# Spartanburg School District 4

# 2026-2027 Employee Handbook

*Spartanburg School District Four is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, religion, national origin, age, handicap, English-speaking status or veteran status in the provision of educational opportunities and benefits in compliance with Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the employment provisions (Title I) of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Age Discrimination and Employment Act, and all other applicable civil rights laws. Non-discrimination inquiries regarding employees and adults should contact the Spartanburg County School District Four Administrative Offices at (864) 476-3186.*

NOTHING IN THIS HANDBOOK OR IN ANY POLICY MANUAL OF SPARTANBURG COUNTY DISTRICT 4 SCHOOLS CONSTITUTES OR CREATES AN EXPRESS OR IMPLIED CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT. RATHER, THIS HANDBOOK SHOULD BE UNDERSTOOD AS A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE BENEFITS OFFERED BY SPARTANBURG COUNTY DISTRICT 4 SCHOOLS AND AN OVERVIEW OF ITS POLICIES AND RULES. THIS HANDBOOK SUPERSEDES ALL PREVIOUS HANDBOOKS OR OTHER DOCUMENTS THAT ADDRESS THE SAME SUBJECT MATTER AS THE POLICIES AND RULES CONTAINED IN THE HANDBOOK. IN ADDITION, THIS HANDBOOK, OR ITS UNDERLYING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES, CAN BE MODIFIED OR ALTERED AT ANY TIME BY SPARTANBURG COUNTY DISTRICT 4 SCHOOLS. I UNDERSTAND THAT THE DISTRICT'S HANDBOOK AND POLICY MANUAL ARE NOT CONTRACTS.

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**Employee Name**
*(Please Print)*

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**Employee Signature**

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**Date**

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## Our Mission

*Spartanburg School District Four…*

Impacting and empowering students for the future through high expectations, academic rigor, supportive relationships, and the development of a strong work ethic in a safe and orderly environment.

## Our Vision

We envision a district where…

- Student learning is a priority.
- Decisions are made in the best interest of students.
- Students graduate with skills necessary for the next phase of life.
- Staff and students feel safe, respected, and valued.
- Educators, families, and the community work together to educate our students.

## Our Beliefs

We believe…

- Student achievement based on high expectations is our priority.
- Decisions should be made in the best interest of students.
- Students deserve highly qualified, motivated, and professional educators who are engaged in continuous improvement.
- Preparation for life-long learning in a global society is our purpose.
- Supportive, nurturing relationships maximize learning.
- Safe, well-maintained facilities enhance the learning environment.
- Family and community involvement are essential for student success.

# Spartanburg District Four Board of Trustees

**Morgan Smith – Chairman**

**Sandy Norman - Vice-Chairman**

**Nathan Craig – Secretary**

**Tony Davis**

**Ted Harrison, Jr.**

**Phil Hembree**

**Micha Kelley**

**Jay Phillips**

**Rick Sloan**

The Spartanburg School District Four Board of Trustees determines the direction of the school district by attending to duties outlined in the South Carolina Code of Laws including:

- Approving policies to govern the district in the areas of personnel, finance, instruction, administration, board operations, student operations, and public relations.
- Employing a superintendent to carry out board-set policies, to manage the day-to-day operations of the district, and to evaluate the superintendent.
- Developing an annual budget based on priorities for instruction, buildings, personnel and services.
- Setting district goals and objectives and monitoring their progress.
- Serving as an appeals body for student and employee discipline cases.

District Four voters elect the school board ensuring local control of the school district. Board members are elected to four-year terms and serve without compensation.

**The District Four Board of Trustees meets on the first Monday of each month at 6:00 p.m. at Woodruff High School unless that date falls on a holiday. In such cases, the Board will meet the following Monday. The public is invited to attend.**

## 2026–2027 School Board Meeting Schedule

August 3
September 14
October 5
November 9
January 4
February 1
March 1
March 29
May 3
June 7

# District Office Staff

**Dr. Aaron Fulmer** *Superintendent*

**Mr. Chris Benfield** *Assistant Superintendent of Business and Finance*

**Mr. Ron Bell** *Maintenance Director*

**Mrs. Heather Dotson** *Administrative Assistant for Special Services*

**Mrs. Kerie Epton** *Administrative Assistant for Personnel and Support Services*

**Mr. Richard Foster** *Systems Specialist*

**Mr. Corey Goodman** *Systems Specialist*

**Ms. Jill Hennett** *Food Service Assistant*

**Mrs. Stephanie Hurst** *Procurement Officer*

**Mr. Russell Mahaffey** *Director of Personnel and Student Services*

**Mrs. Suzanne McConnell** *Special Education Coordinator*

**Mr. Mike Morris** *Athletic Director*

**Mrs. Heather Pace** *Receptionist*

**Mrs. Lesa Perkins** *Instructional Secretary and Accounts Payable*

**Mr. Justin Roper** *Technology Director*

**Mr. Clark Simpkins, Jr.** *Director of Facilities and Assistant Business Manager*

**Mrs. Stacey Skinner** *Benefits and Payroll*

**Mr. James Talanges** *Systems Specialist*

**Mrs. Audra Terry** *Food Service Director*

**Ms. Rachel Traynham** *Director of Compliance and Student Support Services*

**Mr. Austin Tucker** *Systems Specialist*

**Mr. Bobby Turner** *Director of Security and Emergency Management*

**Mrs. Jennifer Turner** *Director of Curriculum and Accountability*

**Ms. Amy Williams** *Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent and Board of Trustees*

# District and School Directory

**Spartanburg District Four Administrative Offices**
118 McEdco Road
Woodruff, SC 29388
Office: (864) 476-3186
*https://www.spartanburg4.org/*
Superintendent: Dr. Aaron Fulmer
Assistant Superintendent of Business & Finance: Chris Benfield

**Woodruff Primary School**
200 Lucy P. Edwards Road
Woodruff, SC 29388
Office: (864) 476-3174
*https://wps.spartanburg4.org/*
Principal: Casey Dover
Assistant Principal: Allison Duckett
Assistant Principal: Tory Legette

**Woodruff Elementary School**
915 Cross Anchor Road
Woodruff, SC 29388
Office: (864) 476-3123
*https://wes.spartanburg4.org/*
Principal: Dr. Michelle McCoy
Assistant Principal: Paige Roper
Assistant Principal: Shanita Wallace

**Woodruff Intermediate School**
205 SJ Workman Highway
Woodruff, SC 29388
Office: (864) 756-7010
*https://wis.spartanburg4.org/*
Principal: Giada Parris
Assistant Principal: Jami Guker
Assistant Principal: Camille Robinson

**Woodruff Middle School**
710 Cross Anchor Highway
Woodruff, SC 29388
Office: (864) 476-3150
*https://wms.spartanburg4.org/*
Principal: Scott Lawson
Assistant Principal: Michelle Call
Assistant Principal: Adam Knighten

**Woodruff High School**
1501 Cross Anchor Road
Woodruff, SC 29388
Office: (864) 476-7045
*https://whs.spartanburg4.org/*
Principal: Christine Morris
Assistant Principal: Eddie Brooks
Assistant Principal: Bryce Duckett

**Transportation Office**
200 Lucy P. Edwards Road
Woodruff, SC 29388
Office: (864) 476-3158
*https://www.spartanburg4.org/departments/transportation*
Transportation Director: Bryan Ard

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

The Spartanburg School District Four Employee Handbook has been created to provide employees with information on policies, regulations, and procedures related to employment. Questions regarding this information should be directed to principals or immediate supervisors unless policies designate a specific district administrator.

The Spartanburg District Four Board Policy Manual may be accessed online at the following link: *https://www.spartanburg4.org/departments/school-board/policy-manual*

In addition, copies of the Spartanburg District Four Board Policy Manual are located in each school's media center.

**Equal Opportunity Employment**

Spartanburg District Four is an equal opportunity employer. The district will recruit, hire, train, promote and make other employment decisions on the basis of individual merit and without discrimination because of race, religion, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, or any related medical conditions), color, disability, age (40 or older), genetic information, national origin, or any other applicable status protected by local, state, or federal law. **Spartanburg District Four Board Policy GBA** applies to all aspects of employment, including the following areas: recruitment, selection and hiring criteria and practices, job classifications, transfer and promotion, demotions, terminations, layoffs and recalls, compensation, working conditions, benefits and privileges of employment, and training.

**Americans with Disabilities Act**

No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States shall, solely by reason of this disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. This applies to those areas covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Any employee who has a disability that may require accommodation should notify his/her employer.

**Drug-Free Workplace**

Pursuant to the federal Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988, **Spartanburg District Four Board Policy GBEC** outlines the following:

- The district is committed to providing a drug and alcohol-free learning environment and workplace. Drug and alcohol abuse at school or in connection with school-sponsored activities on or off school grounds threatens the health and safety of our students and our employees and adversely affects the educational mission.
- No employee will unlawfully manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess, use or be under the influence of any drug in the workplace.
- "Workplace" means the site for the performance of work. That includes any school building or any school premises and any school-owned vehicle or any other school-approved vehicle used to transport students to and from school or school activities. It also includes off-school property during any school-sponsored or school approved activity, event or function such as a field trip or athletic event where students are under the jurisdiction of the school district.
- As a condition of employment, each employee will notify his/her supervisor of his/her arrest for violation of any criminal drug statute. The employee must notify the supervisor no later than 24 hours after such arrest.
- An employee who violates the terms of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action including, but not limited to, nonrenewal, suspension, or termination at the discretion of the board. The board will

take disciplinary action in accordance with district policies and regulations as well as applicable state and federal law.

- The district may randomly test employees in certain "sensitive jobs." Sensitive job has been defined as, but not limited to, jobs that require operation of forklifts, riding mowers/tractors, district vehicles, and buses. In addition, jobs that require the operation of cooking and slicing machines are also considered sensitive jobs. The district will maintain a list of sensitive jobs and will notify employees who hold such positions. An employee who tests positive for alcohol or drugs as a result of a random test will be in violation of this policy.
- It is unacceptable for any safety-sensitive employee subject to the Department of Transportation's drug testing regulations to use marijuana. Since the use of CBD products could lead to a positive drug test result, Department of Transportation-regulated safety-sensitive employees should exercise caution when considering whether to use CBD products.

**Tobacco-Free Schools and Campuses**

**Spartanburg District Four Board Policy GBED** prohibits the use of all tobacco products or paraphernalia including cigarettes, e-cigarettes, cigars, pipes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, and alternative nicotine products to include any vaping product, whether or not it contains nicotine. This policy applies to all district facilities, vehicles, and grounds. This includes any building, facility, and vehicle owned, operated, leased, rented, or chartered by the district and applies to all school-sponsored or school-related events, on or off school grounds. The restriction applies to employees and non-employees. Violation of this policy will lead to disciplinary actions that include, but are not limited to, verbal or written reprimand, or suspension.

**Technology Acceptable Use**

Access to computer systems and networks owned or operated by the school district impose certain responsibilities and obligations on district employees and are subject to district guidelines and governmental laws. Acceptable use is always ethical and shows restraint in the consumption of shared resources.

By participating in the use of networks and data systems provided by the school district, users agree to follow all Spartanburg District Four Technology Use Guidelines. Computer and network resources may only be used for legitimate educational purposes. Abusive, destructive, unauthorized, or otherwise inappropriate activities will result in loss of access privileges. Willful violation of these guidelines may result in district disciplinary action.

**Staff Conduct**

According to **Spartanburg District Four Board Policy GBEB**, the board expects all employees of the district to strive to set the kind of example for students that will serve them well in their own conduct and behavior and subsequently contribute to an appropriate school atmosphere.

To that end, in dress, conduct, and interpersonal relationships, all employees should recognize they are being continuously observed by students, other employees, parents, and community members, and their actions and demeanor may impair their effectiveness as an employee.

The personal life of an employee, including the employee's personal use of privately-owned electronic equipment outside of working hours such as email, text messages, instant messages or social networking sites, will be the concern of and warrant the attention of the board only as it may directly prevent the employee from effectively performing his/her assigned job duties or disrupts the educational environment or as it violates local, state, or federal law, board policy or contractual agreements. Staff members will not fraternize

or inappropriately communicate with students.

No employee will commit or attempt to induce students or others to commit an act or acts of immoral conduct, which may be harmful to others or bring discredit to the district. If it appears an employee may have violated the law, the district will cooperate with law enforcement agencies.

Employees of the district, while on duty, will not use profanity, will not use tobacco in any form, and will not consume or be under the influence of intoxicating beverages. They will not be involved in drug abuse or drug trafficking.

Violations of this policy by employees will be grounds for immediate suspension and possible termination of employment. In such cases, an employee will be informed of his/her right to a hearing.

The following list includes some of the actions that are considered misconduct while on duty**,** on or off district premises.

- failure to adhere to safety and health rules as established by state law and the district
- harassment, intimidation or bullying of a student
- possessing, using, manufacturing, distributing, or dispensing any illegal drugs or alcohol while on duty
- fighting or deliberately harming another
- being absent without approval
- refusing to follow a supervisor's instructions and direction
- destroying school property intentionally
- using obscene language which is unsuitable in the school setting
- having any interaction/activity of a sexual nature or intent with a student
- possessing weapons on school property (unless otherwise authorized by law)
- using school property without proper authorization
- behaving in any inappropriate manner to the extent of adversely affecting the employee's ability to perform his/her work

**Arrest of an Employee**

The Board delegates specific authority to the superintendent to take appropriate employment action with regards to an employee who has been arrested through **Spartanburg District Four Board Policy GBEB**.

- Employees arrested for a misdemeanor offense which would indicate a possible danger or appearance of danger to the school district, co-employees or to pupils will normally be suspended with pay pending adjudication.
- Employees arrested for a felony offense will normally be suspended with pay pending adjudication.
- In certain circumstances, other employment action may be taken.
- *Employees must notify their immediate supervisor within 24 hours of an arrest for any reason.*

# STANDARDS OF CONDUCT FOR SOUTH CAROLINA

**Pursuant to State Board of Regulation 43-58, the State Board of Education has the legal authority to deny, revoke, or suspend a certificate, or issue a public reprimand, for the following causes:**

- **incompetence,**
- **willful neglect of duty,**
- **willful violation of the rules and regulation of the State Board of Education,**
- **unprofessional conduct,**
- **drunkenness,**
- **cruelty,**
- **crime against the law of this state or the United States,**
- **immorality,**
- **any conduct involving moral turpitude,**
- **dishonesty,**
- **evident unfitness for the position for which one is employed,**
- **test security violation,**
- **sale or possession of narcotics,**
- **obtaining or attempting to obtain a certificate by fraudulent means or through misrepresentation of material facts,**
- **failure to comply with the provisions of a contract without the written consent of the local school board,**
- **failure to comply with a court order for child support, and**
- **failure for a second time to complete successfully the formal evaluation process as an annual contract teacher.**

**The State Board of Education may impose any one of the following disciplinary actions on an educator certificate:**

- **permanent revocation;**
- **revocation with the right to reapply after three years,**
- **suspension for a specified period of time;**
- **suspension for a specified period of time, upon satisfaction of certain conditions such as drug or alcohol testing, counseling, or treatment; psychiatric testing, counseling, or treatment; or other conditions appropriate to the facts of the case,**
- **public reprimand.**

**The process for taking disciplinary action on an educator certificate:**

**1. The Department of Education may learn of possible grounds for disciplinary action on an educator certificate from a school district superintendent pursuant to State Board of Education Regulation 43-58.1, other states, the media, and individual complaints.**

**2. Once the Department of Education learns of conduct that may constitute just cause for disciplinary action, the Department will notify the educator of pending disciplinary action and of the educator's right to a hearing. The educator has fifteen days from the receipt of the notice to make a written request for a hearing.**

**3. If the educator fails to request a hearing within this time frame, he or she will waive the right to a hearing and the State Board may impose disciplinary action based on the information presented by the Department.**

**4. If the educator requests a hearing, a hearing will be conducted before the Board or a hearing officer, pursuant to State Board of Education Rule BCAF, Procedures for Educator Certification Hearings.**

**South Carolina educators have had disciplinary action taken on their certificates for**

- **pursuing a personal, inappropriate relationship with a student;**
- **touching a student inappropriately;**
- **engaging in a physical altercation with a student;**
- **supplying alcohol or drugs to a student;**
- **using a school computer to view or download pornography;**
- **sending or receiving prurient e-mails;**
- **violating test security;**
- **violating state or federal laws involving drugs or alcohol or other illegal behavior;**
- **embezzling public funds;**
- **committing breach of trust; and**
- **breaching a teaching contract.**

**Applicants for certification in South Carolina have had their applications for certification denied because they have serious criminal records and, in some cases, failed to fully disclose their criminal records.**

**Notice of the denial, public reprimand, suspension or revocation of an educator's certificate is sent to all districts in South Carolina and to the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC) Clearinghouse.**

**Professional Behavior and Dress**

Employees are expected to adhere to the highest standards of professional conduct in their interactions with students, other employees, and the public. According to **Spartanburg District Four Board Policy GBE**, it is the responsibility of all district employees to serve as role models for students and present a positive, professional image in language, behavior, and dress. In order to provide an atmosphere that enhances learning, prevents disruptions, and sets an example for students, all employees should dress in a professional manner. Each school's faculty handbook may have specific requirements regarding employee dress code.

**Conflict of Interest**

According to **Spartanburg District Four Board Policies GBEA, GCR, and GDR**, no employee shall engage in or have a financial interest, directly or indirectly, in any activity that conflicts or raises a reasonable question of conflict with his duties and responsibilities in the school district. Employees shall not engage in work of any type where information concerning customer, client, or employer originates from any information available to him/her through school sources. A professional employee will not sell instructional supplies, equipment or reference books in the attendance area served by his/her school, nor will the employee furnish the names of students or parents to anyone selling these materials.

The board prohibits a professional staff member from engaging in any employment that would have the following effect:

- Impair the individual's usefulness as an employee in the district.
- Make time and/or energy demands upon the individual which could interfere with his/her effectiveness in performing regular assigned duties.
- Compromise or embarrass the school system.
- Adversely affect the individual's employment status or professional personnel standing.
- Conflict with assigned duties in any way.

An employee will not engage in any other employment or in any private business during the hours necessary to fulfill appropriate assigned duties.

**Tutoring for Pay**

According to **Spartanburg District Four Board Policy GCRD**, a teacher may enter into an agreement with parents for tutoring children for a fee. This practice must be limited to children other than those for whom the teacher is currently teaching or supervising. These restrictions are to assure all students reasonable assistance without charge from their own teachers, as well as to avoid placing a teacher in a position where he/she may have a conflict of interest. A teacher may not tutor any student for pay during his/her regular working hours or on school premises.

**Child Abuse and Neglect**

South Carolina law requires that certain professionals report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect, because they have unique opportunities to observe and interact with children. Mandated reporters must report abuse or neglect when, in their professional capacity, they receive information giving them reason to believe that a child's physical or mental health has been, or may be, adversely affected by abuse or neglect. A decision to report must be based upon a *reasonable belief* that a child has been, or may be, abused or neglected. Thus, mandatory reporters need not have conclusive proof that a child has been abused or neglected prior to reporting abuse or neglect to the proper authorities. A person who is required to report and fails to do so is guilty of a misdemeanor. Upon conviction, he or she may be fined up to $500 or imprisoned for up to six months, or both.

Spartanburg District Four employees should report the abuse or neglect to the school principal or designated school counselor. Upon notification, the principal or counselor will contact Spartanburg County Department of Social Services (DSS), the designated district administrator and the Child Advocacy Attorney. A written report should be submitted to the district administrator and Child Advocacy Attorney. The employee initiating the report should follow up to ensure a written report has been submitted to the Spartanburg County DSS.

**Staff Welfare/Protection**

According to **Spartanburg District Four Board Policy GBG,** the district is obligated to defend employees in legal actions resulting from acts done or omitted in good faith in the course of their employment. This requirement applies to civil or criminal action or special proceedings in the courts of this State or of the United States.

**Workers' Compensation**

The South Carolina Workers' Compensation law was designed to provide for employees who are physically hurt while on the job. According to **Spartanburg District Four Board Policy GBGD**, job-related injuries, no matter how minor they seem, must be reported immediately to the supervisor and school nurse. A ***written accident report*** should be completed immediately following the incident, even if medical treatment is not necessary. Additionally, ***all incidents must be reported*** to Key Risk using the Med-Call service. School administrators or the nurse can provide contact details. If necessary, Med-Call will schedule a medical evaluation appointment.

**NOTICE OF PROTECTIONS**

**Responsibility and Reporting Procedures**

In accordance with **Spartanburg District Four Board Policy GBAA,** the district is committed to maintaining a work environment, which is free from harassment. Harassment consists of unwelcome conduct based upon an individual's protected status such as sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, or any related medical condition), color, race, religion, national origin, handicap, age, marital status, family, sexual orientation, immigrant status, English speaking status or disability. Harassment is a major offense, which may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

An employee who feels that he/she is being harassed or an employee who is the witness to possible harassment must report the matter to the immediate supervisor of the accused employee or to the Director of Personnel. Board policy does not require the employee alleging harassment or witnessing harassment to present the matter to the person who is the subject of the complaint.

The district will promptly and thoroughly investigate all complaints of harassment according to Title IX protocols. It is every employee's responsibility, without fear of reprisal, to bring any form of harassment to the attention of the district. An investigation of the complaint will be handled according to the requirements outlined in Title IX.

Any employee who subjects another to harassment will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge. The district will make the intensely fact-specific determination of whether harassment has actually occurred and will determine what, if any, disciplinary or corrective action will be taken. The district reserves the right to take disciplinary action even if the conduct complained of does not rise to the level necessary to be characterized as harassment under the law.

**Sexual Harassment**

In accordance with **Spartanburg District Four Board Policy GBAA,** the district is committed to maintaining a work environment, which is free from harassment, including sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is defined by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) guidelines as follows: Unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment occurs when: (1) Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment; (2) Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or (3) Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

Sexual harassment may include threats or insinuations, either explicitly or implicitly, that an employee's refusal to submit to sexual advances will adversely affect the employee's employment, evaluation, wages, advancement, assigned duties, shifts or any other conditions of employment.

Other improper conduct in the workplace, whether committed by supervisors, co-workers, or other persons is also prohibited. This other conduct may include, but is not limited to, unwanted sexual flirtations; advances, propositions, or graphic verbal comments about an individual's body; sexually degrading words used to describe an individual; the display in the workplace of sexually suggestive objects, pictures, writing, language or drawings; or unwelcome touching or physical contact. Such conduct, whether committed by persons of the same or opposite sex, is prohibited, even if it does not rise to the level necessary to be categorized as sexual harassment.

**Title IX**

**Title IX Coordinator: Ms. Rachel Traynham**
**Email: rtraynham@spartanburg4.org**
**Address: 118 McEdco Road, Woodruff, SC 29388**
**Phone: 864-476-3186, ext. 2133**

No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. On May 6, 2020, the "Final Rule" was established to include precise legal compliance requirements.

Title IX is:

- Federal law
- Enforced by the Office of Civil Rights (OCR)
- Prohibits discrimination based on sex

Title IX may additionally include the following:

- Discrimination based on gender
- Sexual harassment
- Pregnancy discrimination
- Retaliation
- Bullying/cyber-bullying when it involves sexual misconduct
- Hazing when it involves sexual misconduct

Additional materials regarding Title IX can be located on the Spartanburg District Four website at www.spartanburg4.org. Reports of sex discrimination and sexual harassment should be made to a school administrator and/or the Title IX Coordinator.

**Grievance Procedure**

According to **Spartanburg District Four Board Policy GBK**, the Board recognizes the need for a procedure providing a prompt and effective means of resolving differences that may arise among employees and between employees and administrators. A grievance is a disagreement involving the work situation in which an individual or group of individuals believes an injustice has been done due to one of the following reasons:

- a lack of policy
- an unfair policy
- deviation from a policy
- misapplication of interpretation of a policy or contract

Employees should secure an equitable solution of grievances at the most immediate administrative level. Employees are encouraged to seek resolution of disputes under the existing grievance regulation and will have the right to do so with complete freedom from reprisal. Such grievance may be adjusted without formal proceedings, provided the adjustment is consistent with board policy and existing administrative rules and regulations.

A formal complaint should be filed according to the procedures and timelines outlined in the administrative rule (GBK-R) and by utilizing the grievance form provided (GBK-E).

**Whistleblower Protections**

This notice is to inform employees working on federal contracts, subcontracts and grants of the rights and remedies extended them by the Enhancement of Contractor Employee Whistleblower Protections, **Public Law 112-239, Section 828**, as amended by Public Law 114-261, codified at **41 USC 4712**.

Whistleblower protections prohibit federal contractors, subcontractors, grantees, subgrantees, or personal services contractors from retaliating against an employee who discloses information that the employee reasonably believes is evidence of:

- gross mismanagement of a Federal contract or grant;
- a gross waste of Federal funds;
- an abuse of authority relating to a Federal contract or grant;
- substantial and specific danger to public health or safety; or
- a violation of law, rule, or regulation related to a Federal contract (including the competition for or negotiation of a contract) or grant; to any of the persons or entities listed below:
- a Member of Congress or a representative of a committee of Congress;
- an Inspector General;
- the Government Accountability Office;
- a Federal employee responsible for contract or grant oversight or management at the relevant agency;
- an authorized official of the Department of Justice or other law enforcement agency;
- a court or grand jury;
- a management official or other employee of the contractor, subcontractor, or grantee who has the responsibility to investigate, discover, or address misconduct.

A person who believes they have been subjected to reprisal for a protected action may submit a complaint to the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) of the federal agency that issued the grant or contract. Complaints must be filed no more than three years after the date on which the alleged reprisal took place. Procedures for submitting fraud, waste, abuse, and whistleblower complaints are generally accessible on agency Office of Inspector General Hotline or Whistleblower Internet sites. A reporting tool to identify and link directly to the OIG with jurisdiction over the complaint is available at **Oversight.gov**.

Spartanburg Four employees are reminded that the district has policies and procedures for preventing and reporting fraud, waste, and abuse.

## SCHEDULES

### District Hours of Operation

Spartanburg District Four Administrative Offices will be open from 8:00am to 4:30pm Monday through Thursday and 8:00am to 4:00pm on Friday throughout the school year. School offices are open from 7:30am to 4:00pm Monday through Friday. Summer hours for the district and school offices will be from 8:00am – 4:00pm Monday – Thursday and 8:00am – 12:00pm on Friday. Offices will be closed for holidays.

### School Opening and Closing Times

| | Teacher Arrival | Teacher Departure | Student Tardy | Student Dismissal |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Woodruff Primary School | 7:25am (PK)<br>7:45am | 3:00pm (PK)<br>3:15pm | 7:50am | 2:15pm (PK)<br>2:25pm (5K-1st) |
| Woodruff Elementary School | 7:45am | 3:15pm | 7:50am | 2:25pm |
| Woodruff Intermediate School | 7:45am | 3:15pm | 7:55am | 2:35pm |
| Woodruff Middle School | 7:45am | 3:15pm | 7:50am | 3:00pm |
| Woodruff High School | 7:40am | 3:40pm | 7:55am | 3:15pm |

### Daily Sign-In and Sign-Out Procedures

Employees have keycards to access the keyless entry system. Each card has an assigned number. Most employee access times are from 6:30am – 4:30pm. Coaches and other staff members may have extended access times. The cards will access every door with a card reader at the employee's school. Every employee should scan his or her card upon entering the building and exiting the building for the day. The scanned times will serve for payroll purposes.

Lanyards should not identify the school or district in any way. Please do not label or attach anything to the card that will identify the school in the case that the card is lost. If a card is lost or misplaced, the card should be deactivated immediately. Please notify the school office to deactivate and replace a lost card.

### Certified Staff Work Schedules

The length of the teacher workday, exclusive of scheduled faculty or committee meetings, is 7.5 hours per day. Teachers assigned morning and afternoon duties will report at the time and place specified by the principal. Teachers are responsible for attending any faculty meetings, staff development, or school events called by the

principal. Teachers should not leave school grounds during the day without permission from the principal or his/her designee and should register time of departure and return.

**Classified/Non-Certified Staff Work Schedules**

Classified staff members fill a variety of roles, such as instructional assistants, student assistants, office staff, cafeteria staff, custodial staff, maintenance staff, and bus drivers. Within these roles, there are full-time employees and part-time employees. Hours may vary and are set by the principal or supervisor depending on the location and job responsibilities.

**Emergency School Closings**

During inclement weather conditions, the superintendent will determine whether schools will close or operate on a delayed schedule. Employees will receive automated phone messages from school principals or immediate supervisors. In addition, announcements will be made on local radio and television stations. In most cases, the seven Spartanburg County School Districts will adhere to the same closing schedule. However, there will be occasions when the districts will operate on different closing schedules, so it is important to follow information specific to Spartanburg District Four.

**Planning for Substitute Teachers**

The district provides substitute teachers from a list of approved substitutes. All substitute teachers are required to attend an orientation/training prior to being allowed to substitute in the schools. Substitute teacher orientations/trainings are held each year.

According to **Spartanburg District Four Board Policy GCG and GCG-R**, teachers should request substitutes through school administrators or the administrators' designee. Requests for leaves must be approved by the school principal. Long-term substitutes are necessary to cover classrooms when the regular teachers must be absent for more than 10 consecutive days. Long-term substitutes must be certified teachers.

Teachers are required to provide substitutes with class rosters, lesson plans, classroom procedures, emergency plans, and health-related information.

## EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENTS

The following documents must be completed prior to employment.

**Application**

Every employee must have an application for employment on file in the personnel record. There are separate applications for certified employees and classified (i.e., non-certified) employees. Applications are received and processed through TalentEd Applicant Tracker.

**Credentials**

The proper credentials must be on file in the personnel record for positions requiring certification or licensure. Certified staff should have the most current SC Educator License on file. Instructional assistants should have certificates of completion or transcripts of any post-secondary grades.

**Employee Information Form**

Employees must complete an Employee Information form upon employment and every year thereafter. This form includes demographic information and the emergency contact name and phone number.

**Background Checks**

According to **Spartanburg District Four Board Policies GCF and GBEBDA**, a South Carolina Law Enforcement Division (SLED) background check will be performed on all individuals recommended for employment. Employees from out-of-state will have a background check based on a national registry. Certified employees will also be screened through the National Sex Offender registry and will have a South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS) background check. Employment is conditional upon these results.

**Employment Eligibility Verification/Form I-9**

The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 requires all employees hired by the district to present evidence of employment eligibility and requires employers to verify that eligibility. According to **Spartanburg District Four Board Policies GBJ and GCF**, *all newly hired employees must complete the employee eligibility form (Form I-9) no later than three days after their first working day.*

**DHEC School Employee/Individual Certificate of Evaluation for Tuberculosis**

According to the **Spartanburg District Four Board Policy GBGA**, any person applying for a position in any of the district's schools will, as a prerequisite to employment, secure a health certificate from a licensed physician certifying that such person does not have tuberculosis in an active stage.

*Prior to the first day of employment*, employees must provide a certificate of evaluation for tuberculosis from a licensed physician indicating negative results or treatment of the disease. The School Employee/ Individual Certificate of Evaluation for Tuberculosis must be retained in each employee's file. Once an employee has been certified as a tuberculin non-reactor to the skin test for tuberculosis, he/she does not have to undergo the examination on an annual basis. If an employee reacts positively to the skin test, either special medical treatment or a chest x-ray is required.

**IRS W-4 and SC W-4 Forms**

Employees are required to complete W-4 forms at the time of employment, so the district can withhold the correct federal and state income taxes from the paycheck. Employees should complete new W-4 forms when his/her personal or financial situation changes. If you wish to change your tax withholding amount, you must contact the Benefits/Payroll Specialist to complete a new W-4 form by the 5th of the month. Changes made after the 5th of the month may not be reflected until the following month's paycheck. You may change the W-4 form as often as you would like.

**Drug-Free Workplace Statement**

Pursuant to the federal Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988, the **Spartanburg District Four Board Policy GBEC** addresses work-related effects of drug use and the unlawful possession of controlled substances on district premises. Employees must sign a Drug-Free Workplace Statement acknowledging they received and read the policy on Drug-Free Workplace and will follow said requirements during employment with Spartanburg District Four.

**Computer Technology Competency Assurance**

Employees should indicate their level of computer technology competency by selecting one of three options:

- Met computer technology competency in another school district (identify contact person).
- Completed activities to demonstrate competence in computer technology (list activities).
- Requesting professional development to assist in meeting computer technology competency.

**Personnel Records/Files**

According to **Spartanburg District Four Board Policy GBJ**, the personnel file will include all records and documents collected by the district concerning the employee. It may include any of the following records that are retained by the district.

- evaluation reports made by the administration
- commendations for, and complaints against, the employee made by the administration
- written suggestions for corrections and improvements made by the administration
- teaching credentials
- pre-employment references
- application records
- all other records kept about an employee

The personnel file will be kept at the District Office. The superintendent will have the overall responsibility for maintaining and preserving the confidentiality of a teacher's personnel files. The superintendent may, however, designate another school official to perform these duties for him/her. Each employee has the right to review the contents of his/her personnel file. The employee does not have the right to review references and recommendations provided to the district on a confidential basis.

## EMPLOYEE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**Vector Training Online Modules**

Spartanburg District Four provides professional training on a variety of topics through Vector Training online modules. This format provides flexibility for employees to train on these topics at times that may be more convenient for them. In addition, the modules are specific to the employees' roles. Following each module, there will be a review and/or short assessment covering the contents of the training. A record of all training courses for all employees will be maintained in the Vector Training system.

**Staff Development**

Each school establishes its own staff development schedule based on the School Renewal Plan and its annual Needs Assessment. Staff development may be held after school or during planning periods. Certified staff are required to establish Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) and/or Professional Goals as part of the ADEPT Evaluation System.

**Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Control Plan**

The district has developed an Exposure Control Plan to meet the requirements set forth by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). The Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Control Plan is located in the Health Room of each school. Employees are required to participate in Bloodborne Pathogen training through the Vector Training modules.

## CERTIFICATION AND EXPERIENCE

**Certification**

Individuals employed in an instructional classroom teaching position or who serve in a position designed for the support of the instructional program in the school district must hold appropriate credentials. It is each employee's responsibility to secure the credential from the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE).

An employee's salary is based on the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) credential on file in the District Office. When an employee has earned a higher-level credential, he/she must submit official transcripts to the SCDE for the upgrade of the certificate. The employee must present an updated license to the District Office before a salary adjustment can be made. A Request for Change/Action electronic form (located in SC Educator) and an official transcript must be submitted to the SCDE to initiate this upgrade process. In order for a transcript to be considered official, it must be submitted directly to the SCDE from the issuing college or university. If an employee submits the transcript to the SCDE, it will not be considered official and will not be accepted by the SCDE.

**Alternative Certification**

The Program of Alternative Certification for Educators (PACE) was established to enable degreed individuals, who otherwise do not meet certification requirements, to gain employment as a public-school teacher in a PACE-approved subject area. PACE requires a three-year commitment to the content area and grade level for which the individual is admitted. Candidates may be evaluated by the SC Department of Education (SCDE) for K-12, middle level, or secondary certification.

PACE is available to eligible applicants who meet these requirements:

- Conferred bachelor's degree in the corresponding subject area in certain identified fields;
- Passing score on the Praxis II subject area examination; and
- Clear FBI/SLED background check.

Once a candidate has met the SCDE requirements, he/she will be issued a Letter of Eligibility for employment. Upon receipt of the Letter of Eligibility, the candidate should present the letter to the Assistant Superintendent of Personnel, so the district can submit the Confirmation of Employment (COE) form to the SC Department of Education. (This must be completed each year the employee participates in PACE.) The employee is responsible for any additional documents and course enrollment that may be required by the SC Department of Education. Other methods of alternative certification may be found on the SCDE website. These include Teachers of Tomorrow (ToT), Teach for America (TFA), American Board, and others.

**Teaching Experience Credit**

In order for a teacher to receive credit for a year of experience in South Carolina, the teacher must be employed in a full-time teaching position for at least 152 days. Unpaid absences do not count toward days of employment. SC Department of Education regulations allow part-time employment in a regular teaching position to be accumulated in increments of one-tenths up to 0.8 of FTE (full-time equivalency) status, or 152 full-time days at which time the teacher would be credited with one year of teaching experience.

If an employee needs to document additional years of experience, a Verification of Teaching Experience electronic form must be completed and submitted to the SC Department of Education (SCDE). The educator may upload the completed form to his/her user account in SC Educator unless the SCDE requires that the form be submitted directly by the district or verifying entity (employer, college, university, or education licensing authority in another state). "Guidelines for Granting Educator Experience Credit" can be located on the SCDE website.

**Renewal Credits**

Generally, the professional certificate may be renewed for a subsequent five-year period upon presentation of 120 appropriate renewal credits. Renewal credits are awarded based on approved SC Department of Education (SCDE) Renewal Credit Matrix activities (Options 1 – 11). These credits should also align to the employee's Student Learning Objectives (SLOs), Professional Growth and Development Plan (PGDP), and/or

the School Renewal Plan. National Board Certification qualifies teachers for a five- or ten-year certification period based on the date the credential was issued.

When using college or university graduate coursework for renewal credit, an **official transcript** must be submitted to the Assistant Superintendent of Personnel to document the credits. In order for a transcript to be considered official, it must be submitted directly to the Assistant Superintendent of Personnel from the issuing college or university. It may be submitted electronically or through regular mail. However, it cannot be issued to the employee to forward to the District Office.

To submit renewal credits, the employee should submit the Pre-Approval form and Recertification Computation sheet along with evidence (e.g., transcripts, certificates) to document the credits. The principal's signature and teacher's signature are required on the Pre-Approval form and the Recertification Computation sheet. The forms may be sent to the Assistant Superintendent of Personnel through district mail.

It is important to note that when an employee ends employment with the district, it is his or her responsibility to submit all credits earned while under a Spartanburg District Four contract to the Assistant Superintendent of Personnel. After the employment end date, Spartanburg District Four will not be able to register these credits with the South Carolina Department of Education, and they may become invalid.

## CONTRACTS, EVALUATIONS, AND EMPLOYMENT STATUS (Spartanburg District Four Board Policies GCOA , GCOA-R, GCNA, GCO, GCO-R, and GDO)

### Induction Contract Level (Formative Evaluation)

Teachers who hold an initial certificate or PACE certificate (year 1) in South Carolina are evaluated at the Induction contract level. Teachers transferring from a private school or teachers transferring from out-of-state may also be evaluated at the Induction contract level. The Induction level evaluation is a formative evaluation and can be in place for up to 3 years.

Induction evaluations will include the assignment of a mentor, the formative evaluation based on the SC Teaching Standards, including Student Learning Objectives (SLOs), and participation in the district's Induction class. Teachers who meet the criteria during their Induction year may be employed at the Annual contract level the following year. Teachers who need additional support following an Induction year may be evaluated at the next Induction level or Annual Formative level, which provides diagnostic assistance.

### Annual Contract Level (Summative Evaluation)

An Annual Summative contract is issued to teachers who have met the evaluation requirements of the Induction level. Annual contracts may be formative (i.e., diagnostic assistance) or summative evaluations and may be in place up to four years.

Annual Summative contract evaluations will include a summative (i.e., formal) evaluation by a building administrator and peer evaluator. The evaluation will be based on the SC Teaching Standards and will follow the approved timeline of events. It will also include Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) and/or Professional Goals as determined by school level administration. An Annual Summative contract evaluation must be completed successfully to advance from an initial license to a professional license.

At the discretion of the district, teachers employed from out-of-state who receive a *South Carolina professional teaching certificate based on state reciprocity* may be evaluated at the Annual Formative (i.e.,

diagnostic assistance) level or the Annual Summative level.

**Annual Contract Level (Formative Evaluation)**

Annual Formative evaluation refers to what has been known as diagnostic assistance. It is issued to teachers who have completed an Induction contract year or teachers who were under summative (i.e., formal) evaluation, but did not meet the established criteria. Annual Formative contract evaluations will include a formative evaluation by a school administrator and peer evaluator. The evaluation will be based on the SC Teaching Standards and will follow the approved timeline of events. It will also include Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) and Professional Goals as determined by school level administration.

Teachers may only be evaluated at the Annual Formative level once. The Annual Formative evaluation is always followed by the Annual Summative (i.e., formal) evaluation.

At the discretion of the district, teachers employed from out-of-state who receive a *South Carolina professional teaching certificate based on state reciprocity* may be evaluated at the Annual Formative (diagnostic assistance) level or the Annual Summative level.

**Continuing Contract Level (Goals-Based Evaluation - GBE)**

A Continuing contract is issued to teachers who have successfully completed the Annual Summative evaluation and have fulfilled all requirements for a professional teaching certificate. Continuing contracts will be issued as GBE, Comprehensive Formative, or Comprehensive Summative.

Continuing contract teachers must be evaluated on a continuous basis, i.e., every year. Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) must be completed as part of the Continuing GBE level evaluation. Professional goals may also be required by school administration.

**Continuing Contract Level (Comprehensive Formative Evaluation)**

A Continuing contract teacher holds a professional license. The Comprehensive Formative evaluation is required the year of recertification, i.e., the year the license is set to expire. The teacher is required to complete a Continuing Comprehensive Formative evaluation based on the SC Teaching Standards and write Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) and/or Professional Goals. National Board Certified teachers must receive Comprehensive Formative evaluations at least once every five years.

**Continuing Contract Level (Comprehensive Summative Evaluation)**

A Continuing contract teacher under Comprehensive Summative evaluation holds a professional license and has demonstrated a need for improvement and focused support. The teacher is required to complete a Continuing Comprehensive Summative evaluation based on the SC Teaching Standards and write Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) and Professional Goals. Continuing contract teachers being recommended for Comprehensive Summative evaluation will be notified in writing when the contract is offered. The notification will include the reason a formal evaluation is recommended and a description of the process.

**Memorandum of Agreement/Letter of Agreement/Letter of Intent**

Retired educators will be employed under a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) or Letter of Agreement (LOA). Teachers under these agreements will be evaluated at the Continuing contract level, e.g., GBE or Comprehensive Formative. The specific evaluation will be determined by the expiration date of the teaching license.

Classified (i.e., non-certified) employees are employed on an at-will basis through a Letter of Intent. According

to **Spartanburg District Four Board Policy GDO**, the evaluation system for support staff is designed to measure the level of performance of individual employees and to encourage continued professional development. The evaluation system will not be a contract obligation of the district or a contract right of the employee. It is not intended to create, nor will it be construed to create, an expectation or assurance of continued employment.

**Employment Contracts**

According to **Spartanburg District Four Board Policy GCB**, before May 1 (i.e., by April 30) of each year, the district shall notify in writing all teachers concerning their employment status for the upcoming school year. This includes both the issuance of employment contracts and notice of decisions of the superintendent's recommendation not to renew employment contracts. Employees must give written acceptance of their contracts to the superintendent before May 11 (i.e., by May 10). Failure to give such notification constitutes contract rejection.

Evaluation levels will be stated on the contract. Continuing contract teachers who will be placed on formal evaluation, i.e., Continuing Comprehensive Summative, must be notified in writing when a contract is offered. The notification will include the reason a Summative (i.e., formal) evaluation is recommended and a description of the process.

**Assignments and Transfers**

According to **Spartanburg District Four Board Policy GCK, GCK-R**, **and GDJ**, the superintendent shall be responsible for the assignment of professional personnel. The preferences of teachers and other staff members shall be considered in making assignments and granting transfers. An employee who desires a transfer may submit a request in writing to the employee's current principal who will forward the request to the superintendent. The superintendent is authorized to reassign personnel in the best interest of the district. Transfers shall not require action by the Board of Trustees.

**Suspension, Dismissal, or Non-Renewal**

According to **Spartanburg District Four Board Policies GCQF, GCQF-R, and GDQD**, the superintendent may remove from employment any professional staff member who fails or who may be incompetent to give instruction in accordance with the directions of the superintendent or who other manifests an evident unfitness for teaching.

Evident unfitness for teaching is manifested by conduct such as, but not limited to, the following:

- Incompetence
- Persistent neglect of duty
- Willful violation of rules and regulations of the state board of education and/or Board of Trustees of Spartanburg District Four
- Unprofessional conduct
- Drunkenness
- Crime against the laws of this state or the United States
- Immorality
- Any conduct involving moral turpitude
- Dishonesty
- Illegal use, sale or possession of drugs or narcotics
- Obtaining or attempting to obtain an educator's certificate through fraudulent means or through misrepresentation of material facts
- Failure to comply with the provisions of a contract without the written consent of the board

- Test security violation
- Failure to comply with a court order, such as for child support, etc.
- Failure to successfully complete a formal evaluation process.

In a case of misconduct, disciplinary action may be taken against any certified employee who is determined to have engaged in unprofessional or inappropriate conduct towards students, parents/legal guardians, or staff members. Such conduct may include, but is not limited to, any of the following:

- Violating district policies or procedures
- Engaging in criminal conduct
- Engaging in inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature towards other employees or students
- Harassment, intimidation, or bullying
- Making inappropriate comments to students

This includes any action or conduct communicated or performed in person, in writing, or electronically through such means as a telephone, cell phone, computer, or other telecommunication device, and includes text messaging and instant messaging. Disciplinary action, including a recommendation of termination, may also be taken against any employee whose conduct the administration has determined has impaired the employee's ability to be an effective teacher.

Any teacher whom the superintendent recommends for dismissal or non-renewal is entitled to written notice of that recommendation that includes the following:

- The cause of dismissal
- The teacher's right to a hearing

Terminations/separations will be reported to the State Department of Education as required.

**Reduction in Force (RIF)**

According to **Spartanburg District Four Board Policy GCQA/GCQB,** the Board may find it necessary to eliminate professional staff positions because of decreases in student enrollment, changes in curriculum, financial exigency, or other circumstances as determined by the Board. This process is referred to as Reduction in Force (RIF).

Reduction in force will be on a district-wide basis. Therefore, the superintendent is not limited to considering for RIF termination only those professional staff members in a particular school, area, or program in which the loss of enrollment program change or financial exigency has occurred. The superintendent will determine which positions must be eliminated and will use specified criteria to select those professional staff members who are to be considered for nonrenewal.

**Resignation**

Any certified staff member who wants to cancel or terminate a contract must state his/her desire in writing to the superintendent according to **Spartanburg District Four Board Policies GCQC/GCQD and GDQB**. For such resignation to be effective, it must be accepted in writing by the superintendent. The district is under no obligation to release a teacher from a contract, except due to circumstances beyond the teacher's control, e.g., military/business transfer of spouse or serious illness of teacher.

When the superintendent does not accept a resignation and the employee fails to report to work or perform his/her contractual duties, the superintendent will report the breach of contract to the State Board of Education and request that appropriate action be taken against the employee for failure to comply with

contractual obligations. This may result in the suspension or revocation of the educator certificate.

A non-certified staff member who wishes to terminate his/her employment with the district may submit a letter of resignation to his/her principal or supervisor. The principal or supervisor will forward the request to the superintendent. The staff member is requested to submit this letter two weeks before the desired termination date.

**EMPLOYEE BENEFITS (Spartanburg District Four Board Policy GCBD)**
**Benefits/Payroll Specialist: Stacey Skinner**
**Email: sskinner@spartanburg4.org**
**Phone: 864-476-3186, ext. 2121**

**Public Employee Benefits Authority (PEBA)**
www.peba.sc.gov
202 Arbor Lake Drive
Columbia, SC 29223
803.737.6800 | 888.260.9430
Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

**Open Enrollment**
Open enrollment is held during the month of October of each school year or within the first 31 days for new employees. Additions or deletions of coverage made in October go into effect in January. Employees are eligible to enroll in a variety of insurance products. Additional information, enrollment, and claim forms may be obtained from the district's Benefits/Payroll Specialist or the Public Employee Benefits Authority (PEBA) website at www.peba.sc.gov. Employees may view current coverage in MyBenefits (https://mybenefits.sc.gov)

**Health Insurance**
Full-time employees are eligible for health coverage. The State Health Plan offers the Standard Plan and the Savings Plan and, for retirees who are eligible for Medicare, the Medicare Supplemental Plan. The State Health Plan (SHP) operates as preferred provider organizations (PPO). Blue Choice Health Plan HMO is a health maintenance organization. Coverage is available for employee, spouse and eligible dependent(s). The employee and employer pay a portion of the premiums.

Part-time teachers are also eligible for health, dental and vision coverage but premiums are at a higher level than that of full-time teachers. Premiums vary based upon the number of hours employed.

Employees new to the district must complete enrollment forms within 31 days of employment if they want insurance for themselves, their spouse, and/or dependents. If an employee commences active employment on the first working day of the month, coverage will go into effect on that day. If an employee commences active employment on any other day after the first working day of the month, coverage will begin on the first day of the following month.

If you have a qualifying event (e.g., birth of child, marriage, spouse loses insurance coverage, etc.), you may change your health coverage within 31 days of the qualifying event. You will need to present documentation for the qualifying event, which could take time to secure. Therefore, an employee should not wait until the end of the time period.

**Certificate of Creditable Coverage**

Terminated subscribers may request a certificate of creditable coverage from the insurance carrier. This certificate may be used to reduce the pre-existing condition period of your next employer's health insurance plan. If you and/or your dependents are enrolling in a state health plan for the first time, you are responsible for obtaining and submitting a certificate of creditable coverage with your enrollment form.

**Dental Plans**

The State offers two options for dental coverage: 1) Basic Dental and 2) Dental Plus. Basic Dental is provided at no cost to the full-time employee with lower premiums for qualifying dependent coverage. Basic Dental pays less with higher out-of-pocket costs. Dental Plus pays more with lower out-of-pocket costs, however premiums are higher. Changes to existing dental coverage can be made only during open enrollment in odd-numbered years.

**Vision Coverage**

Vision coverage provides an eye exam once per year. It also allows for either frames/lenses or contacts.

**COBRA**

If you lose coverage due to termination of employment or reduction in hours, coverage for you and/or dependents may be continued under the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (COBRA).

**Life Insurance**

Employees are automatically enrolled in Basic Life insurance at no additional cost if enrolled in health insurance. This policy provides $3,000 in coverage. It also provides a matching amount of Accidental Death and Dismemberment (AD&D) insurance.

**Optional Life Insurance**

Employees may elect more coverage through Optional life insurance. Premiums are determined by employee's age and coverage amount, which is offered in $10,000 increments.

**Dependent Life Insurance**

Employees may elect to cover their eligible spouse and/or children with Dependent Life insurance. Dependent Life Spouse insurance is also calculated based on age and coverage amount, which is offered in $10,000 increments. Dependent Life Child provides a $15,000 policy with a one premium of $1.26 for all eligible children.

**Disability Insurance**

Basic Long-Term Disability Insurance (BLTD) is provided at no cost when an employee is enrolled in health insurance. The monthly benefit will be 62.5% of the employee's monthly salary with a maximum benefit of $800 per month.

Supplemental Long-Term Disability Insurance (STLD) is a voluntary program. Premiums are based on a choice between the 90-day or 180-day waiting periods and age. If approved, the monthly benefit will be 65% of the employee's gross monthly salary.

**Tax-Sheltered Annuities - Deferred Compensation**

The district offers three types of voluntary retirement plans. The district does not provide a dollar/percentage match on monies that employees contribute to these plans. Employees may participate in the Deferred Compensation Program administered by the SC State Deferred Compensation Fund. Earnings which are not

taxed can be deducted from an employee's salary. Information regarding 401(k), 403(b) and 457 plans can be discussed with the Benefits/Payroll Specialist at any time.

**MoneyPlus**

MoneyPlus is a tax-favored account program. An employee funds the account with money deducted pre-tax from the paycheck.

**Employee Assistance Program (EAP)**

McLaughlin Young Group
704.529.1428 | 800.633.3353

Spartanburg District Four provides a valuable benefit to all employees and their immediate family members known as the **Employee Assistance Program (EAP)**. The district has partnered with McLaughlin Young Group, an independent provider of EAP services.

The EAP offers help for personal and/or professional concerns by providing free, confidential, short-term counseling and personal consultation. Additionally, the EAP provides work-life resources for such issues as legal and financial consultations, online learning and resources. The EAP has a network of counselors that are conveniently located. Prior enrollment is not required.

Some examples of concerns that the EAP addresses include:

- Family and relationship issues
- Resiliency and coping skills
- Grief and loss
- Stress
- Depression and anxiety
- Work-related issues
- Alcohol or drug use
- Legal and financial issues

Confidentiality is one of the most important features of the EAP. No one will know that an employee has used this resource unless the employee offers that information or unless someone's safety is threatened. There is no cost to employees for phone calls, virtual or face-to-face visits with the EAP. Spartanburg District Four covers all expenses for this program.

To seek assistance through the EAP, simply call **704-529-1428** or **800-633-3353**. Appointments are available during daytime and evening hours. If an employee schedules appointments during work hours, it is the employee's responsibility to make appropriate arrangements with his/her principal, supervisor, or Assistant Superintendent of Personnel. The EAP is not designed to evaluate fitness for duty or authorize leave of absence but will provide referrals as needed.

The EAP staff at McLaughlin Young is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

**COMPENSATION**
**Benefits/Payroll Specialist: Stacey Skinner**
**Email: sskinner@spartanburg4.org**
**Phone: 864-476-3186, ext. 2121**

**Salary Schedules**

According to **Spartanburg District Four Board Policy GBC**, the compensation of certificated personnel is based on the state salary schedule with local supplements as approved by the board. The schedule takes into consideration the levels of professional training and years of service.

Employees should contact the principal to receive a copy of the salary schedule related to their positions.

**Teaching Certificates**

Certified employees should submit the latest copy of the teaching license to the Benefits/Payroll Specialist. The copy may be printed from the SC Department of Education website by the employee. Payroll changes related to upgrades to the certificate cannot be processed until the new license has been submitted to the Benefits/Payroll Specialist.

**Direct Deposit Program**

Employees are paid on the 20th of each month. Employees may choose to have their monthly payroll checks deposited directly to their personal checking or savings accounts. The employee should set up this program with the Benefits/Payroll Specialist by providing a blank voided check or verification statement from the bank. Employees who receive pay on a weekly or rotational basis do not qualify for direct deposit.

The first check of the contractual period for the nine-month, traditional-calendar employee is issued in August; the last check is in July. Funds are electronically transferred on the morning of payday unless the 20th falls on a weekend. The employee will receive the verification on payday, which will serve as a record of deposit, gross pay, deductions, and net entitlement.

Once direct deposit is established, changes to another account at the same bank must be made by the 5th of the month by notifying the Benefits/Payroll Specialist. If an employee changes banks or notifies the Benefits/Payroll Specialist after the 5$^{th}$ of the month, the employee will receive a check for the initial month of the change, and direct deposit will begin the following month.

**Salary Deductions**

According to **Spartanburg District Four Board Policy DKB**, all deductions from salary, except for deductions required by law, are voluntary on the part of the individual employee. The district requires that voluntary deductions be authorized in writing by the employee on a form supplied by the district. By permitting a payroll deduction plan, the district in no way endorses any product or service or makes any representation as to its possible value.

The following payroll deductions are required by law:

- Social Security
- State and federal income tax
- State retirement

The following additional payroll deductions are allowed by law and approved by the Board:

- Extended family benefits for health insurance
- Tax sheltered annuity plans which meet Board established criteria
- Employee credit unions
- Deductions for state-authorized group survivor monthly income insurance programs and term life insurance

The district will maintain and operate any 403(b) programs pursuant to a written plan. The written plan will contain all the material terms and conditions for eligibility, benefits, applicable limitations, the contracts available under the plan, the time and form under which distributions may be made, and other optional features as appropriate. The district will generally open these programs to all employees and provide notification on an annual basis.

Part-time teachers working 15-30 hours per week qualify for state health and dental insurance.

**Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA)**

The FICA requires employers and employees to make contributions to fund Medicare and Social Security programs. It is a payroll tax that comes out of employee's paychecks. The rate for FICA is set annually, although it does not always change each year. The current FICA tax rate is a combination of the social security tax rate (6.2%) and the Medicare tax rate (1.45%) for a total of 7.65%.

**Name, Address, and Certification Changes**

Employees must immediately report any change in name, address, or status of teaching credential to the Benefits/Payroll Specialist. Changes in insurance coverage should also be reported to the Benefits/Payroll Specialist. For payroll purposes, name changes cannot be processed until a copy of the new Social Security card with the employee's new name has been received by the Benefits/Payroll Specialist.

## RETIREMENT (Spartanburg District Four Board Policies GCQE and GDQC)

**South Carolina Retirement System (SCRS)**

Permanent, full-time employees must either join the South Carolina Retirement System (SCRS) or the Optional Retirement Program (ORP) unless specifically exempted by statute. If an employee does not make a selection, he or she will automatically be enrolled in the SCRS. Temporary or part-time employees may choose whether to join. Membership begins on the effective date of employment.

Contributions under both plans are deferred from federal and state income tax. The employee contributes 9% regardless of the plan chosen. While actively employed, the SCRS account earns 4% interest (compounded annually) while your ORP account rate may vary. If an employee participates in the SCRS she/he must continue in the system even if he or she changes to part-time employment.

## ABSENCES AND LEAVES

**Absences**

Whenever an employee needs to be absent, the principal, the principals' designee, or supervisor should be notified as soon as possible. It is the employee's responsibility to provide notification according to the method provided by the principal, principal's designee, or supervisor, such as a phone call or text message. In most

circumstances, it is not appropriate to send an e-mail due to the possible delay in receipt of the email. Because of the importance of securing a qualified and appropriate substitute, as much advance notice as possible is requested.

**Sick Leave**

According to **Spartanburg District Four Board Policies GCC, GCC-R, GDC, and GDC-R** all full-time employees of the district will accrue sick leave on the basis of one and one-fourth days of sick leave for each month of active service. This will provide:

- 12 days for 9 months (190 days)
- 13 days for 10 months (210 days)
- 14 days for 11 months (220 days)
- 15 days for 12 months (240 days)

An employee may accumulate up to 90 days of sick leave which is accrued but not used provided that such employee does not violate his/her respective contract or agreement. An employee may use sick leave for absences caused by personal illness, illness in the immediate family, or death in the immediate family. If an employee is absent due to personal illness, illness in the immediate family, or death in the immediate family, there will be no salary deduction until all cumulative days have been taken. (Exception: Not more than 12 days per year can be used for reasons other than personal illness.) The day or days will be deducted from the cumulative leave days regardless of whether a substitute is secured.

Immediate family under "illness in the immediate family" will mean parent, spouse, child, brother, sister or any other person living in the house who is dependent on the employee for care.

Immediate family under "death in the immediate family" will mean parent, spouse, child, sister, brother, grandparent, aunt, uncle, mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister-in-law, brother-in-law, niece, nephew, grandchild or grandparents-in-law.

An employee will be allowed to use four days per year of the sick leave for personal reasons other than personal illness, illness in the immediate family, or death in the immediate family. Personal leave must be approved by the immediate supervisor. Such days will not be cumulative. *No employee will be expected to request such a day for personal leave on the last day before holidays officially begin, or, on the first day after holidays officially end. An employee will also not be expected to request such a day during the first two weeks or the last two weeks of the school session.*

All personnel may be compensated for accumulated sick days in excess of 90 days at the rate of $50 per day.

**Personal Leave**

According to **Spartanburg District Four Board Policies GCC, GCC-R, GDC, and GDC-R**, the district will grant full-time employees four days of personal leave each year. These days are non-cumulative and will be charged against the sick leave days granted annually. Employees should direct requests for personal leave to the principal or immediate supervisor.

The district will not grant personal leave during the following periods unless approved beforehand:

- A school day before a holiday
- A school day immediately following a holiday
- The initial two weeks or the last two weeks of the school term

The district defines “school days” as those days when students are in attendance or when scheduled staff development/teacher in-service involves the teacher in question.

The district may deduct the daily cost of a substitute or one-half day pay up to the current pay, whichever is less, for three days from the employee’s salary when he/she is absent for the following reasons.

- wedding in the immediate family
- death of persons not defined as immediate family
- other causes approved by the superintendent

The district may deduct the full daily salary for each day *more* than three that the employee is absent for one of the foregoing reasons.

The district may deduct the full daily salary for each day of absence if an employee is absent for one of the following reasons. (A full salary deduction does not affect sick days.)

- personal business (other than the four days granted)
- leaving before holidays have officially begun or returning after holidays have officially ended
- other causes which in the opinion of the superintendent are not legitimate

The district may require documentation of absences.

**Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)**

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) requires covered employers to provide up to 12 work weeks of unpaid family and medical leave in any 12-month period. Employees are eligible if they have been employed for at least one year and worked at least 1,250 hours in the 12 months preceding the leave.

Leave may be granted for any of the following reasons:

- for a serious health condition;
- to care for a child after birth or adoption; or
- to care for a spouse, child, or parent who has a serious health condition.

All employees will use paid sick leave, if available, in lieu of unpaid leave.

As soon as an employee knows he/she will need to be out of work for more than five consecutive days for a qualifying condition, the employee should submit a letter to the superintendent and Benefits/Payroll Specialist requesting the leave. The letter should include the dates of the absence and an expected return to work date. Upon receipt of the request, a determination of eligibility will be made after reviewing the request and the district policy.

**Paid Parental Leave (PPL)**

On May 12, 2023, Governor Henry McMaster signed into law H. 3908, which adds Section 8-11-151(A) and Section 8-11-156 of South Carolina Code of Laws to provide two (2) or six (6) weeks of paid parental leave (PPL). To be eligible the employees must occupy all or part of a full-time equivalent (FTE) position. Employees in temporary positions are not eligible for PPL. There is no service time requirement to be eligible for PPL.

Leave may be granted for the following reasons:

- Childbirth: Entitled to six weeks

- Adoption: Entitled to six weeks
- Foster Care: Entitled to two weeks

PPL must run concurrently with FMLA. An employee will receive no more than one occurrence of six or two weeks of PPL for a twelve- month period, even if more than one qualifying event occurs. Unused leave remaining at the end of the twelve-month period or separation of employment is forfeited. There is no pay out for unused PPL.

**Professional Leave**

According to **Spartanburg District Four Board Policy GCC and GCC-R,** the superintendent or the superintendent's designee may authorize professional leave for attending state, regional and national meetings, workshops and conferences (including observing in other schools) without pay deduction. The employee must apply for prior approval through his/her principal or supervisor.

The superintendent will determine the number of absences allowable for professional leave. Absences will also be subject to budget limitations for employing substitutes and reimbursement for travel and accommodations.

**Vacations and Holidays**

According to **Spartanburg District Four Board Policy GCD/GDD**, regular, full-time administrators employed on a full-year basis (52 weeks) and year-round personnel will receive vacations and holidays.

Vacations

- All district employees who are 12-month employees accrue leave at the rate of 5/6th day per month for a total of 10 days per year.
- Employees must obtain the prior approval of their supervisors before using vacation.
- Upon separation, the employee will forfeit all vacation leave and pay.

Holidays

The district calendar establishes the holidays for staff members. Holidays are not included in the employees' work year. The following holidays are observed by the district:

- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day (2 days)
- Christmas Day (2 days)
- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- Memorial Day

Full-time custodial and maintenance personnel will observe paid holidays.

**Legal Absence/Jury Duty**

According to **Spartanburg District Four Board Policies GCC, GCC-R, GDC, and GDC-R,** the district will grant an employee leave without loss of pay when he/she is summoned for jury duty or subpoenaed in the line of duty to represent the district as a witness or defendant. If an employee must appear in court for any reason other than the above, the district will deduct substitute pay from his/her salary. Whenever an employee is dismissed by the court before the end of the working day, he/she will return to his/her official duties.

An employee must bring an official statement from the court for days serving on jury duty. When selected for jury duty, employees may request a postponement to a date that does not conflict with the school term.

**Military Leave**

According to **Spartanburg District Four Board Policies GCC, GCC-R, GDC, and GDC-R**, employees may take military leave without loss of pay, seniority or efficiency-rating for one or more periods not exceeding a total of 15 workdays in one year. Saturdays, Sundays, and state holidays may not be included in the 15 days unless these days are regularly scheduled workdays for the employee.

This leave may be taken when the employee is engaged in training or other duties ordered by the governor, the Department of Defense, the Department of the Army, the Department of the Air Force, the Department of the Navy, the Department of the Treasury, or any other department or agency of the government of the United States having authority to issue lawful orders requiring military service. This leave applies to employees who are either enlisted or commissioned members of the South Carolina National Guard, US Army Reserve, US Air Force Reserve, US Naval Reserve, US Marine Corps Reserve, or the US Coast Guard Reserve.
In the event an employee is called upon to serve during an emergency, he/she will be entitled to such leave of absence for a period not exceeding 30 additional days.

**Extended Military Leave**

According to **Spartanburg District Four Board Policies GCC, GCC-R, GDC, and GDC-R**, employees who enlist or are called to active duty are eligible for up to five years extended military leave. All provisions of federal law apply to extended military leave (re-employment, benefits, etc.). However, the district is not required to maintain employee benefits for extended leave. Written substantiation of leave under this policy is required. Falsification of reason for leave may be cause for disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.