of physical coordination, poor motor skills, memory problems, concentration problems, etc.

**(d) Standard 4: Honesty** - An educator shall exemplify honesty and integrity in the course of professional practice. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to, falsifying, misrepresenting, or omitting:

1. Professional qualifications, criminal history, college or staff development credit and/or degrees, academic award, and employment history;
2. Information submitted to federal, state, local school districts and other governmental agencies;
3. Information regarding the evaluation of students and/or personnel;
4. Reasons for absences or leaves;
5. Information submitted in the course of an official inquiry/investigation; and
6. Information submitted in the course of professional practice.

**(e) Standard 5: Public Funds and Property** - An educator entrusted with public funds and property shall honor that trust with a high level of honesty, accuracy, and responsibility. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. Misusing public or school-related funds;
2. Failing to account for funds collected from students or parents;
3. Submitting fraudulent requests or documentation for reimbursement of expenses or for pay (including fraudulent or purchased degrees, documents, or coursework);
4. Co-mingling public or school-related funds with personal funds or checking accounts; and
5. Using school or school district property without the approval of the local board of education/governing board or authorized designee.

**(f) Standard 6: Remunerative Conduct** - An educator shall maintain integrity with students, colleagues, parents, patrons, or businesses when accepting gifts, gratuities, favors, and additional compensation. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. Soliciting students or parents of students, or school or LUA/school district personnel, to purchase equipment, supplies, or services from the educator or to participate in activities that financially benefit the educator unless approved by the local board of education/governing board or authorized designee;
2. Accepting gifts from vendors or potential vendors for personal use or gain where there may be the appearance of a conflict of interest;
3. Tutoring students assigned to the educator for remuneration unless approved by the local board of education/governing board or authorized designee; and
4. Coaching, instructing, promoting athletic camps, summer leagues, etc. that involves students in an educator's school system and from whom the educator receives remuneration unless approved by the local board of education/governing board or authorized designee. These types of activities must be in compliance with all rules and regulations of the Georgia High School Association.

**(g) Standard 7: Confidential Information** - An educator shall comply with state and federal laws and state school board policies relating to the confidentiality of student and personnel records, standardized test material and other information. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

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

**(h) Standard 8: Required Reports** - An educator shall file with the Georgia Professional Standards Commission reports of a breach of one or more of the standards in the Code of Ethics for Educators, child abuse (O.C.G.A. §19-7-5), or any other required report. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. Failure to report to the Georgia Professional Standards Commission all requested information on documents required by the Commission when applying for or renewing any certificate with the Commission;
2. Failure to make a required report of a an alleged or proven violation of one or more standards of the Code of Ethics for educators of which they have personal knowledge as soon as possible but no later than ninety (90) days from the date the educator became aware of an alleged breach unless the law or local procedures require reporting sooner; and
3. Failure to make a required report of any alleged or proven violation of state or federal law as soon as possible but no later than ninety (90) days from the date the educator became aware of an alleged breach unless the law or local procedures require reporting sooner. These reports include but are not limited to: murder, voluntary manslaughter, aggravated assault, aggravated battery, kidnapping, any sexual offense, any sexual exploitation of

a minor, any offense involving a controlled substance and any abuse of a child if an educator has reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused.

**(i) Standard 9: Professional Conduct** - An educator shall demonstrate conduct that follows generally recognized professional standards and preserves the dignity and integrity of the education profession. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to a resignation that would equate to a breach of contract; any conduct that impairs and/or diminishes the certificate holder's ability to function professionally in his or her employment position; or behavior or conduct that is detrimental to the health, welfare, discipline, or morals of students; or failure to supervise a student(s).

**(j) Standard 10: Testing** - An educator shall administer state-mandated assessments fairly and ethically. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. Committing any act that breaches Test Security; and
2. Compromising the integrity of the assessment.

#### **INFORMATION NEEDED FOR BOARD OFFICE**

1. Teacher service record and data sheet, giving number and type of certificate, number of years of teaching experience, and other requested information if applicable
2. Copy of teacher/paraprofessional certificate if applicable
3. Employee's withholding certificate or income tax deductions (Form W-4)
4. Georgia withholding certificate for income tax deductions (Form G-4)
5. Social Security Number
6. State Security Questionnaire
7. Payroll Deduction Forms (Health, Life, Disability, etc.)
8. Medical History Form
9. Official transcripts if applicable

If the need develops for any other information, the employee will be expected to furnish it immediately upon receipt of request, making sure that all forms are properly notarized. It is important that all information requested be filed in the Board of Education office during pre-planning week.

It should be noted that all employees of the Dodge County School System are subject to a criminal background check as outlined in State Board Policy 526.

#### **CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL CRIMINAL RECORD CHECK**

It is the policy of the Dodge County Board of Education to comply with O.C.G.A. 20-2-211, as amended by the 1994 General Assembly by Senate Bill 526, and the implementing regulations as promulgated by the State Board of Education.

Every person who is employed by the Dodge County Board of Education for the first time to fill a certificated position with this school district shall be fingerprinted and have a criminal record check prior to the issuance of a standard school year contract of employment. The method of obtaining fingerprints and of submission to the Georgia Crime Information Center and National Crime Information Center shall be as prescribed by O.C.G.A. 20-2-211, as amended, and by the State Board of Education's policies, rules, and regulations. The school district will pay all costs associated with the background check.

Each person employed for the first time to fill a certificated position with the school district shall be issued a temporary contract valid for 200 calendar days, pending the results of the criminal records check. If the criminal record check reflects that the employee has not been arrested, charged, pleaded guilty or no contest, or been convicted of any criminal offense other than a minor traffic violation, the superintendent shall have the authority without further authorization from the board to sign on behalf of the board a standard employment contract with the employee for the balance of that school year based on the terms and conditions of employment and the assignment of the employee as previously approved by the board.

In the event the criminal record check reflects the employee has been charged with, pleaded to or been convicted of an offense other than a minor traffic violation, the superintendent shall bring the matter to the Board of Education at its next meeting or sooner, if warranted, for a decision. If the superintendent elects, the employee may continue in the employment of the school district pending final board decision.

#### **PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL WORKING CONDITIONS & LENGTH OF SCHOOL DAY**

The Dodge County Board of Education shall strive to provide safe and appropriate working conditions for the professional

staff. The minimum work day for teachers shall be eight (8) hours, and the minimum work week shall be forty (40) hours. The minimum work day shall entail the duties for which the teacher's base salary is paid, such as teaching and teacher preparation, staff meetings, conferences with students and parents, planning conferences, related school activities in the community, and extra-class responsibilities.

#### **ADDITIONAL DUTIES**

Various additional duties are required in each school and will be assigned by the principal. Some of these duties include: early morning or late afternoon building duties, supervision of bus loading, restrooms, halls, drinking fountains, and lunchrooms, supervision of extracurricular activities, on-the-job training, counseling, bus duty, and activities which are essential for the school system's programs. Other responsibilities may relate to assembly programs, clubs, student activities, or for any other school need that may develop during the year. These duties may exceed the schedules for regular assignments.

#### **CERTIFICATE LEVEL**

Each certificate is assigned one level. This level applies to all fields held by an individual and indicates the Commission's determined equivalent of an individual's level of education. Generally, the certificate level equates to the education level completed as follows:

- Level 1 High School Diploma (Vocational Education fields only)
- Level 2 Associate of Arts (Vocational Education fields only)
- Level 4 Bachelor
- Level 5 Master
- Level 6 Education Specialist
- Level 7 Doctorate

#### **CONTRACT PAY PERIODS**

A twelve-month (240, 250 day) contract work year begins July 1 and ends June 30 of the succeeding year. The first pay period will be at the end of July and the last pay period will be at the end of June of the succeeding year.

A 210-day contract work year begins approximately August 1 and ends approximately June 30 of the succeeding year. The first pay period will be at the end of August and the last pay period will be at the end of July of the succeeding year.

A 190-day contract work year (typical teacher contract) begins with the first day of pre-planning for teachers and ends 190 work days later. The length of the teacher work year is subject to change based on receipt of funds from the state. The first pay period is at the end of September and the last pay period is at the end of August of the succeeding year. Employees moving from one contract type to another will experience either the receipt of an additional check(s) (as moving from a 190 day to a 210-day contract) or a month when no check will be received (as moving from a 210 day to a 190 day contract). Employees are advised to plan appropriately when these changes occur, especially the latter type change.

Contracts may be issued for 190, 200, 210, 220, or 230 workdays or for twelve months (240, 250 day) dependent upon the assignment.

#### **CONTRACT PAY STEP**

All Dodge County Board of Education teacher contracts reflect the current pay step as shown on the state salary schedule. Experience is often used to determine the correct placement on the current schedule. Actual years of experience may or may not correspond with placement on the salary schedule. Placement on the local supplement schedule is determined by degree level (See p. 33). One hundred twenty days or more equals one year as relates to movement on the salary schedule.

#### **LOCAL SALARY SUPPLEMENT**

The Dodge County Board of Education currently pays the following local supplement for certified teachers:

|         |        |         |        |            |       |
|---------|--------|---------|--------|------------|-------|
| T-4.... | \$1500 | T-6.... | \$2100 | Sp. Ed.... | \$500 |
| T-5.... | \$1800 | T-7.... | \$2400 |            |       |

## TEACHER RETIREMENT

Individuals meeting the following criteria are **required** to become members of TRS as a condition of employment:

- Personnel who are employed one-half time or more in **specific positions** of the state's public school systems, regional libraries, county libraries, and regional educational service agencies, such as:
  - Teachers
  - Administrators
  - Supervisors
  - Clerks
  - Teacher aides
  - Secretaries
  - Paraprofessionals
  - Public school nurses
  - Employees of the Agricultural Extension Service

Any **vested** member of the Employees' Retirement System (ERS) who accepts employment from an employer normally covered by TRS may elect to remain a member of ERS or to join TRS. A written election must be made to the respective retirement system within sixty days of such employment and is irrevocable once the election is made. Members and their employers will be required to make the appropriate contributions to the respective retirement system.

All new employees will be automatically enrolled as members of TRS based on the information submitted electronically by the employer. You will not complete a paper application.

## SOCIAL SECURITY

All employees of the Dodge County Board of Education are covered by Social Security. Deductions for this purpose are made from salary at the current rate of 7.65% (6.20% for O.A.S.D.I. and 1.45% for H.I.).

## PAY DAY

Pay Day is the last working day of each calendar month. However, an exception is sometimes made in November and December. It is customary for the board to make payment at the time school is dismissed for Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays **when funds are available**.

**Direct Deposit is available.** If it is not chosen, checks will be delivered at the schools by principals during the school year. Payroll checks may be picked up at the Central Office during the summer months. Teachers will receive pay for 190 days service, but their annual salary will be divided into twelve equal payments. Salaries for new teachers just finishing college or transferring from another entity will be divided into thirteen equal payments in their first year of service in Dodge County if they elect to do so. Payroll is made up on the basis of number and status of employees on the 15th day of the month. Automatic deductions will be made for the following purposes:

1. Teacher Retirement
2. Social Security
3. Federal Income Tax
4. Health Insurance and other supplemental insurance, when authorized
5. PAGE/GAE dues, when authorized
6. Days of leave in excess of authorized leave
7. Georgia Income Tax
8. Tax Shelter Annuity, when authorized
9. Garnishments, tax levy, child support, etc., when so ordered by the court.

Providing accurate state and federal tax withholding forms, retirement system membership number, and the social security number to the payroll manager is the responsibility of the employee.

## TEACHER ACCOUNTABILITY

It is the belief of the Dodge County School System that student learning and accomplishment can be observed and measured. It is felt that educators need to show that learning is taking place.

Teacher evaluation is an on-going process designed to improve the quality of instruction and to judge the effectiveness of employee performance and of the school system accomplishments. Supervisors are responsible for observing and assessing the performance of staff members and assisting them in improving their professional competencies as may be identified. Local policy mandates that all Board of Education employees will be evaluated annually on appropriate criteria.

Please see the school principal when questions exist.

### **CHAIN OF COMMAND**

Employees are expected to follow the established chain of command when addressing workplace concerns, school-related matters, operational questions, or requests for administrative review. For teachers, the general administrative chain of command is: Assistant Principal → Principal → Superintendent → Board of Education.

Employees should ordinarily first attempt to address concerns at the lowest appropriate administrative level before requesting review at the next level. This process is intended to promote orderly communication, timely resolution, administrative accountability, and respect for the respective responsibilities of school and District leadership.

Referral of a matter to the Board of Education shall occur in accordance with applicable Board policy, grievance procedures, hearing procedures, or other established processes. Nothing in this section authorizes an employee to circumvent established administrative procedures by individually lobbying Board members concerning personnel matters, grievances, complaints, or pending administrative matters.

Nothing in this provision shall prevent or delay an employee from making a report directly to the appropriate District official, Title IX Coordinator, Section 504/ADA Coordinator, law enforcement agency, child protective services agency, governmental agency, or other authorized entity when the matter involves alleged discrimination, harassment, retaliation, child abuse or neglect, criminal conduct, sexual misconduct, immediate threats to health or safety, whistleblower activity, or any other matter for which direct reporting is protected or required by law.

### **MENTOR TEACHER**

Each new teacher will be assigned a veteran teacher to serve as his or her mentor. The mentor will work with the beginning teacher a minimum of 1-3 years. A separate Induction Teacher Manual is used to guide the mentorship process.

### **IDENTIFICATION BADGE**

Every Dodge County staff member will be issued an identification badge. This badge will allow the teacher free admission to all sports events at Dodge County Middle School and Dodge County High School. The badges are to be returned when the staff member is no longer employed by the system.

### **CENTEGIX CRISIS ALERT BADGE /SAFE SCHOOLS TRAINING**

Every Dodge County employee is required to complete the online SAFE SCHOOLS and CENTEGIX Crisis Alert training. The log in instructions are provided to all new employees. Once the training is complete, a CENTEGIX Crisis Alert Badge will be issued. This electronic badge will allow the employee to activate an alert for administrator assistance or to initiate a lockdown of the school. The badges are school safety equipment and are to be returned when the employee is no longer employed by the system.

### **CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT**

The State of Georgia requires by law that any principal, teacher, counselor, or other school administrator report all cases of suspected child abuse of children under eighteen years of age. The law requires the reporting of injuries or neglect of minors, provides immunity for those reporting in good faith, and provides a penalty for violation of the law.

Child abuse involves any child under eighteen years of age who is believed to have had physical injury or injuries inflicted upon him other than by accidental means, by a parent or caretaker, or has been neglected or exploited by a parent or caretaker, or has been sexually assaulted. Neglect of child may include lack of food, clothing, shelter, or sleeping arrangements; exposure to amoral or asocial circumstances; failure to attend school properly due to parental neglect or disinterest; failure to provide adequate supervision; failure to receive proper and necessary medical care; and suffering from emotional deprivation or inhumane treatment.

The following procedures should be followed for reporting child abuse:

1. Staff reports suspected case to principal.
2. Principal reports case to the School Social Worker (SSW).
3. The SSW will make contact with the child for verification and report findings to the Department of Family and Children Services (DFACS).
4. In the event that the SSW can't be reached, the principal will make a report to DFACS.
5. The Social Worker Referral Form should follow immediately to document all referrals.

## COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

### Pediculosis (Head Lice)

The Dodge County Board of Education acknowledges that pediculosis is a health problem which, if not properly controlled, can reach epidemic proportions and create an unsanitary and unhealthy environment. In order to prevent epidemics of pediculosis and insure the health of Dodge County students, the following actions should be taken when pediculosis is present.

1. Upon the discovery of pediculosis in any of its forms (head lice, head lice eggs, or head lice cases), promptly notify the parents or guardian of the student. The Dodge County Health Department should also be informed of the infestation, including the name of the student, the student's parents and/or guardian, address and telephone number, and any other information relevant to the infestation.
2. Upon the discovery of infestation with pediculosis a student is immediately prohibited from participation in all school activities including classroom attendance. So long as he is infested, the student will continue to be excluded from classes and school activities. Homebound instruction for the student will be permitted if the requirements for participation in the homebound program are met.
3. An infested student may be readmitted to the Dodge County schools upon the written certification of the Dodge County Health Department, school health nurse, or a physician licensed to practice medicine in the State of Georgia that the student has been properly treated for pediculosis, that the student is free from pediculosis, that the family has been properly counseled in the control of pediculosis, and that the student is no longer a health hazard to himself or others.

### AIDS

*\*\*Refer to Dodge County Board of Education Policy Manual.*

### COVID-19

*\*\*\*Refer to Dodge County Schools Reopening Plan.*

## TEACHER ATTENDANCE

It is expected that employees under contract with the Dodge County Board of Education will be present and will fulfill their contractual obligations for the number of days called for in the contract of employment. The only excused absences are those outlined in the policies in the Dodge County Board of Education or those specifically approved by the Board of Education on an individual basis. Absences for reasons other than set forth herein shall constitute a breach of contract of employment, and the contract, at the discretion of the Board, may be terminated. It is the teacher's responsibility to advise administration if there will be an absence of any type or length, and appropriate documentation must be submitted according to procedures and policies. Staff at DCAC/PLC and DCHS are required to obtain a substitute when absent and inform the administration of the substitute when completing leave forms.

## EMPLOYEE TARDIES

If you are going to be late, please call the school/headquarters as soon as possible. In the event you are late, you will be responsible for securing someone to cover your homeroom or duty until you arrive. If you are consistently late to work, the corrective action/employee discipline procedures will be followed. ***\*This area will be noted in TKES Standard 9.***

### **Corrective Action/Employee Discipline Procedures**

The following procedures will be followed by the administration of Dodge County Schools when addressing the actions and/or activities of employees who fail to comply or willfully disobey the policies, procedures, and/or directives of the administration, superintendent, and Board of Education:

- |                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Step 1:</b> | 1 – 4 tardies – Verbal warning; dated and noted in personnel file.                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Step 2:</b> | 5 <sup>th</sup> tardy – Formal written warning; dated and copied to the employee and placed in employee's personnel file.                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Step 3:</b> | 6 <sup>th</sup> tardy and subsequent tardies – Formal disciplinary action; reflected in annual evaluation and possible Professional Development Plan (PDP); dated and copied to the employee, employee's personnel file, and superintendent. |

## EMPLOYEE ABSENCES- Board Policy GARH (Updated July 2026)

The Dodge County Board of Education ("the Board") believes that school system personnel are entitled to an employment benefit that reduces the risk of monetary loss because of certain recognized absences. This policy shall apply to all employees of the Board, regardless of the origin of any funds used to pay their salaries.

Employees are 10-month employees unless extended year (to 11 or 12 months) employment is contracted or otherwise specified by the Board. All employees are required to follow the work calendar established by the Board and may take leave from work only in accordance with this policy or other leave policies enacted by the Board.

#### SICK LEAVE AND PERSONAL LEAVE

Certified personnel employed as teachers, student services support personnel, administrative and supervisory personnel or bus drivers shall be entitled to sick leave with full pay computed on the basis of one and one-fourth working days for each completed contract month (school month in the case of bus drivers). Sick leave days can be accumulated up to 45 days and can be transferred to another employing school system only as provided for in Georgia law.

Classified personnel employed as paraprofessionals, secretaries, nutrition workers, custodians, and maintenance employees are eligible for 1.25 paid sick leave per month worked. Five of these days may be used for personal leave, but should be approved in advance by the principal or building administrator. Sick leave days can be accumulated up to 45 days.

Sick leave may be used for:

Personal and professional reasons, but only up to Five days per school year and only upon approval by the superintendent or designee. (The employee may not be required to reveal the reason for the request as a condition for granting such leave.)

- Personal illness, physical disability (including disability related to maternity) or injury. However, if the local school board disagrees with any doctor's statement of disability or ability, it may appoint a physician of the same medical specialty as the employee's physician for the purpose of receiving independent medical judgment.
- Absence necessitated by exposure to contagious disease
- Absence due to illness or death in the employee's immediate family.

#### PROFESSIONAL LEAVE

Professional leave for training and/or professional meetings attended at the request of the school system shall not be counted against an employee's sick leave. Such professional leave must not be personal in nature, must benefit the school system as a whole, and must be approved in advance.

#### DEDUCTIONS

For any sick leave in an amount above that which is allowed by policy, there shall be a deduction from the full salary of the employee equal to one day's salary for each day of sick leave.

#### OBSERVANCE OF RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

Employees may use personal leave for the observance of recognized religious holidays. If an employee desires to take leave for the observance of recognized religious holidays in excess of the days allowed for personal leave, the employee may be approved for unpaid leave for such purposes provided that such leave is not excessive and does not interfere with fulfilling the obligations of his or her job.

#### JURY AND WITNESS LEAVE

Each person employed by the Board shall be allowed leave with pay for the purposes of serving as a juror in any court or when attending a judicial proceeding in response to a subpoena. Jury and/or witness leave shall not be deducted from an

individual's accumulated personal, professional or sick leave unless requested by the employee in accordance with # 2 below. No employee utilizing jury and witness leave shall be required to pay the cost of employing a substitute to serve during his or her absence for such leave. Employees who serve on juries or who are subpoenaed for reasons arising out of their employment with the school system may select one of the following alternatives:

1. Return the juror remittance to the system and receive full salary; or
2. Keep the juror remittance and deduct from personal leave provided it does not exceed three days.

#### MILITARY LEAVE

All employees of the Board are entitled to paid leave not to exceed eighteen days in any one federal fiscal year for the purpose of complying with ordered military leave duty with the armed forces of the United States or State of Georgia, including duty as a voluntary member of the militia or reserve component of the United States or State of Georgia. Employees also are entitled to leave not exceeding thirty days in any one federal fiscal year if ordered to duty as a result of the declaration of any emergency by the governor or the appropriate officials of the United States armed forces. Employees who have military commitments shall inform the Superintendent or designee annually and shall cooperate to the extent possible in scheduling such leave so as to minimize the disruption in those employees' duties and the mission of the Board of Education.

#### BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

Sick leave may be used for absence due to death in the employee's immediate family. The term "immediate family" shall be interpreted to mean father, mother, brother, sister, child, husband, wife or grandparents of the employee concerned, in-law equivalents of those specified, or a relative living in the residence of the employee.

#### FAMILY & MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

To the extent that any provision in this policy conflicts with or is superseded by the Family and Medical Leave Act ("FMLA"), the regulations promulgated thereunder, or any other federal law, the provision of the FMLA, its regulations or other law, as the case may be, control.

#### LIVING DONOR LEAVE

Pursuant to Georgia law, Dodge County School System employees are entitled to the following paid leave without loss of pay:

1. Up to seven (7) days for the purpose of donating bone marrow for transplantation; or
2. Up to thirty (30) days for the purpose of donating an organ for transplantation.

Living donor leave shall not be deducted from an employee's available sick leave and shall be considered creditable service for the purpose of determining retirement or pension benefits.

To qualify for this leave, employees must submit documentation from a licensed medical practitioner or hospital administrator confirming the planned donation to the Human Resources Department at least seven (7) calendar days prior to the requested leave, unless an emergency or other extenuating circumstances prevent such notice.

#### PARENTAL LEAVE

Pursuant to Georgia law, school system employees are entitled to the following leave without the loss of pay: paid parental leave equally available to all eligible employees of the Board of Education under the following terms:

1. An employee of the Board of Education shall be eligible for paid parental leave for qualifying life events upon satisfying the following criteria:
  1. The employee is classified as full-time by the District and is eligible to participate in the TRS (Teacher Retirement System of Georgia) or the PSERS (Public School Employees Retirement System); and

2. The employee has six continuous months of employment with the Board, regardless of whether he or she is eligible for paid or unpaid leave under federal law. An employee paid on an hourly basis must have worked a minimum of 700 hours over the six-month period immediately preceding the requested paid parental leave date.
2. A qualifying life event means:
  1. The birth of a child of an eligible employee;
  2. The placement of a minor child for adoption with an eligible employee; or
  3. The placement of a minor child for foster care with an eligible employee.
3. The maximum amount of paid parental leave that may be taken by an eligible employee during a rolling 12-month period is 240 hours (30 days), regardless of the number of qualifying life events that occur during such period.
  1. The rolling 12-month period shall be measured backward from the date an eligible employee first uses parental leave.
  2. Parental leave may be taken as needed and may be taken in the same increments as sick leave.
  3. Any unused paid parental leave that remains 12 months after the qualifying event shall not carry over for future use.
  4. Unused paid parental leave shall have no cash value at any time of the eligible employee's separation from employment with the Board of Education.
4. Paid parental leave under state law shall run concurrently with any leave provided under federal law.
5. Eligible employees requesting paid parental leave must obtain prior approval.
6. The Superintendent or designee shall develop paperwork needed to administer paid parental leave, which shall specify the documentation required to establish the existence of a qualifying life event.

#### MATERNAL BIRTH LEAVE

The Board of Education shall make maternal birth leave equally available to all eligible employees. Maternal birth leave is defined as a period of leave from work necessary to recuperate as a result of a qualifying life event. For purposes of this policy, a qualifying life event is defined as the birth of one or more children resulting from a single or multiple pregnancy.

1. School system employees may be eligible for 120 hours of paid maternal birth leave for a qualifying life event upon satisfying the following criteria:
  - a. The employee is classified as full-time by the school system and is eligible to participate in the Teachers Retirement System of Georgia (TRS) or the Public School Employees Retirement System (PSERS); and
  - b. The employee has completed six (6) continuous months of employment with the school system, regardless of whether he or she is eligible for paid or unpaid leave under federal law. An employee paid on an hourly basis must have worked a minimum of 700 hours during the six-month period immediately preceding the requested maternal birth leave date.
2. Maternal birth leave, if taken, shall be used only during the three-week period immediately following the eligible employee's qualifying life event to allow the employee to recuperate from childbirth and shall precede the use of any paid parental leave.
3. Unused paid maternal birth leave shall have no cash value upon the eligible employee's separation from employment with the school system.

4. Paid maternal birth leave shall run concurrently with any leave provided under applicable federal law.
5. If a paid state holiday occurs during an eligible employee's maternal birth leave, the employee shall be compensated only for the state holiday.

Documentation may be required to administer maternal birth leave and to establish the occurrence of a qualifying life event.

## **WORKERS COMPENSATION**

Our workers compensation insurance is with Underwriters Safety and Claims. We want to ensure that all employees are aware of the policies and procedures they need to follow to report injuries.

Steps the employee should follow to report their workplace injury:

1. Inform your supervisor immediately
2. Your supervisor will contact the central office.
3. WC-1 will be completed by the central office.
4. Central office will assist you in scheduling an appointment.

Point of Contact

Misty Selph, Telephone (478) 374-3783 Ext. 110

Email: [mselph@dodge.k12.ga.us](mailto:mselph@dodge.k12.ga.us)

## **PERSONNEL CONDUCT AND PROFESSIONAL APPEARANCE**

Dodge County School System employees are expected to maintain a clean, safe, appropriate, and professional appearance consistent with their assigned duties, work environment, student supervision responsibilities, and role as representatives of the District. Clothing, footwear, grooming, jewelry, and accessories should support a professional educational environment and should not materially interfere with job performance, create a safety hazard, or substantially disrupt school or District operations.

Employees are expected to meet or exceed applicable student dress expectations while recognizing that employee standards may differ based on professional responsibilities and job assignments. Principals and supervisors may authorize reasonable exceptions for special events, spirit days, work projects, field activities, athletic duties, professional learning, pre-planning, post-planning, and other approved circumstances.

The following are generally considered inappropriate unless specifically authorized because of the employee's job assignment or an approved activity:

- Clothing that is excessively tight, excessively revealing, transparent without appropriate coverage, or otherwise inappropriate for a professional educational environment;
- Clothing that exposes the midriff or undergarments;
- Pajama pants, sleepwear, loungewear, or pants that are designed or commonly worn as sleepwear.
- Clothing displaying obscene, profane, threatening, discriminatory, sexually explicit, drug-related, alcohol-related, or otherwise inappropriate words, images, or messages;
- Clothing that materially interferes with the employee's ability to perform assigned duties safely and effectively;
- Bedroom slippers, house shoes, or footwear that creates an unreasonable safety concern in light of assigned duties;
- Ragged, excessively torn, or improperly fitted clothing that is inconsistent with a professional workplace;
- Leggings, jeggings, tights, yoga pants, or similar form-fitting garments unless worn with appropriate professional coverage or when authorized because of the employee's assignment or activity;
- Athletic wear, sweat suits, wind pants, or coaching apparel except when appropriate to assigned duties or specifically authorized;
- Jeans except when authorized by the principal or supervisor, appropriate to assigned duties or approved activities, or permitted on designated casual-dress days.

Dresses, skirts, shorts, and similar garments must be of a professional length appropriate for the educational workplace and the employee's assigned duties.

Jewelry, body adornments, and accessories must not create a safety hazard, materially interfere with assigned duties, or

be inappropriate for the educational workplace. The District shall administer appearance standards without unlawful discrimination.

Employees assigned to maintenance, custodial, nutrition, transportation, laboratory, athletic, industrial, agricultural, or other safety-sensitive duties shall comply with any additional footwear, protective clothing, uniform, or personal protective equipment requirements applicable to their assignments. Maintenance, custodial, and other designated employees may be required to wear nonskid, closed-toe footwear.

Reasonable exceptions or accommodations shall be considered as required by applicable law for sincerely held religious beliefs or practices, disabilities, pregnancy-related limitations, medical conditions, or other legally protected circumstances. Employees seeking an accommodation should contact Human Resources or the appropriate District administrator.

Each principal or supervisor is responsible for addressing dress and appearance concerns consistently and professionally. An employee who reports to work in attire that does not comply with these expectations may be directed to correct the concern, including changing attire when reasonably necessary. Corrective or disciplinary action may be taken for repeated, willful, or serious violations in accordance with applicable Board policy, law, contract rights, District procedures, and due process requirements. Time away from assigned duties resulting from noncompliance may be unpaid or charged to available leave only when permitted by applicable law, Board policy, contract terms, and District payroll procedures.

### **CENTEGIX**

Parents, teachers, staff, superintendents and law enforcement all recognize school emergency preparedness as one of today's most pressing educational issues. Medical emergencies, student altercations, unauthorized visitors, suspicious activity and similar situations occur daily in school systems. In critical moments, simplicity and speed are crucial to effective response.

Teachers and administrators must be empowered to direct help to where it is needed — easily and quickly — because in a crisis, every second matters. Every staff member receives a smart CrisisAlert badge, which has only one function: to empower the wearer to quickly and discreetly activate an alert. The badge vibrates to confirm receipt of the alert. The moment an alert is triggered, CrisisAlert immediately provides clear and critical information to all impacted personnel.

3 Clicks = Administrator Needed

5+ Clicks= Campus Alert/Emergencies

Color Codes for Lights:

|        |                                                       |
|--------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| Red    | Lockdown: Intruder (Campus-Wide)                      |
| White  | Hold: Remain in Place, clear hallways                 |
| Green  | Evacuate: Move students and staff to designated areas |
| Blue   | Shelter: Severe Weather                               |
| Yellow | Lockout: Potential Danger                             |

Prior to receiving a badge, a staff member must complete the online training video and/or module. Certificates of completion will then be sent to the central office, and a badge will be assigned to the staff member.

### **MANDATED TRAINING**

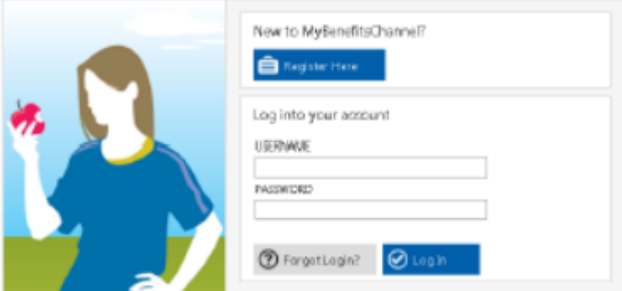
In accordance with O.C.G.A. – 20-2-751.7, all certified staff are required to receive training in sexual misconduct reporting. All Dodge County employees are required to complete this training annually. The training module is available through My Benefits Channel. The modules include:

- Blood Borne Pathogens
- Child Sexual Abuse & Assault Awareness & Prevention
- Code of Ethics Copyright for Schools
- Ethical Use of Social Media FERPA
- Data/Privacy
- Human Sex Trafficking
- Mandated Reporting

McKinney-Vento  
Parental Rights  
Sexual Harassment Awareness & Sexual Misconduct Reporting  
Suicide Awareness & Prevention  
Human Sex Trafficking  
Title IX Regulations and Information for K-12 Educators

## How to Complete My Benefits Channel Courses

**Login to My Benefits Channel** <http://www.mybenefitschannel.com>



**NOTE:** If you have forgotten you

Username/Password, you may send  
an email to

[Support@mybenefitschannel.com](mailto:Support@mybenefitschannel.com)

The Forgot Username? And Forgot  
Password? may not work. Our system  
views them as SPAM.

**Make sure the Home tab is selected. Then select Available Courses.**

The screenshot displays the 'myBenefits Channel' interface. At the top left, the logo 'myBenefits Channel' is visible. Below it, a navigation bar contains links: Home (selected), My Apps, My Contacts, My Profile, and Admin & Reports. On the right of the navigation bar, it says 'Welcome MISTY' with a 'Logout' button and a help icon. A large yellow arrow points to the 'Home' link in the navigation bar. Below the navigation bar, there are two main sections. The left section is titled 'To Do List' and 'Communications Center', showing 'You have 35 tasks pending' and a list of tasks. The right section is a large image of a hand using a computer mouse. Below these sections, there are five icons: Online Pay Info, Education & Training, Wellness Center, Events, and My Task Manager. Below the icons, there are two expandable panels. The first panel is titled 'Online Pay Info' and contains a 'Paycheck Stub' icon. The second panel is titled 'Education & Training' and contains three icons: 'Available Courses' (circled with a yellow arrow), 'Completed Courses', and 'Professional Development'.

**Once Available Courses is Open, you may click on any of the circled areas to show available courses (if they aren't already visible).**

[Home](#)
[My Apps](#)
[My Contacts](#)
[My Profile](#)
[Admin & Reports](#)
Welcome MISTY
[Logout](#)

 Available Courses
  Completed Courses
  Professional Development

Education & Training

Show By:
 ☒ Category
 ☐ Priority
 ☐ Coming Due
 [Expand All](#)
[Collapse All](#)

 Annual Training

| TRAINING COURSE                                                     | PRIORITY  | DURATION | DUE       | EXPIRES    | CREDITS |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|----------|-----------|------------|---------|
| <a href="#">Title IX - Regulations Addressing Sexual Harassment</a> | Mandatory | 71 min.  | 9/30/2023 | 12/31/2023 |         |

 School-Specific Training

| TRAINING COURSE                                                                      | PRIORITY  | DURATION | DUE       | EXPIRES    | CREDITS |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|----------|-----------|------------|---------|
| <a href="#">Bullying, Hazing, Harassment &amp; the Law (with quiz)</a>               | Mandatory | 20 min.  | 9/30/2023 | 12/31/2023 |         |
| <a href="#">Internet Safety and the Child Internet Protection Act (with certify)</a> | Mandatory | 30 min.  | 9/30/2023 | 12/31/2023 |         |
| <a href="#">Introduction to Cyber-bullying (with quiz)</a>                           | Mandatory | 20 min.  | 9/30/2023 | 12/31/2023 |         |
| <a href="#">Introduction to Hazing (with quiz)</a>                                   | Mandatory | 20 min.  | 9/30/2023 | 12/31/2023 |         |
| <a href="#">Sexual Harassment: Special Circumstances for Schools (with quiz)</a>     | Mandatory | 15 min.  | 9/30/2023 | 12/31/2023 |         |

1. Click on the Titles of the courses.
2. You will do the following for each course.
3. Click on Start Course (upper right).
4. Following any instructions on the page(s) that follow.
5. This may include typing your first and last names as an eSignature.
6. Click on Finish Course (lower right). Click on Exit Course (lower right).

The course you have finished will no longer show in Available Courses. You may click on Completed Courses to see all completed courses.

## **PROFESSIONAL LEARNING**

Professional learning activities are prioritized by the Dodge County Curriculum Department, Federal Programs Director, and Special Education Director. Each school also schedules specific Professional learning depending on specific needs. At the end of the academic year, a survey will be given to all staff to identify areas that Professional Learning would be beneficial. The district will schedule PL opportunities for those identified areas, as well as school-site scheduling.

Each school's School Improvement Plan, as well as the System's Strategic Plan, provides priorities for the school/system program of Professional Learning. The needs of all staff are identified and assessed through the system's needs assessment administered in the spring or through the teacher and leader evaluation systems (TKES/LKES). Data is analyzed to identify the system level and school level strengths and weaknesses.

Training that is common to all schools or centered on a common topic is coordinated at the system level. Training in instructional technology, data analysis, SLDS, CPR, and special education services are examples of some of this type of training. Coordination of training opportunities such as these listed provides a consistent approach as well as meeting the unique needs of individual schools.

Professional learning activities are dependent upon state and federal funding. Additional funds for Professional Learning are requested through the local school system and federal programs. Title II A funds are used for improving teacher quality to provide training to ensure teachers and paraprofessionals are "highly qualified". Local funds, Title I funds, Special Education funds, and Program Improvement funds are also used to fully implement the comprehensive system program for continued Professional Learning.

## **PROFESSIONAL LEARNING PROCEDURES**

A needs assessment which focuses on the system/school goals is given to all schools in the spring of the year. Several schools may also administer their own survey with teachers. The results of the assessment are tabulated and presented to the system level leadership team. From these results, system initiatives and school initiatives are planned. The schools submit prioritized yearly professional learning plans to the system-level professional learning coordinator and from these an activity list is developed and maintained.

Professional Learning funds shall be used for activities that enhance the skills and knowledge of all school system personnel, school board members and school council members, which are directly related to improving student achievement. Every decision concerning professional learning will be made with improving student achievement as the goal. Title IIa funds are available to classroom teachers and school level administrators.

Professional learning funds shall only be expended for one or more of the following items.

1. Additional compensation for teachers to serve as mentor teachers.
2. Teachers and school level administrators to participate in professional learning activities, i.e. substitute teacher salaries and employee benefits.
3. Travel for professional learning purposes. (for teachers and school-level admin)
4. Professional and technical service fees and expenses for instructors and consultants.
5. Training materials and supplies.
6. Developing and implementing initiatives to assist in recruiting, hiring, and retaining effective teachers
7. Reimbursement for expenditures of persons who successfully complete approved conferences, workshops/courses, GACE testing, etc.

## **PROFESSIONAL TRAVEL PROCEDURES**

Dodge County Schools use the State of Georgia Travel Policy as a guide on rates and allowable expenses. It is the employee's responsibility to be knowledgeable of the travel regulations and procedures so that information may be submitted accurately.

1. Participants complete the professional leave form at least 10 days before the training that is requested.
2. The form is submitted to the school administrator and district professional learning coordinator on line where final approval is granted.
3. If the request is made by a staff member with no personal or sick days available, the professional learning request will be denied.
4. Requisition forms will be completed if there is a fee to be paid. The purchasing clerk will begin the registration process with a purchase order.
5. Expenses will be reimbursed according to Dodge County Procedures, using the Statewide Travel Regulations as a guide.
6. Dodge County certified staff will be encouraged to serve as instructors and consultants as often as possible. The

train the trainer method is utilized whenever possible.

7. All professional learning will require redelivery to department, grade level, and/or school. Documentation must be submitted to the office of curriculum and professional learning.

### **ACCEPTABLE USE COMPUTER POLICY**

The Dodge County Schools Computer Network is established for the educational and professional use of Dodge County Schools' students, faculty, and staff ("Users"). This Technology and Acceptable Use Policy (the "Policy") is intended to govern Users with respect to Dodge County Schools Network and the Internet. Users are expected to conduct themselves on the Dodge County Schools Network in the same fashion as they do elsewhere in the community. Users who violate this Policy will have their Dodge County Schools Network privileges revoked and may be subject to further disciplinary action, including suspension or dismissal. Dodge County Schools may also report offenders to applicable law enforcement agencies.

The Dodge County Schools Network provides access to the global Internet. Dodge County Schools have taken available precautions to restrict access to controversial materials on the Internet. However, on a global network, it is impossible to control all materials. Dodge County Schools believe that the valuable information and interaction available on the Internet far outweighs the possibility that Users may find material that is not consistent with our educational goals.

The smooth operation of the Dodge County Schools Network relies upon the proper conduct of all Users. The signature on the Handbook Acknowledgement form is legally binding and indicates the parties who have signed have read the terms and conditions of this Policy carefully and understand their significance.

### **Dodge County Schools Network - Terms and Conditions (Acceptable Use and Illegal Actions)**

**Scope and Authority** – The Dodge County Schools Network includes all hardware, software, and network services used by the Dodge community. Parents give the school permission to use applications that are educationally beneficial to our students.

### **Privileges**

The use of the Dodge County Schools Network is a privilege, not a right. The use of an account must be consistent with the educational objectives of Dodge County Schools. The Technology Office and/or School Administration will deem what is inappropriate use and will refer any such conduct to Dodge County Schools Administration. Dodge County Schools, in its sole discretion, reserves the right to determine what conduct constitutes a violation of this Policy, and the discipline for any such violation. Transmission of any material in violation of any U.S. or state regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, material protected by copyright, threatening or obscene material, or material protected by trade practice. Use of the Dodge County Schools Network for commercial activities, product advertisement, or political lobbying is prohibited. Use of the Dodge County Schools Network and the Internet must be consistent with this Policy and all policies and practices of Dodge County Schools, and violations of this Policy and such other policies and practices may result in the suspension or loss of an account, loss of Internet access, or in other forms of disciplinary action.

### **No Expectation of Privacy**

Dodge County Schools routinely monitor usage of the Dodge County Schools Network and may review any communications on its systems. Dodge County Schools is able to override all passwords. Users do not have a privacy right in the contents of their computer system, including messages sent, received, or stored on the email systems or in their use of the Internet. Passwords to these systems exist for the benefit of Dodge County Schools. Users should have no expectation that the ability to choose a password for a system in any way limits the ability or right of Dodge County Schools to monitor all activity.

### **Security**

Security on any computer system is a high priority, especially when the system involves many Users. No User may have access to another's files on the Dodge County Schools Network. The following guidelines will help maintain Dodge County Schools Network security:

If you feel you have identified a security problem on the Internet, you must notify the Director of Technology.

Do not allow anyone else to use your account and do not use another individual's account.

Inappropriate attempts to access a server as an administrator will result in immediate cancellation of User privileges and/or discipline.

Any User identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access to the Dodge County Schools Network.

## **Inappropriate Access**

Not all of the information freely available on the Internet is reliable or helpful. Students and employees must evaluate the source of the information, as well as the information itself, to determine its appropriateness and usefulness.

In addition to providing information, the Internet is capable of providing the means to communicate directly with others via "instant or private messaging" programs, video conferencing programs, and other means. Also, there are many places and software technologies that will allow for the free exchange of files between computers over the Internet, such as email. Not all of these methodologies are appropriate for an educational environment as outlined in this document.

Downloading or loading of software on Dodge County Schools' computers is prohibited. There is an enormous quantity and variety of free software available on the Internet. However, widespread downloading of such software on the School's computers has a cumulative negative effect, and can result in the substantial degradation of performance, additional maintenance time, and increased threat of virus infestation. All software purchases must be approved by the technology staff.

Students may not use school computers to access any Internet site or sites that contain information that is inappropriate for educational purposes or sites that teachers, staff or administration deem inappropriate for the instructional program. Examples of inappropriate information and/or content include, but is not limited to, the following:

Students may not access, upload, download, transmit, display or distribute:

1. offensive material – content that is in poor taste or could be considered obscene; abusive or sexually explicit language, racist, illegal, harassing or inflammatory.
2. distribute dangerous material – content that provides direction in the construction of explosives or similar devices or instruction or practices that could injure the students themselves or others.
3. inappropriate contacts – materials that can lead to contact with strangers who could potentially threaten the student's health or safety.

If a student is uncertain as to whether or not a site's material might be considered inappropriate, the student should consult his or her teacher or a member of the administrative staff for clarification.

## **Privacy**

School staff and administrators have access to student email for monitoring purposes. Students should have no expectation of privacy on the Google Apps for Education system.

Limited personal use - Students may use Google Apps for Education tools for personal projects but may not use them for:

- Unlawful activities.
- Inappropriate sexual or other offensive content.
- Threatening another person.
- Misrepresentation of Dodge County Schools, staff or students.

## **Safety**

Students will tell their teacher or other school employee about any message they receive that is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable.

Students are responsible for the use of their individual accounts and should take all reasonable precautions to prevent others from being able to use their accounts.

Under no conditions should a user provide his or her password to another person.

## **Access Restriction - Due Process**

Due to the rapidly changing technology environment, Dodge County Schools reserve the right to determine if an action not listed in this document is inappropriate, and the student may be subject to discipline.

## **Hardware**

Student Chromebooks/Devices are managed in order to allow for student use of systems only for educational purposes. Under no circumstances is a student to attempt to modify the existing hardware configuration. Modification can be considered either opening the case or changing hardware or software settings. Students are responsible for any damage on their computers. Dodge County Schools Information Technology offers a Guest Network for connection purposes.

## **Contact**

Each student and employee is responsible for all activity that occurs under his/her user account. Students and employees may not place information on the Internet that is inappropriate or unacceptable.

Students may not give out any personal information (e.g., address, phone number, user name, passwords, etc.) about themselves or about other people. Students may not use school computers for commercial purposes or political lobbying.

### Summary

This is a list of the more common things students, faculty and staff are specifically **NOT** permitted to do.

- Download any files, especially music and videos, from the Internet.
- Use any form of “instant or private messaging” software on student devices.
- Install any applications or software onto Dodge County Schools’ computers.
- Disable or modify any running tasks or services.
- Transfer and/or store music files from any personal devices to Dodge County Schools systems.
- Play games, unless directed to by an instructor or supervisor for educational purposes, at any time on Dodge County Schools computers, including Internet-based games.
- Use proxies or other means to bypass the content filtering systems in place and/or defeat any settings that prevent the access of material deemed and flagged as inappropriate by the blocking devices.
- Use remote accessing software or hardware to take control of any network attached device or workstation.
- Remove License decals or inventory control tags attached to the systems.
- Disrupt its use by other individuals by connecting to other Dodge County Schools networks to perform any illegal or inappropriate act, such as an attempt to gain unauthorized access to other systems on the network.
- Anyone who inadvertently accesses an inappropriate site must immediately leave the site and report it to his/her instructor or supervisor.
- Attempt to log onto the network as a system administrator.
- Any user identified as a security risk may be denied access to the network.
- Damage caused by the intentional misuse or vandalism of equipment will be charged to the person who committed the act.
- Any damage to the student Chromebook/or device is the responsibility of the user.

### Consequences

Use of school’s internet is a privilege. Failure to abide by the terms of this policy will result in the following disciplinary actions:

- Willful damage of computer hardware, computer software (including the deletion of programs and/or files) and computer networks will result in the student being responsible for the current repair and replacement cost of the damaged software and/or equipment. Any student violating the terms of this document will receive appropriate disciplinary action as defined by the school administrations.
- Students could lose computer/network privileges, and/or receive detention, suspension or expulsion.
- The Director of Technology or his/her designee may close an account at any time as required. The administration, faculty and staff of Dodge County Schools may make a request to the Director of Technology or his/her designee to deny, revoke or suspend specific user accounts based upon violations of this policy.

### Improper Use and Content

Users may not use the Dodge County Schools Network for purposes of harassment, intimidation or bullying of others. Bullying is the repeated use of a written, verbal or electronic expression, physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at another student that:

- Causes physical or emotional harm to the student or damage to the student’s property;
- Places the student in reasonable fear of physical injury or of damage to property;
- Creates a hostile environment at school for the student;
- Infringes on the rights of the student at school; or,
- Materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.
- A hostile environment is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the student’s education.

Cyber-bullying involves an act of bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including but not limited to electronic mail, internet communications, or instant messages. Cyber-bullying also includes the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person; or, the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions described in the definition of bullying. Cyber-bullying also includes the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions described in the definition of bullying.

Dodge County Schools shall, in its sole discretion, determine whether such conduct violates this policy and any other policies of Dodge County Schools. Users must remember that material distributed through the Internet is public. On the Internet, there is no central authority, so each site is responsible for its own Users. Complaints received from other sites regarding any of our Users will be fully investigated, and disciplinary action may be taken as a result.

### **Social Media, Electronic Communication, and Open Records**

Dodge County Schools recognizes that employees, students, and families use social media and electronic communication. Employees are expected to exercise good judgment, maintain appropriate professional boundaries, and communicate professionally when acting within the scope of their employment or when reasonably identifiable as representatives of the District.

Employees shall not post, send, share, or transmit content that violates District policy or applicable law, including requirements concerning discrimination, harassment, bullying, threats, confidentiality, student privacy, professional conduct, or employee ethics.

Employees shall not disclose confidential student, family, personnel, health, or District information obtained through their employment except as authorized or required by law.

Employees should avoid online or electronic conduct that violates District policy, breaches confidentiality or professional boundaries, materially interferes with the employee's job responsibilities, or substantially disrupts school or District operations.

Electronic communication with students and parents/guardians shall be professional and transparent and should be conducted through District-approved communication methods whenever reasonably practicable. Employees shall not engage in inappropriate, secretive, sexual, romantic, threatening, harassing, or otherwise unprofessional electronic communication with students.

Employees shall refrain from personal social media activity during instructional time, duty time, supervision time, planning periods, meetings, professional learning, or any other time such activity interferes with assigned job responsibilities. This restriction does not prohibit District-authorized, instructional, emergency, or other approved use. Additionally, when engaging in personal social media activity, employees should be mindful not to interfere with District operations.

Employees should understand that communications created, sent, received, or maintained through District email accounts, District communication platforms, District software, or District-issued electronic devices may constitute public records and may be subject to inspection or disclosure under the Georgia Open Records Act unless exempt from disclosure by law. Communications concerning District business may also constitute public records regardless of whether they are created, sent, received, or stored on a District-issued device or a personal device. Employees shall comply with applicable District records-retention requirements and shall not delete, conceal, alter, or destroy records in violation of law or District policy.

Depending on the nature and severity of the conduct, violations may result in corrective or disciplinary action, up to and including termination, consistent with applicable law, Board policy, contract rights, and due process requirements.

### **Theft and Vandalism**

Users must acknowledge the use of the intellectual property of others. Users must treat information found electronically in the same way as information found in printed sources. Rules against plagiarism will be enforced. It is the responsibility of each User to comply with the terms and condition for the acquisition and use of software found on the Internet. Dodge County Schools will not allow the copying or storing of illegally acquired software. In this case, vandalism refers to deliberate attempts to damage the hardware, software, or information residing on Dodge County Schools Network or any other computer system attached through the Internet. Attempts to violate the integrity of private accounts, files or programs; the deliberate infecting of a computer with a "virus," attempts at "hacking" computers using any method, or other such actions shall be a violation of this Policy.

### **"Netiquette"**

Users must abide by accepted rules of network etiquette, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Do not reveal personal information – your address or telephone number, or those of students or colleagues.
- Be polite. Do not be abusive in your messages to others. Use appropriate language and do not use vulgarities, or any other inappropriate language.

- Do not use the Dodge County Schools Network in such a way that would disrupt its use by others.

### **Waiver of Warranties; Limitation of Liability**

Dodge County Schools makes no warranties of any kind, whether express or implied, concerning this service. Dodge County Schools shall not be held responsible for any damages suffered, including the loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, missed deliveries, service interruptions, or errors and omissions. Dodge County Schools denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through this service. All terms and conditions as stated in this Policy are applicable to the use of computer resources at Dodge County Schools, in addition to internet use.

### **Preservation of Resources**

All resources are limited; computer resources are not an exception. Because space on disk drives and bandwidth across the lines, which connect Dodge County Schools Network both internally and externally, are limited, neither programs nor information may be stored on the system without the permission of the system administrator. Users are not to load software on any school computer. Each User is permitted reasonable space to store e-mail, Web, and personal files, as mandated by system file quotas. Dodge County Schools reserves the right to require the purging of files in order to regain disk space without warning. Users whose need for the resource is more pressing will have priority of space.

### **NON-DISCRIMINATION-SECTION 504**

There will be no discrimination on the basis of sex, race, age, creed, color, or disability in the educational programs, activities or employment practices in this school system. The Superintendent or designee has been appointed as the school system Title IX & Section 504 Coordinator. The Title IX/Section 504 Coordinator shall be responsible for supervising the Dodge County Board of Education's efforts to comply with all aspects of the legislation regarding discrimination including Title IX of the Educational Amendments Act of 1972 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, for investigating both employee and student complaints and for establishing and monitoring grievance procedures that provide for prompt and equitable resolution of such complaints.

### **COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES**

Please see Dodge County Board of Education Policy GAE for details.

### **GRIEVANCES -- TITLE IX**

The following procedures shall be utilized by employees and students in filing Title IX complaints against the school district:

1. The employee or student shall submit a written statement describing the practice or action believed to be prohibited by the provisions of Title IX
2. Upon receipt of a written complaint, the superintendent shall investigate the allegation to determine if the district is in noncompliance with Title IX.
3. When violations are found to exist, the superintendent shall confer with the appropriate school personnel to determine the appropriate course of action to correct the situation.
4. Upon agreement and approval, the superintendent shall supervise the administration of the new procedures and communicate the response to the employee or student who initiated the complaint.
5. Should the complainant fail to agree with the decision, the complainant has the right to appeal to the Dodge County Board of Education. Should the Board of Education fail to agree, the complainant may appeal to the Office for Civil Rights, Department of Education, and Welfare. Point of contact for Title IX Grievances is:

Tonya Brown  
Title IX Coordinators  
720 College Street  
Eastman, GA 31023  
(478) 374-3783 Ext. 129  
Email: [tbrown@dodge.k12.ga.us](mailto:tbrown@dodge.k12.ga.us)

### **COMPLAINT PROCEDURES for Title I, Part A**

Dodge County Schools are committed to open communications between staff and parents at the county's Title I, Part A schools in order to reach the goal of educating all students. We are aware that disagreements may arise periodically. These disagreements need to be resolved in a timely manner. The following procedures have been developed to handle complaints dealing with Title I, Part A programs, services, and staff members. All Title I, Part A complaints are to be directed to the Title I Director as described below.

### ***Filing a complaint process:***

1. Gather all information related to complaint.

2. Complete complaint form with specific details.
3. Send complaint form to Title 1 office at the address listed on the form.

**Once the complaint is received, the central office staff responsible for complaint procedures will do the following:**

1. Investigate and prepare a response to the complaint.
2. Set an appointment with the originators of the complaint in order to resolve the complaint. The director of Title I usually arranges this meeting within five (5) working days after the receipt of the complaint

**Additional Steps (if required)**

1. If the complaint cannot be resolved by the Title I Director, a meeting will be set up with the superintendent, the Director of Title I, and the concerned parties.
2. The superintendent will work with the Title I Director to resolve the complaint.
3. If the issue is still unresolved, the Title I Director will contact the State Department of Education's Title I, Part A office for guidance.
4. Meetings with officials from the district may be scheduled in order to resolve the complaint.
5. If additional steps beyond the State Department of Education are required in the resolution of the complaint, these steps will occur in accordance with the federal *No Child Left Behind* legislation.

**Contact for Complaints**

Dr. Patricia Connell, Title I Director  
Dodge County Board of Education  
720 College Street  
Eastman, GA 31023  
Phone: (478) 374-3783  
Fax: (478) 374-6697  
Email: [pconnell1@dodge.k12.ga.us](mailto:pconnell1@dodge.k12.ga.us)

**DIVISIVE CONCEPTS**

Please see Dodge County Board of Education Policy IKBB for details. The Dodge County Board of Education, the Superintendent, and each school shall prohibit employees from discriminating against students and other employees based on race. The district shall ensure that curricula and training programs encourage employees and students to practice tolerance and mutual respect and to refrain from judging others based on race. The district has a policy that provides complaint resolution procedures regarding complaints or allegations. More information on the process and the policy can be found at

<https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/Policy/ViewPolicy.aspx?S=4055&revid=fSqclxbytslsh3JWNety82EA==&ptid=amlgTZiB9plushNjl6WXhfiOQ==&secid=&PG=6&IRP=0>

**REPORTING SUSPICION OF FRAUDULENT ACTIVITIES**

To ensure the reporting of suspicion of fraudulent activity the Dodge County Board of Education ensure employees, clients, and providers confidential channels to report suspicious activities. *Fraud* is defined as a false representation of a matter of fact, whether by words or by conduct, or by concealment of that which should have been disclosed, that is used for the purpose of misappropriating property and/or monetary funds from federal grants.

Dodge County Board of Education thoroughly and expeditiously investigates any reported cases of suspected fraud to determine if disciplinary, financial recovery, and/or criminal action should be taken. All reports of suspect fraud must be handled under the strictest confidentiality. Only those directly involved in the investigation should be given information. Informants may remain anonymous but should be encouraged to cooperate with the investigators and should provide as much detail and evidence of alleged fraudulent act as possible.

Procedures and Responsibilities for reporting suspected fraudulent activity are:

1. Anyone suspecting fraud concerning federal programs should report their concerns to Dodge County Superintendent at (478) 374-3783.
2. Any employee with the Dodge County Board of Education (temporary staff, full-time staff and contractors) who receives a report of suspected fraudulent activity must report this information within the next business day. You are to contact Internal Investigations by contacting Superintendent at (478) 374-3783. Employees have the responsibility to report suspected fraud. All reports can be made in confidence.
3. The Dodge County Board of Education shall conduct investigations of employees, providers, contractors, or

vendors.

4. If necessary, you will be contacted for additional information.
5. Periodic communication through meetings should emphasize the responsibilities and channels to report suspected fraud.

### **MINUTE OF REFLECTION**

In compliance with the Georgia Law, at the opening of school on every school day in each public school classroom, the teacher in charge shall conduct a brief period of quiet reflection for not more than 60 seconds with the participation of all pupils. This moment of quiet reflection is not intended to be a religious service or exercise but shall be considered as an opportunity for a moment of silent reflection on the anticipated activities of the day.

Teachers and administrators shall not suggest or imply that students should or should not use the moment of reflection for prayer, nor shall they deny to any student the right to use it for a moment of quiet prayer. Students and/or staff may not under any circumstances use the moment of quiet reflection to audibly pray, singly or in unison.

### **ATTENDANCE AND RECORDS**

Daily reports of attendance are required. Teachers are expected to keep accurate records in the following areas:

1. Teacher personal record book
2. Attendance records
3. Textbook records
4. Permanent Records
5. F.T.E. accounting
6. Others as assigned by the school principal.

### **HANDLING OF STUDENT OR SCHOOL FUNDS**

Every teacher, from time to time, will have in his or her possession funds belonging to the children or school. These funds may be for the lunchroom, field trips, or consumable supplies. Teachers should not leave such money in a desk drawer or in any place where theft or loss may occur.

These funds are the teacher's responsibility. For the teacher's protection, as well as good business practice, it is important that receipts be given for money collected. There is a state law requiring principals to keep detailed records of all monies collected and spent in the schools. Teachers are required to deliver to the principal all funds collected by them; a receipt will be given. All payment of bills will be made through the principal's office.

### **REPORTING TO PARENTS**

Report cards for all students are sent home each nine weeks. The school should make every effort to keep parents and guardians informed about their children's progress in scholarship, attitudes, and behavior. Grades of students should never be discussed with or made available to anyone other than the student and the student's parents or guardians. Posting grades or allowing a student to see the teacher's grade book is not an approved policy of the Board of Education. Each teacher is responsible for the grading of all students' work and the recording of grades appropriately.

### **STUDENT DISCIPLINE/CORPORAL PUNISHMENT**

Students and parents expect every teacher to administer firm, impartial, and courteous discipline. Redirection is needed for students who violate expectations. Corporal punishment may be administered after exhausting all other means, but only by the principal or his/her designee. It should never be resorted to except in cases of direct disobedience or other gross misconduct. For additional information regarding corporal punishment, see Dodge County Local Board Policy Manual, JDA. Always be knowledgeable of your school's discipline policy.

### **STUDENT BEHAVIOR**

When a teacher identifies a student as a chronic disciplinary problem student, the principal shall notify the parents and invite them to observe the student in a classroom situation. At least one parent shall be invited to a conference to devise a disciplinary and behavioral intervention plan (BIP). Parents must be invited to a conference to devise a behavioral plan before students suspended or expelled return to school. Failure of the parent to attend such conference does not preclude the student from being readmitted.

### **OFF-CAMPUS CONDUCT**

The Board has a responsibility to provide protection for students and employees and to provide and maintain a safe and orderly environment for education to take place. Therefore, it is the duty of the Board of Education to make necessary

rules and policies to regulate student conduct for the purpose of maintaining good order and discipline in the schools. Administrators are authorized to take disciplinary action for conduct which occurs:

- (1) on the school grounds at any time;
- (2) off the school grounds at a school activity, function or event; or
- (3) en route to and from school or a school activity.

Authority to take disciplinary action also extends to any off-campus non-school related actions by students, at any time of the year, which have a direct and immediate impact on school discipline, the educational function of the school, or the welfare of the student and staff. A student who has committed a criminal act while off campus is subject to disciplinary action and may be excluded from school. Such act could include, but would not be limited to, a felony or an offense which would be considered to be a felony if the student were an adult, or an assault upon another student, a violation of the drug laws or sexual misconduct of a serious nature. Such student whose presence on school property may endanger the welfare and/or safety of other students or staff, or whose presence may cause substantial disruption at school, would also be subject to other appropriate disciplinary action including but not limited to in-school suspension, and assignment to an alternative educational program or site may be made.

School officials shall contact the proper authorities to verify any and all allegations that a student has been arrested or charged. The Superintendent and staff shall cooperate with the probation office or courts in order to allow for that office to conduct a proper investigation. If the matter involves a juvenile, the Superintendent and staff shall cooperate with the Juvenile Court concerning the student's conduct and record in school.

Any suspension, expulsion, or exclusion from enrollment under this policy shall be handled in accordance with due process as set out in Board policy relating to suspension or expulsion.

#### **CARE OF CLASSROOM**

It should be remembered that children respond to attractive surroundings, and an effort should be made by teachers to keep classrooms clean and attractive. The custodian(s) assigned to the building will do most of the work; however, much can be done by the teacher and students by keeping paper off of the floor and giving proper care to window shades, walls, desks, and other equipment in the room. Teaching children to be neat and to have proper respect for public property is one of the duties of the teacher.

#### **FIELD TRIPS AND EXCURSIONS**

Teachers need to be aware of the processes and procedures for field trips and excursions prior to requesting permission to take a group on a field trip.

1. A request for an educational field trip involving the use of any carrier shall originate with the teacher and shall be submitted for approval to the local school principal on the field trip request form. If this form is approved by the local school principal, the form should be submitted for approval to the Superintendent. This information will then be forwarded to the person responsible for scheduling trips at the Transportation Department. Any field trip which involves overnight travel by students must be approved by the Superintendent. Field trips which involve only walking excursions of students from the school campus to a community location require the approval of the local school principal only. All excursions and/or field trips require parent letters and standard release forms for student participation.
2. Requests must be received in the central office fifteen (15) school days prior to the date of the trip. Requests must be forwarded to the transportation department ten (10) days prior to the date of the trip. Athletic directors or coaches are requested to submit schedules of upcoming sports activities whenever possible.
3. A change of destination of an approved field trip will require new approval. A new form should be submitted and the previously requested field trip canceled in the appropriate manner (3 days prior to the scheduled date).
4. Only students who are regularly enrolled in school and who are involved in instructional activity will be eligible for transportation. Chaperones are not to bring preschool children with them.
5. Teachers and/or adults approved by the principal will be permitted to accompany transported groups for supervisory purposes.
6. It shall be the responsibility of the local school principal and teacher in charge of field trips to secure written parent/guardian permission for every student involved in a field trip. In cases involving a series of field trips related to one particular area of study or activity, a blanket permission form may be obtained, provided that parents are made aware of all field trips to be included in the series.
7. Rules relative to pupil safety and behavior will be adhered to with the students. The bus driver will review the rules and regulations that the student riders are to obey.
8. Requests, authorizations, and other approved forms will be furnished to all schools by the Transportation

Department.

9. Grades and/or grade teams are limited to one in-county and one out-of-county field trip. Length of out-of-county field trips is limited to a 75-mile radius for grades K – 5 and 170 mile radius for grades 6 – 12. This does not include competition.
10. The expense of the fuel and bus driver for all non-competition field trips must be covered by the participants or sponsors acquired by the participants. The Transportation Department will provide a cost estimate upon request.
11. Field trip policies are established annually by the Board of Education based on availability of funds.
12. In all cases, appropriate chaperones shall be provided and approved by the principal.
13. In the event of cancellation of a field trip, notification must be given at least three (3) days prior to the scheduled date.
14. Additional requirements/regulations pertaining to field trips can be obtained from the school principals.

### **SOLICITING FUNDS**

School children in the Dodge County School System are not permitted to solicit any subscriptions or sell any article or articles without approval of the Board of Education. The Board of Education makes the following exceptions to the general rule in the last paragraph:

1. The sale of advertisements in the school annuals, after school hours only.
2. The sale of advertisements for printed programs of special events such as concerts, plays, etc.

Sales should be done outside class hours only. Each school shall submit in writing to the Board of Education any proposed project that it or any organization within it would like to have approved at least fourteen (14) days prior to the first annual board meeting upon which the request is to be considered. Each organization is limited to one fundraiser per year.

### **GRADING**

A student's grade will not be lowered as a means of punishment except as follows:

1. Students giving or receiving assistance during an exam period will be sufficient grounds for some appropriate reduction on the grade for that particular exam.
2. Disturbance during a class may result in a student's removal from the class. The student must make up work missed during his absence at the convenience of the teacher. If the work is not made up, the student will receive a zero for the work missed.

### **DODGE COUNTY SCHOOL POLICIES**

The Dodge County Board of Education Policy Manual contains rules and guidelines that relate to all aspects of school operation. As policies are changed or new policies added, copies are forwarded to schools for placement in the manuals. One is kept in the principal's office and one is kept at the Board of Education Office. Teachers are encouraged to study policies and to be aware of all implications or changes of policy. When such seems needed, it is suggested that the principal or immediate supervisor be informed. Dodge County Board of Education Policies are also available through eBoard on the district website ([www.dodge.k12.ga.us](http://www.dodge.k12.ga.us)).

### **ELIGIBILITY FOR EMPLOYMENT**

The Illegal Immigration Reform and Enforcement Act of 2011 is a state law which became effective July 1, 2011. Each individual employee is responsible for the correct implementation of this law. The I-9 form is the official document for use in this program. This form must be completed within the first three work days and is retained on file in the central office.

### **DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE**

The Dodge County Board of Education declares that the manufacture, distribution, sale or possession of controlled substances, any CBD product, marijuana and other dangerous drugs in an unlawful manner or being at work under the influence of alcohol, controlled substances, marijuana or other dangerous drugs is a serious threat to the public health, safety and welfare. With this in mind, the Board declares that its work force must be absolutely free of any person who would knowingly manufacture, distribute, sell or possess a controlled substance, marijuana or a dangerous drug in an unlawful manner. This prohibition specifically includes, but is not limited to, the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance or 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.

An administrator who reasonably suspects that an employee reported to work under the influence of drugs/alcohol or that an employee suffered a work-related injury as a result of the use of drugs/alcohol shall request that the employee take a drug/alcohol test. Refusal to take such a drug/alcohol test shall be viewed as a positive drug/alcohol test and may result

in disciplinary actions up to and including termination of employment. Refusal to take a drug/alcohol test may also result in the denial of benefits, including but not limited to, workers' compensation benefits.

Entities contracting with the Board shall, as a condition of the contract, assure a drug and alcohol-free workplace. For contracts, a drug and alcohol-free workplace means a geographic location at which individuals are directly engaged in the performance of work pursuant to a contract with the Board.

Any employee who is convicted for the first time, under the laws of this state, the United States, or any other state, of any criminal offense involving the manufacture, distribution, sale or possession of a controlled substance, marijuana or a dangerous drug shall be subject to disciplinary action. At a minimum, such an employee shall be suspended for a period of not less than two months and shall be required to complete, at his or her own expense, a drug abuse treatment and education program licensed under Chapter 5 of Title 26 of the Official Code of Georgia and approved by the board. At a maximum, such an employee may be terminated from his employment with the school system. Any employee who is convicted for a second or subsequent time under the laws of this state, the United States, or any other state, of any criminal offense involving the manufacture, distribution, sale or possession of a controlled substance, marijuana or a dangerous drug shall be terminated from his or her employment and shall be ineligible for employment for a period of five years from the most recent date of conviction.

If, prior to an arrest for an offense involving a controlled substance, marijuana or a dangerous drug, an employee notifies the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee that the employee illegally uses a controlled substance, marijuana or a dangerous drug and is receiving or agrees to receive treatment under a drug abuse treatment and education program licensed under Chapter 5 of Title 26 of the Official Code of Georgia and approved by the Board, the employee shall be entitled to maintain his or her employment for up to one year as long as the employee follows the treatment plan. During this period, the employee shall not be separated from employment solely on the basis of the employee's drug dependence, but the employee's work activities may be restructured if practicable to protect persons or property. No statement made by an employee to the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee in order to comply with this code section shall be admissible in any civil, administrative or criminal proceeding as evidence against the public employee. The rights granted by this policy shall be available to an employee only once during a five year period and are intended to be and shall be interpreted as being the same as those minimum rights granted pursuant to the Georgia Drug-Free Work Force Act and any subsequent amendments thereof.

As a condition of employment, each employee must abide by the terms of this policy and must notify the Board within five days after any arrest on any drug-related or alcohol-related criminal charge and further notify the Board within five days of any conviction of a drug-related or alcohol-related offense.

The Board of Education shall not consider for employment any applicant who has been convicted for the first time of any drug offense as described above for a three-month period from the date of conviction nor shall the Board of Education consider any applicant for employment who has been convicted for the second time of any drug offense as described above for a five-year period from the most recent date of conviction.

For purposes of this policy, "conviction" refers to any final conviction in a court of competent jurisdiction, specifically including acceptance of a plea of guilty, nolo contendere, or any plea entered under the First Offenders Act of Georgia or any comparable state or federal legislation.

No certified employee or employee with a contract for a definite term shall be subject to suspension or termination pursuant to this policy except in compliance with the provisions of the Fair Dismissal Act of Georgia, Official Code of Georgia Annotated §§ 20-2-940 through 947. This policy is not intended and shall not be interpreted as prohibiting the school system from taking appropriate disciplinary action against any employee where there exists evidence that an employee uses, distributes or sells illegal drugs even though the employee has not been convicted of any criminal offense or where there exists evidence that an employee is under the influence of alcohol while on duty, except that the school system may not use the statement of any employee to the Superintendent requesting treatment as described in this policy.

The school district shall provide such staff development as required by state or federal law to inform employees of the dangers of drug abuse, the availability of employee assistance and drug counseling and treatment and the terms of this policy.

A copy of this policy shall be disseminated to all employees either directly or through employee handbooks.

### **100% Tobacco-Free School District Policy**

The Dodge County School Board of Education recognizes that the use of tobacco products is a health, safety, and environmental hazard for students, employees, visitors, and school facilities. The Board acknowledges that adult employees and visitors serve as role models for students and that the Board's acceptance of any use of tobacco products implies school approval, if not endorsement, of such use. In addition, the Board recognizes that it has an obligation to promote positive role models in schools and promote a healthy learning and working environment, free from unwanted smoke, for the students, employees, and visitors to the school campus. Finally, the board recognizes that it has a legal authority and obligation pursuant to the Georgia Smoke-free Air Act of 2005 (O.C.G.A. § 31-12A-1 et seq.), the federal Pro-Children's Act (Title X of Public Law 103-227), the Georgia Youth Access Law (O.C.G.A. § 16.12.171) and the No Child Left Behind Act.

#### **Tobacco/Vape Use Prohibited**

No student, staff member or school visitor is permitted to use any tobacco product/vape at any time, including non-school hours 24 hours per day, seven days per week:

- In any building, facility, or vehicle owned, leased, rented or chartered by the Dodge County Schools.
- On any school grounds and property – including athletic fields and parking lots – owned leased, rented or chartered by Dodge County Schools; or
- At any school-sponsored or school-related event on-campus or off-campus.

In addition, no student is permitted to possess a tobacco product/vape. The policy may permit tobacco products to be included in instructional or research activities in public school buildings if the activity is conducted or supervised by the faculty member overseeing the instruction or research and the activity does not include smoking, chewing, or otherwise ingesting the tobacco product.

#### **Tobacco Products and Tobacco Use**

Tobacco products are defined to include cigarettes, candy cigarettes, chewing tobacco, blunts, blunt wraps, pre wrapped blunt cones and tubes, cigars, cigarillos, bidis, pipes, cigarette packages or smokeless tobacco containers, lighters, ash trays, key chains, t-shirts, coffee mugs, and any other items containing or reasonably resembling tobacco or tobacco products. Tobacco use includes smoking, chewing, dipping, or any other use of tobacco products.

#### **School Grounds and Property**

School grounds and property means and includes land, school facilities and school vehicles used for the provision of academic, extracurricular programs and administration by the district. School grounds include playgrounds and recreational places. School grounds include that portion of land, school facilities and other facilities owned by municipalities, private entities or other individuals during those times when the school district has exclusive use of a portion of such land, school facilities, or other facilities for the provision of extracurricular programs.

#### **Time of Day**

"Any time" or "at all times" means during normal school and non-school hours - 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.

#### **Signage**

Signs declaring all school grounds and property as tobacco-free will be posted in all school buildings and vehicles. Signs will be posted at all vehicular entrances to school grounds and building entrances, and in all indoor and outdoor athletic facilities.

#### **Enforcement for Students**

Consequences for students engaging in the prohibited behavior will be provided in accordance with the school's student code of conduct. Students who violate the school districts tobacco use policy will be referred to the guidance counselor, school nurse, or other health or counseling services for all offenses for screening, information, counseling and referral. All student violators will have access to an Alternative to Suspension (ATS) program. The ATS program will provide up-to-date information on the many consequences of tobacco use, offer techniques that students can use to stop tobacco use at school, and provide referrals to local youth tobacco cessation programs. Parents/guardians will be notified of all violations and actions taken by the school. School may also use community service as part of the consequences. Suspension will only be used after a student has several prior violations or refused to participate in other outlined measures.

### **Enforcement for Staff and Visitors**

Consequences for employees who violate the tobacco use policy will be in accordance with personnel policies and may include verbal warning, written reprimand, or termination. Visitors using tobacco products will be asked to refrain while on school property or leave the premises. If they refuse, law enforcement officers will be contacted to escort the person off the premises or cite the person for trespassing in case the person refuses to leave the school property. In the case of a violation within the building of a school, the person is in violation of the Georgia Smoke free Air Act of 2005 and the federal Pro-Children's Act (Title X of Public Law 103-227) and subject to a fine. Signage will be prominently posted in all visitors' areas and school staff and officials will communicate policy to visitors upon arrival and infractions.

### **Enforcement at Outdoor School Sponsored Events on Campus Grounds**

All outdoor school sponsored events on campus (ex. athletic events, meetings or functions by community groups renting school property) must be tobacco free. This policy must be clearly stated in all contracts, correspondence and verbal and written announcements to all attendees and contractors.

### **Enforcement at School Sponsored Events Off Campus**

All indoor and outdoor school sponsored events off campus in venues (ex: rented arenas, stadiums, halls, theaters) must be tobacco free. This policy must be clearly stated in all contracts, correspondence and verbal and written announcements to all attendees and contractors.

### **Opportunities for Cessation**

The administration will identify and offer programs and services for students who are ready to quit tobacco use. The administration will identify and offer programs and services for school staff who use tobacco products to support them in complying with the policy that prohibits tobacco use on school grounds and during school-related events and assisting those staff who are ready to quit smoking or other tobacco use.

### **Prevention Education**

The administration will identify programs or opportunities for students (inside and or outside of the classroom) to gain a greater understanding of the health hazards of tobacco use and the impact of tobacco use as it relates to providing a safe, orderly, clean and inviting school environment.

### **Procedures for Implementation**

The policy will become effective on January 1, 2011 or upon adoption by the Board. The administration will develop a plan for communicating the policy that will include information in student and employee handbooks, announcements at school-sponsored or school-related events, and appropriate signage (as mentioned above) in buildings and around campus. Other methods will be identified for notifying students, employees and parents about this policy. An enforcement plan, which identifies consequences for students, staff and visitors who violate the policy, will be created and communicated to all students, staff and parents.

### **Model Enforcement Policy**

Enforcement for students:

1st Offense: Tobacco education/alternative to suspension course or a one-day suspension; parent notification

2nd Offense: Tobacco education/Alternative to Suspension course is mandatory; parent notification

3rd Offense: Three-day suspension; parent notification

4th Offense: Administrator's discretion

Enforcement for staff: Should follow the school's personnel regulations as with any other personnel policy.  
Enforcement policies for visitors: Communicate, Communicate, And Communicate!

### **DRUG-FREE SCHOOLS POLICY COMPLIANCE**

Information for you to know:

- \* The use of illicit drugs and the unlawful possession and use of alcohol is wrong and harmful.
- \* Disciplinary sanctions, up to and including expulsion and referral for prosecution, will be imposed if the standards of conduct are violated. The sanctions to be imposed for violations may include conferences, suspension, and expulsion.
- \* Information concerning drug and alcohol counseling, rehabilitation, and re-entry programs can be obtained from the school counselor or administrative staff.
- \* Compliance with the standards of conduct is mandatory.
- \* Parents or students wishing to receive or review the entire board policy on student or employee drug use and/or possession may receive a copy of this policy upon request.
- \* The sharing of prescription medication is unlawful.

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

It is the policy of the Dodge County School District that racial, sexual, or other forms of harassment or discrimination are strictly forbidden. Any student or employee who believes he or she has been subjected to harassment or discrimination by other students or employees of the school district based upon his or her race, color, religion, national origin, age, or sex should promptly report the same to the principal of this school or the appropriate coordinator, who will implement the board's discriminatory complaints or harassment procedures. Students may also report harassment or discrimination to their school counselor. Students and employees shall not be subjected to retaliation for reporting such harassment or discrimination.

## **Meal Charge Policy**

Emphasis on federal regulations has required the Dodge County School District to establish a procedure for meal charges. Meal charges cannot exceed \$10.00 for any student or adult. ALL charges must be paid prior to the last school day of the month. An Alternative Meal will be served once this charge threshold is reached. An Alternative Meal consists of a sandwich and a carton of milk. Please view all account activity at [myschoolbucks.com](http://myschoolbucks.com) or contact the School Nutrition Cashier at the school.

## **DESCRIPTION OF BENEFITS**

**GENERAL INFORMATION FOR NEW EMPLOYEES-** In compliance with Georgia House Bill 37, notice is given that the Dodge County Board of Education withholds social security and/or participates in other benefits as listed below.

**Cafeteria Benefit Plan (Section 125)** - Effective July 1, 2000, the Dodge County School system updated their Cafeteria Plan. Deductions included are health, dental, cancer, intensive care, accident, hospital indemnity, and vision.

**Teacher Retirement System** - Teacher's Retirement is a required deduction all employees employed one-half time or more. Covered positions are teachers, administrators, supervisors, clerk, paraprofessionals and secretaries. All members contribute 6.00% of their gross salary to the system. The employer contribution rate for FY27 is 22.32%. As of July 1, 1989, payroll deductions are federal and state tax exempt.

**Employee Retirement System**-Employees who transfer from a ERS agency can elect to remain in ERS, as long as they are full-time employees. All members contribute 1.25% of their gross salary to the system. The employer contribution rate for FY27 is 29.28%.

**Public School Employees Retirement System** - Public Retirement is a supplemental retirement plan provided for bus drivers, maintenance workers, custodians and food service workers. Each member contributes \$10.00 per month (September - May).

**State Health Benefit Plan** – Employees may be eligible for health insurance benefits offered through Georgia State Health Benefit Plan (SHBP). Options and eligibility requirements may be obtained at <http://dch.georgia.gov/documents/summary-plan-description>

**American Family Life** - Group rates on intensive care, life, cancer, hospital indemnity and/or accident insurance. These deductions are under the Cafeteria Plan.

**Guardian Life** - Employer paid Dental, Vision and Group Life, Short Term and/or Long Term Disability. Employees may also insure their dependents and pay through payroll deduction.

**Unum Provident Life Assurance Company** - Group rates for Term and Whole Life insurance.

**Mass Mutual** - Tax sheltered Annuities are available to supplement your retirement (fixed and variable accounts) and additional life insurance coverage is available for you and your dependents that can be carried with you when your employment is terminated.

**Valic** - Tax-deferred retirement plan options, ranging from IRA's to a wide array of fixed-account and variable-account investment options.

**LSW** – Same as Valic

**Worker's Compensation Insurance** - The Board of Education is required to provide this insurance for all school employees. An employee must report immediately to their supervisor any accident that occurs while the employee is on duty.

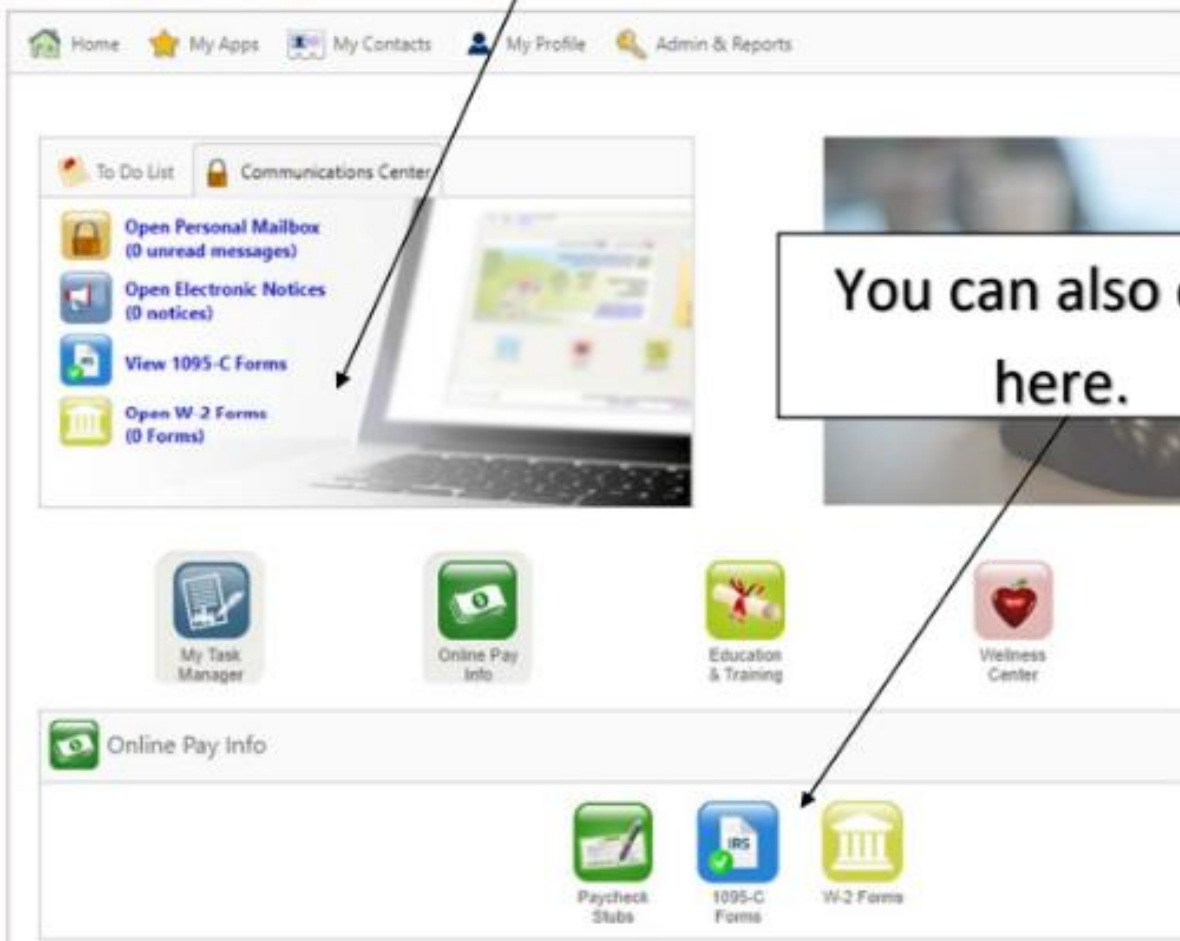
**PAGE and GAE/DAE** - Dues for these organizations are payroll deductible.

## Where to find my W2/1095 Forms?

1. Go to My Benefits Channel Link

<https://www.mybenefitschannel.com/Public/Login/login.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2Fdefault.aspx>

Click on View 1095 or Open W2



You can also click here.

Once you get on the screen click the year.

Results

| Year | EN        | Office                   | Type |
|------|-----------|--------------------------|------|
| 2023 | 586000229 | DODGE COUNTY BOARD OF ED | W-2  |

## SIGNATURE PAGE

I affirm that I have reviewed the contents of the Dodge County Schools Personnel Handbook for 2026-2027 which includes the information that I will abide by while employed by the Dodge County Board of Education.

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*Staff Signature*

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*Date*