

**GUILFORD COUNTY
SCHOOLS
PERSONNEL HANDBOOK
2010-2011**

712 N. Eugene Street
Greensboro, NC 27401

www.gcsnc.com

NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

In compliance with federal laws, Guilford County Schools administers all educational programs, employment activities and admissions without discrimination because of race, religion, national or ethnic origin, color, age, military service, disability or gender, except where exemption is appropriate and allowed by law. Refer to the Board of Education's Discrimination Free Environment Policy AC for a complete statement. Inquiries or complaints should be directed to the Guilford County Schools Compliance Officer, 120 Franklin Boulevard, Greensboro, NC 27401; 336-370-2323.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT	1
GENERAL INFORMATION	4
INTRODUCTION	5
MISSION STATEMENT	6
BELIEFS	6
CODE OF ETHICS – GUILFORD COUNTY SCHOOLS	7
CODE OF ETHICS FOR N.C. EDUCATORS	8
CODE OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE AND CONDUCT	10
COMMUNICABLE DISEASES - EMPLOYEE SAFETY	10
CONFLICT OF INTEREST	10
CORPORAL PUNISHMENT AND FORCE	10
CRIMINAL RECORDS CHECK	11
DISPOSAL OF BOARD PROPERTY	11
DRUG AND ALCOHOL FREE WORKPLACE	11
EMERGENCY CLOSINGS	12
EMPLOYEE ABSENCES	14
EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYMENT	14
GRIEVANCES - EMPLOYEES	14
HARASSMENT/BULLYING/DISCRIMINATION OF STAFF	15
HARASSMENT/BULLYING/DISCRIMINATION OF STUDENTS	15
HEALTH EXAMINATION CERTIFICATE	15
IDENTIFICATION BADGES	16
OVERTIME	16
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	17
REPORTING ALLEGED VIOLATIONS OF LAW OR ORDINANCE	19
SCHOOL CALENDAR	20
SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF STUDENTS	20
SMOKING	21
SELECTION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS	21
USE OF COPYRIGHTED MATERIALS	21
USE OF ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION CAPABILITIES	22
WEAPONS ON CAMPUS	22
RECRUITMENT AND INCENTIVES	23
COOPERATING TEACHERS - SUPERVISION OF STUDENT TEACHERS	24
TEACH GUILFORD	24
MISSION POSSIBLE	24
LICENSURE INFORMATION	26
INDUCTION AND PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT	27
BEGINNING TEACHERS' PROGRAM	27

LICENSE GUIDELINES	28
EMPLOYMENT, COMPENSATION AND EVALUATION	30
ASSIGNMENT AND TRANSFER - CLASSIFIED	31
ASSIGNMENT AND TRANSFER - LICENSED	31
CLASSIFIED EMPLOYMENT	31
EMPLOYMENT OF SUBSTITUTES	32
EVALUATION - CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL	32
EVALUATION - LICENSED PERSONNEL	32
EXIT INTERVIEWS	33
JOB SHARING FOR EMPLOYEES	33
LICENSED EMPLOYMENT (TEACHERS AND OTHERS)	34
PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLANS	35
PERSONNEL FILES	35
RE-EMPLOYMENT OF RETIRED EMPLOYEES	36
RESIGNATION - CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL	36
RESIGNATION - LICENSED PERSONNEL	37
RESIGNATION – LEAVE BALANCES	37
SALARY ADMINISTRATION	37
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	40
BENEFITS ENROLLMENT	41
CHANGES IN EMPLOYEE STATUS (NAME AND/OR ADDRESS CHANGE etc.)	41
DEFINITIONS (FOR BENEFITS PURPOSES)	42
INCOME TAX WITHHOLDING	43
INSURANCE	43
LONGEVITY	48
MISCELLANEOUS BENEFITS	49
RETIREMENT SYSTEM	50
LEAVE BENEFITS	52
WHO TO CALL LIST	67
USE OF PERSONAL LEAVE CHART	69
NOTICES	70

2010-2011 Edition: August, 2010

General Information

INTRODUCTION

This handbook addresses the resource needs of employees for up-to-date information on issues that affect their employment with the school district. References to numerous Guilford County Board of Education policies and procedures are included throughout the Personnel Handbook as part of this resource process, but are not intended to cover those policies and procedures in detail.

All employees of the Guilford County Board of Education have a duty to understand and comply with applicable laws, policies and procedures. Copies of our operating policies and procedures are available at each school, other work sites and on the school district's web site. These resources may be easily accessed for the detailed information that is often needed by employees.

Please note that each school may assist its employees by way of site-based guidelines not contained in this handbook or official Board documents. Additionally, district-wide divisions and departments other than Human Resources may have published procedures, which affect employees (Payroll Department, for example).

The Guilford County Schools' policies and procedures, whether or not contained in this handbook, are not an employment contract nor are they terms of an employment contract. The school district's employees (other than employees in positions covered by North Carolina General Statute 115C-325, or employees who have specific employment contracts) are all employees at will. This means the employee or the school district has the right to terminate the relationship at any time, with or without reason. Nothing in this handbook is intended to create an employment contract.

Each employee is required to sign the Guilford County Schools Confirmation of Receipt of Personnel Handbook Notification acknowledging access of the handbook on the Guilford County Schools web site and the associated duty to familiarize him/her with district policies and procedures. Revisions to the handbook will be made as necessary. We believe the information contained in this handbook to be accurate at the time of publication. All employees should be alert to changes in policies and/or procedures implemented during the year. Proposed policies are available for public comment before adoption. Changed policies and/or procedures are placed on the web site when adopted/approved. Because we always seek to improve the usefulness of this handbook, employees are encouraged to send written suggestions or ideas regarding its content.

Please accept our best wishes for a great year and we appreciate your dedication to the students of the Guilford County Schools.

Shirley Morrison Ed. D
Chief Human Resources Officer

MISSION STATEMENT

Students will graduate as responsible citizens prepared to succeed in higher education or the career of their choice.

BELIEFS

We believe that ...

... schools exist for students.

... each child has value.

... students respond to high expectations.

... students learn best when they are actively involved in learning.

... learning is a creative process.

... all children can learn.

... students learn differently.

... learning is strengthened through the use of technology.

... good public education includes accountable use of funds.

... education is a lifelong process.

... education is a shared community responsibility.

... early childhood enrichment builds success in school.

... good facilities promote learning.

... investing in staff development is essential for good schools.

... diversity is of great value.

... quality of life depends upon quality of education.

... public education for all children is essential to a strong and lasting democracy.

... public education is a public trust.

... leadership creates vision and strong public support.

... (Reference: Policy GP-1 adopted December adopted December 12, 2000 Guilford County Board of Education)

GUILFORD COUNTY SCHOOLS CODE OF ETHICS

"The mission of the Guilford County School System is to ensure that every student achieves mastery of academic skills essential for success in life and acquires the knowledge needed to live as a productive citizen in a rapidly changing world, and that every student gains understanding and respect for self and others."

The success of our school system depends on adherence to the highest ethical principles in the operation of the system and in the relationship between the school board and superintendent, the superintendent and staff and the staff and students. This code reflects the principles, goals and responsibilities that are essential to ensuring the integrity of the school system and these relationships. All persons who are a part of the Guilford County School system shall seek to:

1. Assure the opportunity for high quality education for every student and make the well-being of students the fundamental principle for all decisions and actions.
2. Uphold the principles of due process and individual dignity; respect and protect the civil and human rights of everyone.
3. Consider all issues fairly.
4. Implement fully all national, state and local laws and regulations pertaining to education and public agencies.
5. Preserve, protect and promote the well-being of the Guilford County Schools.
6. Build and preserve trust in public education and work to instill respect for our community, state and nation.
7. Have the courage to act and to be responsible for one's own actions.
8. Maintain high standards and a strong work ethic.
9. Act as part of an educational team with mutual respect and regard for each other.
10. Act with honesty, fairness, integrity and discretion in all relationships.

CODE OF ETHICS FOR NORTH CAROLINA EDUCATORS

Adopted by the State Board of Education June 5, 1997

PREAMBLE

The purpose of this Code of Ethics is to define standards of professional conduct.

The responsibility to teach and the freedom to learn, and the guarantee of equal opportunity for all are essential to the achievement of these principles. The professional educator acknowledges the worth and dignity of every person and demonstrates the pursuit of truth and devotion to excellence, acquires knowledge, and nurtures democratic citizenship. The educator strives to maintain the respect and confidence of colleagues, students, parents and legal guardians, and the community, and to serve as an appropriate role model. The educator exemplifies a commitment to the teaching and learning processes with accountability to the students, maintains professional growth, exercises professional judgment, and personifies integrity.

To uphold these commitments, the educator:

I. COMMITMENT TO THE STUDENT

- A. Protects students from conditions within the educator's control that circumvent learning or are detrimental to the health and safety of students.
- B. Maintains an appropriate relationship with students in all settings; does not encourage, solicit, or engage in a sexual or romantic relationship with students, nor touch a student in an inappropriate way for personal gratification, with intent to harm, or out of anger.
- C. Evaluates students and assigns grades based upon the students' demonstrated competencies and performance.
- D. Disciplines students justly and fairly and does not deliberately embarrass or humiliate them.
- E. Holds in confidence information learned in professional practice except for professional reasons or in compliance with pertinent regulations or statutes.
- F. Refuses to accept significant gifts, favors, or additional compensation that might influence or appear to influence professional decisions or actions.

II. COMMITMENT TO THE SCHOOL AND SCHOOL SYSTEM

- A. Utilizes available resources to provide a classroom climate conducive to learning and to promote learning to the maximum possible extent.
- B. Acknowledges the diverse views of students, parents and legal guardians, and colleagues as they work collaboratively to shape educational goals, policies, and decisions; does not proselytize for personal viewpoints that are outside the scope of professional practice.
- C. Signs a contract in good faith and does not abandon contracted professional duties without a substantive reason.
- D. Participates actively in professional decision-making process and supports the expression of professional opinions and judgments by colleagues in decision-making processes or due process proceedings.

- E. When acting in an administrative capacity:
 - 1. Acts fairly, consistently, and prudently in the exercise of authority with colleagues, subordinates, students, and parents and legal guardians.
 - 2. Evaluates the work of other educators using appropriate procedures and established statutes and regulations.
 - 3. Protects the rights of others in the educational setting, and does not retaliate, coerce, or intentionally intimidate others in the exercise of rights protected by law.
 - 4. Recommends persons for employment, promotion, or transfer according to their professional qualifications, the needs and policies of the LEA, and according to the law.

III. COMMITMENT TO THE PROFESSION

- A. Provides accurate credentials and information regarding licensure or employment and does not knowingly assist others in providing untruthful information.
- B. Takes action to remedy an observed violation of the Code of Ethics for North Carolina Educators and promotes understanding of the principles of professional ethics.
- C. Pursues growth and development in the practice of the profession and uses that knowledge in improving the educational opportunities, experiences, and performance of students and colleagues.

CODE OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE AND CONDUCT FOR NORTH CAROLINA EDUCATORS

The North Carolina State Board of Education (SBE) has adopted rules to establish uniform standards of professional conduct for licensed professional educators throughout the state. These rules have been incorporated into Title 16 of the North Carolina Administrative Code and have the effect of law. These rules shall be the basis for State Board of Education review of performance of professional educators and are binding on every person licensed by the State Board of Education. Violation of the standards shall subject an educator to investigation and possible disciplinary action by the State Board of Education or local school district. The full text of these standards is provided on page 70 of this handbook.

Reference: G.S. 115-C-295.3

Title 16, North Carolina Administrative Code

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES - EMPLOYEE SAFETY

The Guilford County Schools will attempt to provide a secure environment for all students and employees. All efforts will be made to protect students' and employees' rights and to control communicable diseases. All decisions regarding the employment status of employees with communicable diseases shall be made on a case-by-case basis.

(Reference: Board of Education Policy GBRAB)

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The Guilford County Board of Education recognizes that all business transactions in which the school system engages, not only must be within the law, but also must respect generally accepted fair trade practices. The Board further recognizes the need for all employees to refrain from engaging in inappropriate business-related behavior. Employees of the school system shall not:

- ◆ engage in selling goods or services to the Board.
- ◆ engage in or have a financial interest in any activity that conflicts or raises a reasonable question of conflict with duties or responsibilities in the school system.
- ◆ engage in any type of private business during the employee's school day or at school site.
- ◆ engage in work of any type where the source of information for a customer, client, or employer originates from school system data.
- ◆ accept gifts from any person or groups desiring or doing business with the school system, except for nominally valued instructional products or advertising items, which are widely distributed.
- ◆ provide employee directories to anyone who wishes to use them for pecuniary purposes.

(Reference: Board of Education Policy GAG)

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT AND FORCE

The Board believes that a well-disciplined school system can be maintained without the use of corporal punishment and force. Therefore, Administrative policy (Student Discipline JD) prohibits the use of corporal punishment by principals, assistant principals, teachers, substitute teachers, any other school system personnel, student teachers or volunteers. While the district prohibits the use of corporal punishment as a means of discipline, school personnel may use reasonable force to control behavior or to remove a person from the scene in the following situations:

- to quell a disturbance threatening injury to others;
- to obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects on the person or within the control of a student;
- for self defense; or

- for the protection of persons or property.
- to maintain order on school property, in the classroom, or at a school-related activity on or off school property.

(Reference: G.S. 115C-390; Administrative Policy JD)

CRIMINAL RECORDS CHECK (EMPLOYEES and SUBSTITUTES)

Board Policy GBDC requires a criminal records check on newly hired employees including substitutes. A criminal records check will also be conducted on a random or rotating basis on all annually rehired and current employees including substitutes. (Reference: Board of Education Policy GBDC; Administrative Procedure GBDC-P)

CRIMINAL RECORDS CHECK (VOLUNTEERS)

Reasonable background inquiries and checks are required for any volunteers (to include interns, student teachers, tutors or similar roles) who have unsupervised contact with students. Prior to the usage of any volunteer in a role which may allow unsupervised contact with students, each volunteer must complete a volunteer registration on the district's website (www.gcsvolunteers.com). The registration form must include appropriate personal information to allow the district to complete an in-state criminal record check, and sufficiently detailed information to enable the district to investigate any out-of-state or federal arrests or convictions. The district's Human Resources Office will review the results of the background and notify the school principal and volunteer coordinator with results and recommendations. No volunteer as defined above is to be used unless the background check has been completed and is returned with an affirmative recommendation.

(Reference: Administrative Policy GBDC-A)

DISPOSAL OF BOARD PROPERTY

Individual employees are not authorized to give away, sell or otherwise dispose of school district property. Such disposals shall be handled by appropriate staff in accordance with state statutory requirements and local policy governance limitations.

(Reference: G.S. 160-A-266(C); Board of Education Policy DO)

DRUG AND ALCOHOL FREE WORKPLACE

Due to the commitment to a drug and alcohol free workplace, it is the policy of the Guilford County Schools that the work environment shall be free of the presence of alcoholic beverages or unlawful controlled substances and that employees shall perform their job assignments safely, efficiently, and without the adverse influence of alcohol or controlled substances. Therefore, the school system prohibits all employees from possessing, using, manufacturing, dispensing, selling, distributing, or being under the influence of illegal drugs and from the use, sale, distribution or possession of drug paraphernalia. All employees are prohibited from unlawfully possessing, using, manufacturing, dispensing, selling, distributing or being under the influence of alcohol. Consideration will be given as to whether rehabilitation will be offered to employees who have difficulty with drugs or alcohol, so that they may live up to standards set by this policy. A summary of this policy will be given to each employee.

This policy shall govern each employee (1) during school hours, (2) while on any property owned or leased by the Board, (3) at any time during which the employee is acting in the course and scope of his/her employment with the Board, and/or (4) at any other time that the employee's violation of this policy has a direct and adverse effect upon the performance of his/her job.

It is a condition of continued employment that each individual shall comply with this policy and shall notify his/her supervisor of any charge, conviction (or plea of guilty, no contest, or "nolo contendere") of any criminal drug or alcohol statute no later than the next business day after any such charge, conviction or plea. Similarly any employee whose duty it is to drive a vehicle or repair equipment or vehicles shall comply with the policy and shall notify his/her supervisor of his/her arrest or charge of violation of any criminal drug statute or any motor vehicle violation involving the use of alcohol or controlled substances at any time and shall notify his/her supervisor of any charges for those offenses no later than the next business day after being charged.

Violation of this policy shall subject an individual to personnel action including, but not limited to, termination of employment or the requirement that the employee participate satisfactorily in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved for such purposes by the Administration, or suspension, with or without pay, or conditional continuation of employment, or any combination of these enumerated actions. The acts prohibited by this policy do not include the lawful and proper use of drugs prescribed by a doctor or over-the-counter medications. However, no employee shall report to work or engage in normal duties, if he/she is visibly and/or knowingly impaired by drugs prescribed by a doctor or over-the-counter medications. Such conduct is considered improper and may result in further disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

The school system reserves the right to test employees whose duty it is to drive a vehicle, repair vehicles or equipment, provide armed security and other persons in similar safety positions any time prior to or during employment. The system reserves the right to test any employee upon reasonable suspicion of drug or alcohol use.

Any employee who refuses to submit to any diagnostic test to detect alcohol and/or drug use or refuses to submit to search procedures after reasonable suspicion is established may be suspended immediately pending consideration of a decision to terminate employment.

(Reference: Administrative Policy GA)

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

In case of school cancellation, delayed opening and/or early dismissal of school due to emergency and/or hazardous conditions, the following procedure shall govern all employees. The official closing notice will be delivered via the CONNECT ED telephone message system, placed on our public access television channel and posted on the district's web site. Television and radio stations will be notified, when necessary, early on the mornings(s) of hazardous conditions. When school is canceled for the day(s), due to hazardous conditions, the canceled day(s) will be rescheduled in the school calendar by the calendar coordinator at the direction of the Superintendent.

Ten-Month Employees:

If school is canceled for the day, 10-month employees, all teachers and School Food Service Managers shall report to work at the normal starting time or select one of the following options:

1. take unscheduled vacation, if available,
2. arrange to make up time with principal/supervisor
3. take personal leave (licensed instructional personnel only), or
4. take leave without pay.

If one of the stated options is selected, the principal/supervisor must be called and informed of the employee's intentions.

If school is canceled for the day on a mandated or optional teacher workday, employees who are scheduled to work (teachers and affected 10-month employees only) should report at the normal starting time or select one of the following options:

1. take unscheduled vacation, if available,
2. arrange to make up time with principal/supervisor,
3. take personal leave (licensed instructional personnel only), or
4. take leave without pay.

Eleven and Twelve-Month Employees:

If school is canceled for the day, 11-month and 12-month employees (including central office personnel) shall report to work at the normal starting time or select one of the following options:

1. take unscheduled vacation, if available,
2. arrange to make up time with principal/supervisor,
3. take leave without pay.

If one of the options is selected, the principal/supervisor must be called and informed of the employee's intentions.

Any changes in the time for the employees to report to work will be announced by the Superintendent at the time of the school cancellation announcement.

If school opening is delayed for students, school-based non-administrative instructional employees are expected to report at least fifteen (15) minutes before the time designated for students to arrive; this time (delayed opening) will not have to be made up. All other employees are expected to report at the regular work time except for bus drivers and child nutrition employees whose schedule, under such conditions, is to be set in advance by the supervisor. If for some reason the above appropriate timeline is not possible, the employee will contact the principal/supervisor about the arrival problem and the issue of taking leave or making up the time missed.

If school is dismissed early, teachers and other school-based employees will be dismissed fifteen (15) minutes after all students have departed. This time will not have to be made up. A principal or his/her designated representative must remain at the school until notified by the director of transportation or his/her representative that all of their students who ride school buses assigned to their schools have been delivered to their afternoon destination. Central office personnel will be dismissed at the discretion of the Superintendent. However, when schedules are modified due to excessive heat, all staff members are expected to work the normal work schedule.

*This procedure excludes strict calendar make-up provisions for year-round schools. Following the loss of a day(s) by year-round schools, the principal will submit a proposed make-up plan to his/her executive director and the calendar coordinator for review and approval.

Make up time must be within the guidelines of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). Non-exempt employees may not work more than 40 hours a week.

Aces group leaders/clerks and other employees, who work after-school hours, will follow the guidelines above for canceled school days.

(Reference: North Carolina G.S. 115-C-316(2); Administrative Procedure AFC-P)

EMPLOYEE ABSENCES

When absent from duty for whatever reason, an employee must notify the appropriate supervisor of his/her inability to report to work by the time and procedure designated by the supervisor. If the employee fails to notify the appropriate supervisor (or designee) of his/her absence, a deduction will be made from his/her salary for the time lost.

Unexplained absences or leaving the job site without authorization will not be tolerated and will be considered sufficient cause for discharge. The appropriate supervisor or the Human Resources Department may require, at any time, a statement from a medical doctor or other acceptable proof that the employee was unable to work. Such documentation is required for absences of more than five (5) consecutive days.

The Guilford County Schools has installed ASEOP, an automated substitute employee management system. AESOP tracks the reporting of employee absences and calls substitute employees when appropriate. **All school-based employees, with the exception of custodian and child nutrition personnel, are expected to report each absence to this system by telephone or through AESOP internet access, regardless of whether a substitute is required or obtained.** Employees will receive training at their respective work sites to properly access AESOP and report absences. **The requirement to report absences to AESOP does not relieve employees of any additional absence reporting required by their principal or supervisor.**

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYMENT

The Guilford County Board of Education believes in the dignity of all individuals and in the worth of their labors. To this end, the Board will ensure that all applicants for employment and all employees are employed, assigned, supervised, promoted, compensated, and terminated in full compliance with state and federal equal opportunity statutes. No applicant for employment or current employee will experience discrimination based on race, creed, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, physical handicap, sexual orientation or disability.

The policy does not extend any rights beyond those granted by state and federal law.

Concerns in this area should be discussed with one's supervisor or with the supervisor's supervisor.

If concerns remain, employees should contact the Federal Compliance Officer in the Information/Special Services Division, or the Executive Director or Chief Human Resources Officer responsible for personnel. (Reference: Administrative Policy GAAA Legal Reference: Title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; American Disabilities Act, 1991)

GRIEVANCES - EMPLOYEES

The Guilford County Board of Education encourages the administration to actively attempt to resolve differences and to reduce the potential sources of conflict between employees and administrators. Open, effective channels of communication among all employees, administrators and the Board shall be established and maintained. **Any employee who has a grievance against the school district or against another employee within the district shall have the opportunity for an orderly**

presentation and impartial review of the grievance. The grievant will be permitted representation at any formal step in the grievance process.

It is usually more effective for an employee and his/her immediate supervisor to resolve potential conflicts through open and informal communication. In addition, the policy and its accompanying administrative procedure address formal and informal grievances, the right to representation, procedures and timelines, confidentiality, bypassing rights and release time.

(Reference: Administrative Policy GAE; Administrative Procedure GAE-P)

HARASSMENT/BULLYING/DISCRIMINATION OF STAFF

The Guilford County Board of Education believes that all employees are entitled to work in school-related environments that are free of harassment/bullying/discrimination. The policy addressing harassment/bullying/discrimination includes definitions of harassment/bullying/discrimination.

Any employee who believes he/she has been the victim of harassment/bullying/discrimination at the worksite or as a result of district employment by any person is encouraged to report the alleged acts, including the specific facts of the incident(s) and the name(s) of the individual(s) to his/her immediate supervisor in a timely manner. If the immediate supervisor is directly involved or if the employee is more comfortable, the employee should report such acts to the Chief Human Resources Officer or the Executive Director for Human Resources. Where members of the Board, the Superintendent, or any senior staff members are involved, the employee should report such acts to the Board attorney. An immediate investigation of the claims will take place and upon evidence of harassment/bullying/discrimination, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

(Reference: Administrative Policy GAMA)

HARASSMENT/BULLYING/DISCRIMINATION OF STUDENTS

The employees in the Guilford County Schools are expected to provide learning environments for students which are free of harassment/bullying/discrimination. Any student who believes that he/she has been subjected to harassment/bullying/discrimination by any employee (s) of the Guilford County Schools and any student or employee who has knowledge of harassment/bullying/discrimination or inappropriate staff-student relations should report the facts of the incident (s) and the name (s) of all the individual (s) involved in any material way immediately to the student's principal or to the supervisor of the person reporting the incident. There will be an immediate investigation of the incident.

(Reference: Administrative Policy GAMAA)

HEALTH EXAMINATION CERTIFICATES

All public school employees upon initial employment, and those who have been separated from public school employment more than one school year, shall file a completed Guilford County Schools/North Carolina Public Schools "Health Examination Certificate" certifying their freedom from any communicable disease, including tuberculosis or any disease, physical or mental, which would impair the person's ability to perform his/her job duties prior to reporting to work. The "Health Examination Certificate" must be on a form supplied by the school district and can be signed by a physician, physician's assistant, or nurse practitioner licensed to practice in North Carolina. Additionally, individuals in these same categories with unrestricted licenses in other states can complete the Health Examination Certificate. Health Certificates are available on the Guilford County Schools web site.

The local Board or the Superintendent or his/her designee may require any employee to take a physical examination whenever deemed necessary.

(Reference: G.S. 115C-323)

IDENTIFICATION BADGES

All permanent or interim employees are expected to visibly display, attached to their person, the approved Guilford County Schools photo identification badge while on any property owned or leased by the Board, during school hours or at any time the employee is acting in the course and scope of his/her employment with the Board. Identification badges will be provided by the school district upon employment and remain the property of the Guilford County Schools. Persons who leave employment with the Guilford County Schools are required to return their ID badges to their immediate supervisors. **Replacement of lost badges shall be made at the employee's expense, and can be obtained by calling the Benefits Office at 370-8304.**

The Guilford County Schools currently extends the **courtesy** of free admission to most middle and high school athletic events upon presentation of the identification badge. This admission is for the **employee only** and does not admit anyone else accompanying the employee. Employees may be required to present other picture identification as well for admission. Identification badges are not good for admission to state play-off contests. Admission to these contests is controlled by the North Carolina High School Athletic Association.

OVERTIME

It is the policy of the Guilford County Schools to abide by all applicable sections of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and its later amendments. This overtime policy is applicable to all employees of the Guilford County Schools who are covered under the provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act. The school district's intention is to assure good faith compliance with FLSA to the extent applicable to the Guilford County Schools.

1. **Exempt** - All employees classified as "Exempt" from the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act are paid for the accomplishment of assigned accountabilities rather than being paid for the number of hours worked in a work week. For example, a full-time exempt employee would be expected to work a *40-hour week at a minimum. Hours, in excess of the minimum, by an exempt employee performing work that is usual and customary are considered "accomplishment of assigned accountabilities" for which there is no additional compensation whether in time off or pay. **The category of "exempt" employees includes but is not limited to teachers, administrators, and certain supervisory staff.**

* A full-time exempt teacher is expected to work a 37 ½ hour week at a minimum.

2. **Non-Exempt** - All employees classified as "Non-Exempt" from the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act must be paid for overtime hours worked or given compensatory time off. Overtime is paid or **compensatory time** given to non-exempt employees for hours in excess of 40 hours actually worked in a work week. However, work schedules can be reduced within a week to offset extra hours worked earlier in the week so as not to exceed 40 and thereby avoid an "overtime" situation.

The work week begins Saturday at 12:01 a.m. and ends the following Friday at 12:00 midnight. **The category of "non-exempt" employees includes but is not limited to teacher assistants, custodians, school food service workers and certain office support employees.**

3. **Approval to Work Overtime** - No overtime hours will be worked by non-exempt employees unless approved in advance by the employee's Department Head and, when for overtime pay, the overtime must be approved by the divisional Chief Human Resources Officer who is responsible to budget for such expenses. Work by a non-exempt employee which has not been

requested by management but is nonetheless endured or permitted is still considered work time by FLSA. Therefore, no non-exempt employee will work, without the appropriate approval, prior to or after regularly scheduled hours, because such time would be considered overtime when in excess of 40 hours in the work week, even though the work had not been specifically authorized.

Supervisors/Department Heads are responsible for ensuring that overtime hours are authorized, recorded, and properly documented for compensatory time off or overtime pay in accordance with the established record-keeping forms and instructions. Non-exempt employees working beyond the normal work week without specific approval, and supervisors who permit this, will be subject to disciplinary action.

(Reference: Fair Labor Standards Act; Guilford County Schools Auxiliary Services Procedures Manual)

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Guilford County School System encourages each employee to use all available opportunities for professional development. Specialized training sessions, in addition to renewal credit opportunities, are made available to employees.

GCS-SPONSORED ACTIVITIES

Individual schools or various divisions within the Guilford County Schools often desire to conduct staff development activities which award CEU's to employees who participate in these courses. In such cases, the Office of Professional Development must approve the workshop, before renewal credit can be offered. Requests should be made 4 (four) weeks prior to the start date of the workshop.

Workshops must meet the following state standards:

- a minimum of six(6) clock hours of direct training by an instructor (6 CEUs will be granted);
- workshop meeting times must be a minimum of two (2) hours at a time. CEU's are only granted for up to 6 hours of staff development per day.
- for all-day workshops, a one-hour lunch break must be provided to all participants. It is not acceptable to cut the lunch break short in order to release participants early from the workshop.
- for each 10 hours in a course, only one (1) of the 10 hours can be an outside assignment. Two (2) hours of homework assignments must be given to earn one hour of instructional credit.
- content and instructional activities designed in a sequential manner to develop specified competencies of a specific population;
- must be led by qualified personnel and directly supervised by the sponsoring school unit;
- credit is granted on the basis of program completion and achievement of specified individual performance, which is determined by individual evaluation of specified competencies.
- **no partial credit can be given to any workshop participant.** Participants who miss more than 30 cumulative minutes of any workshop are not eligible for credit.
- **participants must register for approved GCS / site-based courses. Participants**

- **who attend, but do not register before the last day, will not receive CEU credit.**
- enrollment is limited to assure accountability of credit granted.

The Professional Development contact designated by the school's principal must create the online course description and session information and request approval from the Office of Professional Development. Course approval submissions should be completed four (4) weeks prior to the start date of the workshop.

The SS-3 "Application for Reading Course Approval" form should be submitted with the online request for course approval if requesting Reading credit. Fill out the form and submit electronically to the Professional Development Department.

Upon approval, the workshop will be posted on the Professional Development web site. Participants should register for the approved GCS workshop prior to the start date of the workshop. Instructors are responsible for printing the attendance sheet, signing the workshop roster and delivering it to the Office of Professional Development within three (3) working days after the workshop has been completed. Once the signed roster is received, attendance will be marked and CEU credit will be posted for the participants.

REQUESTING PRIOR APPROVAL FOR NON-GCS COURSES

All events that are not provided by GCS must receive prior approval. To request prior approval to earn renewal credits for attending a **NON-GCS** course, workshop, seminar, conference, etc. the employee should request approval via the GCS Professional Development web site before they attend an event for which they wish to receive CEU credit. Failure to do so, may disallow CEU credit. Requests should be made 3 (three) weeks prior to the start date of an event. **CEU credit cannot be awarded for any course with less than 6-hours of instruction.**

How to Request Prior Approval for a Non-GCS Event

1. Go to www.gcsnc.com
2. Click on the **Professional Development** link under the Quick Links menu.
3. Click on the **Register for Courses** button at the next screen.
4. Click on **Logon**. Enter your **User ID** and **Password**.
5. Click on **Logon**.
6. Click on **Event Request**.
7. Click on **Create New Event**. Fill the data fields. Fields with a red asterisk are required fields.
8. Click on **Submit for Approval**.

The Office of Professional Development will review the request, make a decision with regards to awarding CEU credit for successful completion of the event, and inform the employee of that decision via their GCS email. Approval / Denial will be given within 2-3 weeks.

AFTER THE EVENT IS COMPLETED

Upon successful completion of the event, the employee should follow the directions provided below. It is very important that the employee return to the Professional Development web site and mark "**I Have Completed This Event**." Failure to complete this task causes CEU credits not to be posted to their transcript.

How to Get Credit Posted Upon Completion

1. Go to www.gcsnc.com
2. Click on the **Professional Development** link under the Quick Links menu.
3. Click on the **Register for Courses** button at the next screen.
4. Click on **Logon**. Enter your **User ID** and **Password**.
5. Click on **Logon**. Click on **Event Request**.
6. If the event has been approved, click on the **Event** you have completed.
7. Scroll down to the bottom of the page and click on **“I Have Completed This Event.”**
8. Click on **Done** located at the bottom of the page.
9. Submit documentation to Rick Cobb at W. Washington St. Greensboro.
 - College Credit: Submit **Official Transcript**. Only official university / college transcripts will be accepted.
 - Non-College Course: Submit Certificate of Completion and Agenda if CEU credit is not printed on the certificate
 - Conference: Submit Certificate of Completion, Conference Syllabus and SS-4 form that can be downloaded from the GCS Professional Development web site.

How to Check the Status of your Approval

1. Logon to the Professional Development site.
2. Click on **Event Request**
3. The Event Report will indicate whether your Non-GCS Event has been approved or denied.

Credit will **not be recorded** until the appropriate document is submitted to the office of Professional Development.

NATIONAL BOARD CERTIFICATION

Completion of National Board Certification is the equivalent of 15 CEU’s for one renewal cycle (including reading requirement). You can choose to use the CEU’s for your current renewal cycle or “bank” them for the next renewal cycle. In order to receive credit, submit a copy of your congratulatory letter from NBPTS to the Staffing Department and indicate if you wish to use your credits for the current renewal cycle or the next cycle. You cannot use portions of the NBPTS CEU credit for the current renewal cycle and “bank” a portion for the next cycle.

QUESTIONS

Persons with questions concerning **licensure renewal** should contact the Staffing Department at 378-8806. Persons with questions concerning the **renewal credit approval process** should contact the Office of Professional Development at 370-3279.

Refer to the Guilford County Schools Professional Development web site for additional up-to-date information. Click on the Professional Development link on the GCS homepage <http://www.gcsnc.com>.

REPORTING ALLEGED VIOLATIONS OF LAW OR ORDINANCE

As employees of the Guilford County Schools, all staff members are expected to observe and obey all laws and ordinances, in addition to all policies and procedures of our Board of Education.

Any employee charged with or arrested for any violation(s) of a criminal, or serious traffic vehicular law (such as, vehicular homicide, hit and run, or any such law classified as a felony or for which a conviction could lead to incarceration) or ordinance, must report such fact in writing to the administrator in charge of the department, office, or school to which the employee is assigned no later than the next scheduled business day. In cases involving employee hospitalization and/or incarceration (jail) involving the stated violation, the employee shall report the alleged violation within 24 hours after his/her release. Such report shall include all pertinent facts concerning the alleged violation(s). Following receipt by the administrator, such confidential report will be forwarded as soon as possible, but no later than one scheduled business day, to the Executive Director for Human Resources or administrative designee who shall carefully review the situation along with any recommendations from the administrator as to what action, if any, is appropriate at that time. Failure to truthfully report charges, as noted above, may subject the employee to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

It is the employee's responsibility to keep his/her appropriate administrator apprised of the judicial process in the matter. Upon judicial action in the matter, the employee must report the disposition and pertinent facts, in writing, to the administrator no later than the next scheduled business day following adjudication.

(Reference: Administrative Policy GBDC)

SCHOOL CALENDAR

The Guilford County Board of Education annually adopts a school calendar consisting of 215 days. The 215 days must fall within the fiscal year and including the following:

- (a) Teacher days cannot exceed 215 days.
- (b) There must be 180 days or 1,000 hours of instruction.
- (c) School cannot start before 8/25; and must end by 6/10.
- (d) The school year can extend to 6/30 in order to make up inclement weather days.

Non Instructional Days:

- 1. There are 10 annual leave (vacation) days.
- 2. There are 10 holidays.
- 3. There are 15 teacher work days to be used as protected, mandated and optional.
- 4. There are 5 (out of 15) teacher workdays that are protected. Protected days are scheduled: one each at the beginning and the end of the school year and one at each academic quarter. No meetings or trainings can be scheduled on protected days. Teachers can elect to use annual leave days, if approved by the principal.
- 5. Of the remaining 10 teacher workdays, up to 7 days can be mandated for district training, district meetings or individual school initiatives.
- 6. The remaining teacher workdays are optional, some of which can be used for school-based training.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF STUDENTS

The employees in the Guilford County Schools are expected to provide learning environments for students which are free of sexual harassment. Any student who believes that he/she has been subjected to sexual harassment by any employee (s) of the Guilford County Schools and any student or employee who has knowledge of sexual harassment or inappropriate staff-student relations should report the facts of the incident (s) and the name (s) of all the individual (s) involved in any material way immediately

to the student's principal or to the supervisor of the person reporting the incident. There will be an immediate investigation of the incident.

Staff shall not engage in a romantic or sexual relationship with any student enrolled in the Guilford County Schools whether or not it is consensual.

It is a Class I felony for teachers, school administrators, student teachers or coaches at any age and other school personnel at least four years older than a student to take indecent liberties with that student during or after the time both were present together in the same school but before the student ceases to be a student at that school. School personnel who are not teachers, school administrators, student teachers or coaches and who are less than four years older than the student who take indecent liberties with a student victim are guilty of a Class A1 misdemeanor. Consent is not a defense. Legal marriage to the student is a defense to this crime.

(Reference: Administrative Policy GAMAA; G.S. 14-202.4)

SMOKING

The use of tobacco products on or in any school property, or at any school-sponsored activity or event (regardless of location), is prohibited.

This policy will be strictly enforced, as follows:

- (1) Employees in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action.
- (2) Student discipline for infractions will continue to be as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct.
- (3) Others who violate this policy will be asked to appropriately dispose of tobacco products. If they do not promptly comply, they will be asked to leave school property immediately.

(Reference: Guilford County Schools Policy CPGA)

SELECTION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

The Board of Education recognizes the importance of using a variety of instructional materials, in addition to adopted textbooks, to meet the instructional needs of students. Materials for classrooms and school library media centers will be selected by the appropriate professional personnel in consultation with the administration, faculty, students and the community. Final decision on a purchase will rest with the Superintendent or designee.

(Reference: Guilford County Schools Policy Governance Executive Limitations 13; Guilford County Schools Policy IFA: Administrative Procedure IFA-P)

USE OF COPYRIGHTED MATERIALS

The Guilford County Schools requires that all employees be knowledgeable of and adhere to all provisions of current Federal copyright law, *Title 17* of US Code, and Congressional "fair use" guidelines. The district recognizes and supports the limitations on unauthorized duplication and use of copyrighted materials in all formats, as well as contractual and licensing agreements pertaining to the instructional use of all formats, including electronically transmitted materials. Willful or serious violations are considered to be in violation of expected standards of behavior for employees, students, and school visitors and may result in disciplinary action in accordance with board policy. The legal and insurance protection of the district will not be extended to employees who unlawfully copy or unlawfully use copyrighted materials.

(Reference: *Title 17* of US Code; Congressional "Fair Use" Guidelines)

USE OF ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION CAPABILITIES

The Guilford County Board of Education recognizes that technology and the Internet offer staff members the resources from thousands of computers and millions of individual people all over the world. Staff members may have access to e-mail, information and news, advertisements, discussion groups, and university and government libraries around the world.

Guilford County's e-mail and Internet capabilities have been established to enable staff members to more efficiently perform their duties, to support research and education and to extend the resources of the Guilford County Schools. To that end, all uses of electronic transmission capabilities must support the goals and educational philosophy of the school district.

Employees should be aware that there is no reasonable expectation of privacy with regard to their use of, and transmission of information over, district-owned computers and computer networks. The school district reserves the right to monitor such use and transmission and to take appropriate disciplinary action if it can be reasonably determined that an employee has violated acceptable use standards.

(Reference: Administrative Policy EFE)

WEAPONS ON CAMPUS OR OTHER EDUCATIONAL PROPERTY

(a) The following definitions apply to this section:

- (1) Educational property. - Any school building or bus, school campus, grounds, recreational area, athletic field, or other property owned, used, or operated by any board of education or school board of trustees, or directors for the administration of any school.
 - (1a) Employee. - A person employed by a local board of education or school whether the person is an adult or a minor.
 - (1b) School. - A public or private school, community college, college, or university.
- (2) Student. - A person enrolled in a school or a person who has been suspended or expelled within the last five years from a school, whether the person is an adult or a minor.
- (3) Switchblade knife. - A knife containing a blade that opens automatically by the release of a spring or a similar contrivance.
- (4) Weapon. - Any device enumerated in subsection (b), (b1), or (d) of this section.

(b) It shall be a Class I felony for any person to possess or carry, whether openly or concealed, any gun, rifle, pistol, or other firearm of any kind on educational property or to a curricular or extracurricular activity sponsored by a school. Unless the conduct is covered under some other provision of law providing greater punishment, any person who willfully discharges a firearm of any kind on educational property is guilty of a Class F felony. However, this subsection does not apply to a BB gun, stun gun, air rifle or air pistol.

(Reference: G.S. 14-209.2)

Recruitment and Incentives

COOPERATING TEACHERS – SUPERVISION OF STUDENT TEACHERS

Licensed teachers who have achieved career status with GCS are eligible to serve as cooperating teachers in the Guilford County Schools Student Teacher Program. Eligible employees must also have the endorsement of the principal. No student teacher will be placed without this endorsement. Student teachers shall abide by the district’s calendars and by all the schedules and policies of the schools to which they are assigned. Any financial compensation for cooperating teachers is the sole responsibility of the college or university.

Principals are notified in writing of student teacher placements and will notify cooperating teachers of approved placements.

TEACH GUILFORD

Teach Guilford is a GCS initiative utilized to attract and retain qualified teachers. Highlights of the program are:

1. First-day pay allows new teachers the option of receiving a \$1,200 (before tax deduction) salary advance on their first day of employment.
2. Home mortgage incentives are offered by several financial institutions, including the State Employees’ Credit Union. Ask for GCS incentives/discounts.
3. Apartment rental incentives offer new teachers free rent for the first month or waived/reduced security deposits. Ask rental agencies for incentives offered to Guilford County Schools’ employees.
4. Vehicle incentives may be offered by various dealerships for new teachers and administrators.
5. Banking incentives are offered by Suntrust and the State Employees’ Credit Union. Guilford County Schools’ employees also receive special incentives at other financial institutions. Call individual financial institutions for additional information.

MISSION POSSIBLE

Qualifying faculty members at Mission Possible Schools are eligible for two types of incentives—recruitment and performance. Recruitment incentives are paid out over the course of the school year as a part of the employee’s regular paycheck. Performance incentives are paid out to qualifying faculty as a one time payment following the receipt and analysis of performance data. The tables below detail qualifying faculty, recruitment incentives, and performance incentives. All incentive eligibility should be verified with the Mission Possible Office by each faculty member.

Recruitment/Retention Incentives

Position	Incentive
K-5	\$2,500
6-8 Language Arts or Reading	\$2,500
6-12 Math without a math degree or 24 content hours (C or above)	\$2,500
6-12 Math with a math degree or 24 content hours (C or above)	\$9,000
Algebra I	\$10,000
English I	\$2,500
Elementary Principal	\$5,000
Middle School Principal	\$7,500
High School Principal	\$10,000

Performance Incentives

Position	Level IV (>1.0 SE)	Level V (>1.5 SE)
K-2	Not Eligible	Not Eligible
3-5 Composite EOG	\$2,500	\$4,000
6-8 LA/Reading	\$2,500	\$4,000
6-12 Math	\$2,500	\$4,000
Algebra I	\$2,500	\$4,000
English I	\$2,500	\$4,000
Position	Level IV (>50%)	Level V (>75%)
IB and AP Math	\$2,500	\$4,000
Position	School Makes AYP	
Principal	\$5,000	
Curriculum Facilitator	\$2,500	

Licensure Information

INDUCTION AND PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

The Guilford County Schools recognizes that first-year teachers face many challenges as they make the transition from college student to classroom teacher. To ensure that our new professionals have the support they need to become the best teachers possible, Guilford County Schools provides a comprehensive induction program called "Right Start" to help them reach that goal.

"Right Start" consists of three (3) days of pre-service workshops which provide an introduction to the Guilford County Schools, its culture, expectations, resources, policies and procedures. First year-teachers are also provided opportunities to work one-on-one with a mentor teacher. The initial workshops are followed by a series of monthly seminars in which a wide variety of timely topics are presented and discussed in detail.

"Right Start" is administered by the Organization Development Division. Beginning teachers needing help should call 370-8098 to request assistance.

BEGINNING TEACHERS' PROGRAM

The Beginning Teachers Program (BT), mandated by the State Board of Education effective January 1, 1985 and amended in 1997, is a three-year program that extends professional education preparation and offers the assessment and support necessary for an individual's professional growth.

Teachers who did not receive a continuing license prior to January 1, 1998 and have fewer than three years of appropriate service (normally considered to be public school service) in their area of initial licensure are required to participate in Beginning Teacher Program (BTP).

Out-of-state applicants are not subject to BTP requirements if their North Carolina Licensure is based on reciprocity (not all states have reciprocity with NC) or completion of a National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)-approved education program (not all out-of-state colleges/universities are NCATE-approved) and they have three or more years of appropriate experience. Out-of-state applicants, with less than three years experience, will participate in BT.

Individuals who renew expired licenses do not have to participate in a BTP if they have three or more years of appropriate experience at the time of license renewal. If they do not have such experience, they are subject to BTP requirements.

Year I, Year II and Year III beginning teachers (BTs) in the Guilford County Schools are assigned a Mentor/Support Team consisting of their principal/supervisor (or designee) and a career status "mentor" usually from their same subject area or grade level. A minimum of six successive months of participation is required per school year for the "year" to count toward fulfillment of the BTP requirement.

All initially licensed teachers are required by the state to show "continuous professional growth" as determined by each individual school district. Guilford County Schools requires that beginning teachers document their continuous professional growth on their professional development transcript logs. Workshops and courses must be approved through the Professional Development web site and must be taken within the fiscal year of July 1 to June 30. It is strongly recommended that teachers complete a minimum of two (2) continuing education units (CEU's) each BT year.

Year I, Year II and Year III beginning teachers will focus on teaching, working with a mentor, preparing an Individual Growth Plan (IGP), learning about the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards, practicing reflective writing and carryout all requirements of the State of North Carolina.

Continuing Professional Licensure (Standard Professional II License) will be granted when the BT has successfully completed licensure requirements; has completed the required professional growth as prescribed by the LEA; has completed three years of teaching; and the designated local official has notified DPI that there is no reason due to character or conduct that the BT should not receive licensure to teach in North Carolina.

Completion of BT requirements in one teaching area satisfies the BT requirement for all other teaching areas. Once continuing licensure has been earned in one teaching area, additional teaching areas do not require a BT experience.

Initially licensed teachers who are assigned to subject areas in which they hold a provisional license may not earn a continuing license until the specific license provisions have been satisfied.

Initial licensure becomes null and void after three years of unsuccessful experience and is not extended. The individual can return to an approved education program to correct deficiencies and earn a new initial license that allows him or her another opportunity to meet the performance requirements.

Initially licensed teachers who believe they may need additional assistance other than that provided by the assigned mentor should contact the Right Start Office at 370-8098.

LICENSE GUIDELINES

State law requires all employees in "licensed" positions to hold appropriate licensure for their subject, grade level or professional assignment. "Appropriate" can mean a regular 5-year license or a "provisional" license or endorsement good for just the school year in question. The maintenance of a valid license in the area of assignment is the individual responsibility of the employee. Personnel who hold licenses which expire during a particular year must furnish documentation to the Staffing Operations Office that the required renewal credits, Praxis Test scores, semester hours of coursework, etc. have been completed.

Effective with 5-year licenses expiring June 30, 1994, the holder of the expiring license must provide information on whether or not he/she has been convicted of a felony or crime other than a minor traffic offense since his/her first N.C. license was issued. The state mandated form providing this information must be completed and on file for the license extension to be valid.

Licensed employees with a continuing license must document 15 or more units of renewal credit during each five-year cycle to renew or extend their license. One unit of credit is awarded for each year of full-time licensed employment during the five-year cycle, and the remaining units must be earned by completing approved staff development activities that are relevant to the assignment and/or license area (completion of an on-line "Prior Approval Form" assures that relevance). Credit may be earned for attending locally sponsored workshops, college/university/community college offerings, activities offered by various outside entities, and locally approved "independent study" activities. **PRIOR APPROVAL** is **REQUIRED** to earn renewal credit for all activities which are offered by any entity other than the Guilford County Schools, including colleges, State Department of Public Instruction, universities, technical schools and community colleges. "Prior Approval" means that an employee desiring renewal credit for a particular activity must request approval before the beginning date of the activity.

Effective July 1, 2004, a minimum of three (3) Continuing Education Units (CEU's) in technology competencies will no longer be required.

For “individuals teaching Kindergarten through eighth grade whose licenses expire on or after June 30, 2004, a minimum of three (3) Continuing Education Units (CEU’s) must be earned during each five year cycle by completing activities which address State Board of Education policy on reading methods.”

Teachers of grades K-12 must complete three (3) renewal credits in their academic subject areas, including strategies to teach those subjects, during each five year renewal cycle effective July 1, 2009.

School Administrators renewing their licenses on or after July 1, 2007 must complete five (5) Continuing Education Units during each renewal cycle focused on the Principal’s role in teacher effectiveness, teacher evaluations, teacher support programs, teacher leadership, teacher empowerment, and teacher retention.

Employment, Compensation And Evaluation

ASSIGNMENT AND TRANSFER - CLASSIFIED

The reassignment and transfer of classified personnel may be necessary under certain conditions. Transfers may be self-initiated (at the request of the employee) or administration-initiated (employer directed based on administrative determination). The salary impact of the transfer of a classified employee will depend on whether the move is a promotion, a demotion or lateral transfer.

Approved self-initiated transfers for classified employees may occur at any time during the year. Employees are not required to submit any paperwork to the Human Resources Office in order to transfer and may make direct contact with principals or other administrators regarding openings. The actual date of transfer must be agreed upon by the losing and gaining administrators, but the date should not extend beyond 60 days after the transfer has been approved by the Chief Human Resources Officer or designee. If the transfer is a promotion, then the move will take place within fourteen (14) calendar days.

(Reference: Administrative Policy GCM)

ASSIGNMENT AND TRANSFER - LICENSED

The reassignment and transfer of licensed personnel may be necessary under certain conditions. Transfers may be self-initiated (at the request of the employee) or administration-initiated (employer directed based on administrative determination). As a rule, self-initiated transfers of licensed employees will not occur during the school year, except under limited conditions as outlined in Administrative Policy GBM. This procedure addresses information related to the criteria, the exemptions, and the notice for transfer. **Self-initiated transfers will not occur after May 1st for the following school year. Those seeking employment in Mission Possible (MP) Schools may accept transfers only into MP incentive positions through June 15th. As a general rule, non-career status teachers in Year 3 of Probationary contract status are not eligible to transfer. However, the Human Resources Office may make exceptions for documented hardship cases. Licensed employees on an action plan during the transfer period, interim or substitute employees and licensed employees who have been advised that their contracts may not be renewed are NOT eligible for transfer.**

The transfer period is open from approximately February first through the end of the day May 1st. Employees eligible for transfer do not have to be on the transfer list during the transfer period.

(Reference: Administrative Policy GBM-P)

CLASSIFIED EMPLOYMENT

Classified personnel are issued letters of appointment upon their employment with the Guilford County Schools. Listed below are the types of letters of appointment given to classified employees.

Continuing letters of appointment: Continuing letters of appointment are issued to full-time and part-time classified employees in continuing positions.

Interim letters of appointment: Interim letters of appointment are issued to classified employees who fill positions which (1) are temporarily vacant, (2) work with a single student (interpreters only), (3) are specially funded for a specific period of time. All classified employees are considered "at will" employees. The "at will" status is a category wherein the employee can be legally dismissed from employment at the discretion of the school district.

EMPLOYMENT OF SUBSTITUTES

Only those persons whose names appear on the Guilford County Schools' Approved Substitute List may be employed in a substitute capacity.

Teacher and Teacher Assistant substitutes must have 48 semester hours of coursework or an Associate Degree with a cumulative GPA of 2.0 to qualify as a substitute.

Approved substitutes can be employed only in the categories for which they have been approved. For example, a person approved to substitute for a teacher assistant cannot substitute for a teacher unless that person has also been approved to be a substitute teacher.

Current non-exempt employees who are also approved to substitute may not exceed the 40-hour work week provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

Licensed: Substitutes are required for licensed personnel absences if they deliver direct instructional services to students. The principal must request a substitute in writing to the Chief Human Resources Officer (c/o the Director of Staffing Operations) in order to employ substitutes for school counselors and media specialists. Teacher Assistants may be employed as substitutes in accordance with specified procedures.
(Reference: Administrative Procedure GBRJA-P; North Carolina Public Schools Financial Procedures Manual)

Classified: Substitutes for all classified personnel may be employed on the recommendation of principal/supervisor and with the approval of the Chief Human Resources Officer (c/o the Director of Staffing Operations) or through approved procedures following their absences for a specified period of time.
(Reference: Administrative Procedure GBRJB-P)

Contact the Substitute Office at 378-8820 or 370-8382, for additional information.

EVALUATION - CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL

The Guilford County Board of Education places a high priority on both engaging the most competent personnel available and on assisting them to develop throughout their term of employment. Classified employees, who are at-will employees, should be evaluated no less frequently than once each fiscal year. **However, if any employee receives ratings which are all at or above "satisfactory" levels, the formal evaluation may take place every two years as long as the employee's service continues to meet at least "satisfactory" levels. The Supervisor must document the satisfactory performance during alternate years by completing the "Certification of Classified Employee Performance" form. Additional appraisals may be conducted at any time deemed necessary by the evaluator. The evaluator and the employee must sign to indicate that the employee has read the completed evaluation form.**

(Reference: Board of Education Policy GCI)

EVALUATION - LICENSED PERSONNEL

The Guilford County Board of Education attaches a high priority to securing the most competent personnel available and, once they are employed, in assisting them in their professional growth and development throughout their careers. The evaluation is a timely process in which judgments are made about the employee's work. The performance evaluation is a continuing process for the purpose of identifying strengths and weaknesses of the individual and improving the quality of work.

Specific procedures which comply and are consistent with North Carolina laws and State Board of Education regulations regarding the evaluation of licensed personnel may be found in Administrative Policy GBI.

(Reference: Administrative Policy GBI; Board of Education Policy GBDB; G. S. 115C-333;)

EXIT INTERVIEWS

It is not a requirement that personnel ending employment with the Guilford County Schools go through a formal exit interview with Human Resources Department staff. Any employee desiring to have such an opportunity for feedback to the school district will be granted an exit interview, just as the district reserves the right to request the interview of selected personnel upon separation from employment. Employees desiring an exit interview should contact the Staffing Operations Director. In addition, all certified staff are given the opportunity to complete a confidential on line exit survey. The Human Resources Office utilizes the data gathered from this brief questionnaire to identify trends related to turnover and address concerns which are noted within the surveys. Resignation forms are available on the Guilford County Schools' website, from your supervisor or from the Human Resources Department.

JOB SHARING FOR SCHOOL EMPLOYEES

If the local board of education wishes to employ job-sharing staff, it must designate one or more positions as job-sharing positions.

Eligibility

An employee in a job-sharing position is a person who:

- (1) Is employed by a local board of education less than-full- time, **and**
- (2) Is sharing a position with one other employee of the same job classification.

These job-sharing provisions apply to both certified personnel and non-certified personnel.

Reemployed Retirees

Because the benefits for staff employed in job-sharing positions include retirement, retirees can only be employed in temporary job-sharing positions. Retirees employed in temporary job-sharing positions do not earn leave benefits.

Salary

Employees in job-sharing position will be paid pro-rata based on the salary schedule for the position. Experience for certified personnel will be credited at the rate prescribed in Licensure Policy. For non-certified employees, experience credited for salary purposes will follow local policy.

Note: The legislation states, "Service rendered by a school employee in a job-sharing position shall be credited at the rate of one-half year for each regular school year of employment".

Benefits

An employee in a permanent job-sharing position who works at least 20 hours per week shall receive paid legal holidays, annual vacation leave, sick leave, and personal leave on a pro-rata basis. Such an employee also receives service credit under the Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System as provided in G.S.135-4(b) and insurance benefits as provided in G.S. 135-40.2. Retirement is earned at a rate of one-half year of retirement credit for each regular school year of

employment. Participation in the State Health Plan is an optional benefit. If the employee elects to participate in the State Health Plan the employing school unit pays 50% of the Plan's total non-contributory premiums and the employee pays the balance.

(Reference(s): G.S. 115C-302. 1; G.S. 115C-316; G.S. 135-4(b); G.S. 153-40.2; NCGA 2003, S.B. 701 and NC Benefits and Employment Policy Manual)

LICENSED EMPLOYMENT (TEACHERS AND OTHERS)

Eligible instructional licensed personnel are issued contracts upon their employment with the Guilford County Schools. Listed below are the types of contracts given to licensed employees.

Probationary Contracts: New licensed instructional employees who hold clear Standard Professional I or II North Carolina licenses are eligible for probationary contracts which carry probationary status for a maximum of four (4) consecutive years. Licensed employees who come to the Guilford County Schools holding career status from another North Carolina school unit are given probationary contracts which carry probationary status for a maximum of one (1) year. Licensed employees who come to the Guilford County Schools from out-of-state school units and are eligible to hold clear North Carolina licenses are given probationary contracts which carry probationary status for a maximum of four (4) consecutive years. Licensed employees who formerly held career contracts with the Guilford County Schools and who are re-employed in the school system are given probationary contracts which carry probationary status for one (1) year.

A probationary year consists of a minimum of one hundred and twenty (120) working days during a fiscal year (actual days at work excluding sick leave, annual leave and holidays) for teachers. If a probationary teacher does not work 120 workdays as a full-time, permanent teacher during the fiscal year because the teacher is on sick leave, disability leave or both, that year shall not be deemed to constitute:

1. A consecutive year of service for the teacher, or
2. A break in the continuity in consecutive years of service for the teacher.

Career Contracts: Career contracts and **career status (tenure)** are given to licensed employees who have met the requirements established under the probationary contracts and who have received approval by the Guilford County Board of Education. Upon notification of the affected employee, career contracts become effective immediately.

Interim Contracts: Interim contracts are issued to licensed personnel who fill positions which are:

1. temporarily vacant;
2. short-term for a specific period of time, not to exceed one school year;
3. less than full-time, not to exceed one school year.

Interim contracts are also given to licensed employees who do not hold valid and clear North Carolina licenses in at least one area. Interim employees are not eligible to be placed in the tenure track until they hold a valid and clear license in at least one subject area.

Administrative Contracts: Principals and Assistant Principals, and certain Directors and Supervisors who have not attained career status under the provisions of G.S. 115C-325 will be issued initial two-year contracts and are eligible for extensions of four (4) years according to the provisions of G.S. 115C-287.1.

Note: If any licensed employee believes that he/she has not been issued the correct contract or the correct number of years of probationary status, it is the employee's responsibility to advise the Director of Staffing Operations, so that any discrepancy can be reviewed and appropriately resolved. (Reference: G.S. 115C-325 and G.S. 115C-287.1)

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLANS

Licensed Employees:

A Performance Improvement Plan refers to any written strategy designed to help an employee improve or gain even greater competence. This includes Individual Growth Plans (IGPs) and Action Plans. North Carolina General Statute 115C-333 and Board of Education Policy GBIA require an action plan for any licensed employee who receives a rating of below standard or unsatisfactory on any function of the employee's performance evaluation, unless the Superintendent recommends dismissal, demotion or non-renewal of the employee. Under state law, teachers are required to enter into the Superintendent's plan for professional development.

An action plan cannot be appealed for the following reasons:

1. The placement on an Action Plan of a licensed employee who receives a rating of below standard or unsatisfactory, since this is required by statute.
2. The ratings received on an evaluation, which result in the placement of an employee on an Action Plan.
3. The fact that an administrator does not meet every requirement set forth in an Action Plan, provided that there has been substantial compliance.

(Reference: G.S. 115C-307 (e); G.S. 115C-333; Administrative Policy GBIA)

An IGP shall be developed or reviewed at least twice annually. For first-year beginning teachers and first year probationary teachers, IGPs shall be developed after the first observation.

(Reference: Administrative Policy GBIA)

Classified Employees:

Any classified employee who receives an overall performance rating below a "satisfactory" level on his/her performance evaluation must participate in a performance improvement plan designed to improve the employee's performance in the deficient area(s). Any performance improvement plan may be appealed to the immediate Supervisor or to the Director of Staffing Operations if the employee is not satisfied with the decision of the immediate Supervisor.

(Reference: Board of Education Policy GCI)

PERSONNEL FILES

The Superintendent shall maintain in his office a personnel file for each employee that contains any complaint, commendation, or suggestion for correction or improvement about the employee's professional conduct, except that the Superintendent may elect not to place in a teacher's file (i) a letter of complaint that contains invalid, irrelevant, outdated, or false information or (ii) a letter of complaint when there is no documentation of an attempt to resolve the issue. The complaint, commendation, or suggestion shall be signed by the person who makes it and shall be placed in the employee's file only after five days' notice to the employee. Any denial or explanation relating to such complaint, commendation, or suggestion that the employee desires to make shall be placed in the file. Any employee may petition the local board of education to remove any information from his personnel file that he deems invalid, irrelevant, or outdated. The board may order the Superintendent to remove said information if it finds the information is invalid, irrelevant, or outdated. Personnel files for each employee are maintained in the Human Resources Department at the Eugene Street Administration

Office. Any employee wishing to review his/her personnel file should call the Records Office to schedule an appointment; **regrettably the records office cannot accommodate walk-ins**. Every employee may have access to his/her own personnel file except pre-employment data, during working hours, provided reasonable notice is given to the Human Resources Office.

(Reference: G. S. 115C-307(e); 115C-325 (b); 115C-319, 320 and 321;
Board of Education Policy GAK; Administrative Procedure GAK-P)

RE-EMPLOYMENT OF RETIRED EMPLOYEES

Employees who have retired from the Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System may be considered for re-hire to a full-time or part-time position or a temporary (less than six (6) months) full-time position.

EMPLOYMENT OF RETIREES SUBJECT TO THE EARNINGS CAP

Retirees employed under this section must meet certain conditions:

1. The individual must have ended employment with the school system in good standing.
2. Retirees must have been retired at least 6 months.
3. It is the responsibility of the retiree to contact the Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System to determine the earnings cap and monitor their earnings upon re-employment to ensure they do not exceed the earnings cap.
4. Appointment will be made on an interim basis for no more than one year at a time.
5. The hiring administrator must provide a written justification to support the recommendation to hire.

Salary

Retirees will be paid according to salary schedules established for the position.

Benefits

Retirees working full-time will not earn benefits unless they cancel their retirement benefits.

Retirees working 20 hours per week but less than 30 hours would earn pro-rated part-time benefits from the school system and continue to receive retirement benefits.

RESIGNATION - CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEES

Classified employees are required to submit their written resignation notice at least fourteen (14) calendar days prior to the effective date. Failure to provide sufficient notice will be made part of the employment record, does not reflect positively, and will harm future reemployment possibilities; even with proper notice, employees who resign during the school year are generally not reemployed within the next twelve months. Resignations which occur during the summer months must provide a notice of at least fourteen (14) days prior to start date for employees for the next school year.

Once a resignation is accepted by the Superintendent or his/her designee, it may not be withdrawn by the employee.

(Reference: Board of Education Policy GCO)

RESIGNATION - LICENSED EMPLOYEES

The Superintendent or his/her designee shall be authorized to accept resignations from employees on behalf of the Board. Once a resignation is accepted by the Superintendent, it may not be withdrawn by the employee. **When it becomes necessary for a licensed employee to cancel his/her contract, or terminate employment, a written resignation notice should be received at least thirty (30) calendar days prior to the effective date in accordance with General Statute 115C-325(0).** Beyond harming future reemployment possibilities, failure to provide such notice may constitute grounds for license revocation. Further, employees who resign during the school year are generally not eligible for reemployment within the next twelve months. **Resignations which occur during the summer months must provide a notice of at least thirty (30) days prior to the start date for employees for the next school year.**

(Reference: Board of Education Policy GBO)

RESIGNATION AND LEAVE BALANCES

Following a resignation, the distribution of leave balances is as follows:

1. When an employee resigns and is immediately rehired in another North Carolina school system, sick leave, annual leave, bonus leave and personal leave balances must be transferred to the hiring school system. **The resigning employee must contact our Payroll Department (370-8367) and request the transfer of leave balances.**
2. When an employee resigns and is not immediately rehired in another North Carolina school system, the sick leave and personal leave are kept in a “bank” for 60-63 months (based on employees’ months of service) and payment is made for annual leave days. Reinstatement of sick and personal days will follow G.S.115c-336.
3. With the exception of immediate rehire in another North Carolina school system, payment is made to the employee for annual leave days and bonus leave days.

(Reference: Public Schools of North Carolina Benefits and Employment Policy Manual; G.S. 115C-336 sections 3, 4 and 5)

SALARY ADMINISTRATION

Pay Plan Administration

Besides the State Teacher's Salary Schedule, locally adopted salary schedules exist for positions employed by the Board of Education. Our pay plan recognizes experience as the basis for pay increases within the established pay range. Rules and procedures on salary progression are available for review at school / department offices, at the Staffing Operations Office and on the district’s web site.

Hiring Rate/Starting Salary/Salary Adjustments

- (a) Teachers and others paid on the teacher and/or state salary schedules are placed on the schedule and step certified by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction based on years of experience and degree held. GCS provides a local supplement to these salaries.
- (b) New employees assigned to the Master Salary Schedule that sufficiently verify previous work experience may receive credit for experience in accordance with the provisions set forth for experience criteria.

New employees assigned to the Bus Driver Salary Schedule who sufficiently verify previous work experience may receive credit up to the maximum of the Bus Drivers' Salary Schedule in accordance with the provisions set forth for experience criteria.

- (c) Employees are encouraged to monitor their pay vouchers to assure proper placement on the appropriate salary schedule. Errors in salary placement (underpayments and overpayments) will be corrected upon discovery. Salary adjustments will be effective, retroactively, to the date the error occurred. However, under no circumstances will a retroactive salary adjustment be made for more than twelve (12) months prior to discovery. All adjustments will be made effective on the first day of the appropriate pay period.

Progression Through the Salary Range

In accordance with State law and regulations, for licensed personnel assigned to a state schedule plus a supplement (e.g. teachers), experience step increments are granted annually, unless frozen by legislative action. Generally, all others on the Master Salary Schedule or bus driver salary schedule will advance one step on the assigned salary grade for completion of each year of satisfactory service until he/she reaches the maximum of the salary range. Experience step advancement does not necessarily result in an increase in pay.

Pay for Part-Time Work

Compensation of any employee appointed for less than full-time service shall be computed on a pro-rated basis for hours worked. These employees will be covered by Workers' Compensation and Social Security and will receive other fringe benefits as determined by the Board of Education and state law.

Extra Duty/Extended Employment

Only employees who have been classified as "Exempt" from the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) are eligible to be employed for Extra-Duty/Extended Employment such as coaching or extra-curricular activities. An "Agreement for Extended Employment" must be completed for each activity.

Paydays

Employees are paid either monthly on the 15th of the month or the last day of the month or semi-monthly on the 15th and last day of the month. Each paycheck will include earnings for all work performed through the end of the previous payroll period. **Contact the Payroll Department at 370-8370 for additional information on pay dates.** In the event that a regularly scheduled payday falls on a weekend or bank holiday, employees' bank accounts will be credited on the revised pay date.

Direct Deposit

All employees are required to enroll in the Direct Deposit Program or the Payroll Card Program administered by Wachovia Bank. An employee must complete either the Direct Deposit Authorization Agreement for Automatic Deposits (Form FIN-F002) or the Payroll Card Enrollment Form (FIN-F041). After the Direct Deposit Authorization Agreement or the Payroll Card Enrollment Form is received and processed, a trial transaction must be run between the Guilford County Schools bank and the employee's bank; therefore, it may take 6 to 8 weeks before deposits will be made directly to the employee's account. **Employees may view their paycheck information (paystubs) online, by visiting www.gcsnc.com "Quick Links for Employees" and click on "Employee Self-Service". Any questions or requests for the Direct Deposit Authorization Agreement or the Payroll Card Enrollment Form should be directed to the Payroll Office at 370-8367.**

Payroll Deductions

Federal and State income taxes, Social Security tax, and retirement contributions, tax liens and the like shall be payroll deducted as required by law and the Board of Education. No other payroll deductions from employee's pay for contributions to charitable or other organizations will be made without the request of the employee, prior approval, and in accordance with locally established procedures.

State Employees' Credit Union Summer Cash Account

Ten and eleven month employees may choose to enroll in the State Employees' Credit Union Summer (SECU) Cash Account as a structured method to save for summer payroll checks. The Summer Cash Account is available to all SECU members that work less than 12 months per school year. During the working months, a payroll deduction is made from the employees' check and forwarded to SECU and deposited in their Summer Cash Account. Funds from the Summer Cash Account (including the interest that is earned on their savings) will be automatically transferred into the requested SECU checking or share account in the non-working month(s).

Additional information and questions regarding the SECU Summer Cash Account should be directed to any of the SECU branches.

Employee Benefits

BENEFITS ENROLLMENT

Employees are required to complete the enrollment process for their benefits. **Failure to do so may negate or delay an employee's eligibility status for benefits and result in a delay in receiving the first or subsequent paychecks.** Benefits packets will be distributed to new employees or to employees who transfer to a position that changes their benefits eligibility.

CHANGES IN EMPLOYEE STATUS/QUALIFYING EVENTS

Benefit–Election Status Changes: Certain benefit changes for health or dental insurance and flexible benefits are regulated by federal and state agencies. If one of the following qualifying events occurs during the plan year, employees may be allowed to change (add, terminate, increase or decrease) current election(s) in pre-tax benefits. The change must, however, be as a result of one of these events and must be consistent with the change in status.

- Marriage
- Divorce - Legal Separation - Annulment
- Death of spouse
- Birth or adoption of child
- Placement of child in foster care
- Termination or commencement of employment by spouse or covered children
- Change from part-time to full-time, or full-time to part-time employment status by employee or spouse
- The taking of an **unpaid leave** of absence by either the employee or spouse
- Attainment of limiting age, change in student status or marriage of dependents
- Entitlement of Medicare or Medicaid by employee, spouse or dependent
- Required, by court order, to provide coverage for child(ren)
- Request to stop withholding premiums from paycheck. **STATE HEALTH PLANS ONLY.**
- A significant change (at least fifty \$50 dollars per month) in the health premium benefits in the plan covering spouse and/or dependents. **STATE HEALTH PLANS ONLY.**

When a status change (qualifying event) occurs that alters coverage needs, employees, within 31 days of the event must go to <https://gcsnc.hrintouch.com> and enter the change. Documentation to verify the change must be sent to the Benefits Office immediately. If unclear, please call the Benefits Office at (370-8352 or 370-8996) to determine if a change can be made.

Address/Telephone Change:

Employees may make changes by completing the change request located on the Guilford County Schools web site: www.gcsnc.com. Employees should go to “Employee Self Service”; follow logon directions and edit contact information.

Name Change:

Name change forms **MUST BE** completed in the Benefits Office. Employees must provide appropriate documentation (marriage license, new social security card, court order, etc.) for a name change. Also, depending on the position and changes, other forms may be required, e.g. change in beneficiary or name change on teaching license.

DEFINITIONS (For Benefit Purposes)

Permanent Employee

Employed with the expectation of permanent employment to fill a position that is to be permanent if present needs and funds continue, or employed for at least six full consecutive monthly pay periods to replace one or more employees who are on leave of absence without pay; and may be full-time or part-time.

***Full-Time Employee**

Employed at least 30 hours per week; eligible for full benefits

Full benefits include:

1. insurance plans offered by the district
2. financial plans offered by the district
3. leave days (sick, annual etc.) earned at the full rate for years worked
4. State Teachers' and Employees' Retirement System
5. longevity payments
6. Employee Assistance Program
7. leave of absence
8. NC State Employees' Credit Union
9. general liability insurance
10. savings bonds; until January 1, 2011

***Part-Time Employee**

Employed at least 20 hours per week, but less than 30; eligible for pro-rated (partial) benefits.

Pro-Rated (partial) benefits include:

1. health insurance may be purchased paying the employee and employers' cost
2. leave days (sick, annual etc.) earned on a pro-rated (partial) basis for years worked
3. longevity payments
4. Employee Assistance Program
5. leave of absence
6. NC State Employees' Credit Union
7. tax deferred annuities 403 (b) programs
8. savings bonds; until January 1, 2011
9. general liability insurance

*Does not necessarily apply to Visiting International Faculty or Retirees returning to work.

Interim Employee

Employed on a temporary basis to fill a position for a designated period of time.

Employed to replace an employee on leave.

Can be full-time or part-time.

Temporary Employee

Employed less than 20 hours per week, or employed in an interim position for less than six (6) full consecutive monthly pay periods.

INCOME TAX WITHHOLDING FORMS

Federal (form W-4) and state (form NC-4) forms may be obtained from Payroll Office, Benefits Office or the Guilford County Schools web site under Human Resources – Staffing Forms for the purpose of changing income tax withholding information. Changes in exemptions and deductions may be made at any time during the year.

INSURANCE

Health Insurance

All permanent full-time employees of the Guilford County Schools are eligible for group insurance. Employees may elect to have their spouse and/or children covered by the same plan by paying a set monthly premium. **Beginning July 1, 2011, children can be covered up to age 26 regardless of student or marital status providing the child is not eligible for other employer sponsored health benefit coverage. This only applies to Health Insurance.** The additional premium is collected by payroll deduction one month in advance and is handled as a pre-tax salary reduction. For employees who are paid in ten (10) installments, a monthly escrow is also deducted to cover the cost of health insurance premiums during the summer months. **Permanent part-time employees working a minimum of twenty (20) hours per week may purchase health insurance if they pay the total premium (employee and employer costs).**

Health Insurance is provided free to all permanent, full-time employees by the State Health Plan and is currently administered by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina. The insurance provides coverage for hospital and medical expenses. Two Preferred Provider Organizations (PPO) Plans are offered. The plans are the NC Smart Choice Blue Options Basic, and Standard plans. For comprehensive information visit the State Health Plan web site (see below).

The annual enrollment period for health insurance is determined by the State Benefits Office.

Claims under the State Health Plan should be filed as soon as possible after services are received. It is the employee's responsibility to file claims. Claims may be filed by medical professionals. If needed Claim forms are available on the State Health Plan web site listed below.

Changing from one health and/or dental plan to another can be done only during the annual enrollment period. Changes in current coverage options may be made during the annual enrollment period or other times, with a documented "qualifying event" if done within thirty-one (31) days of the event. "Qualifying events" include but are not limited to: birth of a child, change in marital status, etc. See Benefit Election Status changes.

Contact the Benefits Office with questions concerning insurance and speak with any insurance representative or contact the NC Smart Choice Blue Options PPO Plans' customer service at 1-888-234-2416.

(Reference: The State of North Carolina Comprehensive Health Benefit Plan; <http://www.shpnc.org>)

NC HealthSmart Wellness Programs

The NC HealthSmart Wellness Programs are online tools to help employees manage their personal health. Visit www.shpnc.org and click on NC HealthSmart.

The NC HealthSmart web site includes:

1. Health Risk Assessment (HRA) survey
2. Personal Action Plan based on your HRA results
3. Lifestyle improvement programs
4. Health information references for any health or medical question

LONG TERM CARE INSURANCE

Long Term Care Insurance can help cover the costs of custodial care that an eligible employee, spouse or dependent may need, including care received at home, in a nursing home or in an assisted living facility. The State Health Plan has entered into a contract with the Prudential Insurance Company of America to provide Long Term Care Insurance for state employees.

Enrollment is voluntary and must be done directly with the Prudential Company of America. **There is no payroll deduction, only direct billing to the employee or to a personal bank account.**

New employees may enroll at the time of hire.

For additional information, call the Prudential at 1-800-284-9648 or visit online at www.prudential.com/gltc (group name: stateplan/ password: stateplanltc).

Cafeteria (Flexible) Benefits

Guilford County Schools permanent full-time employees are offered a cafeteria (flexible) benefits plan. **This plan offers employees an opportunity to save money by paying for non-reimbursed medical expenses, dependent care expenses, dental, supplemental hospital, cancer insurance, and vision insurance with pre-tax dollars. Supplemental disability insurance and whole life insurance are offered only on an after-tax basis. The annual enrollment period for flexible benefits is in September/October of each year** *The effective date of coverage is January 1. Once enrolled, **NO** changes in coverage options may be made during the plan year for pre-tax coverage unless there is a benefit election status change/qualifying event (see page 41). Additional information is available from the Benefits Office. The plan year for the Cafeteria (Flexible) Benefits program is January 1 through December 31 of each year. **The Plan Document and Summary Plan Description for our Cafeteria (Flexible) Benefits Plan is located on the Guilford County Schools web site.**

Note: Employees must re-enroll in flexible spending accounts (medical and dependent care) each year. Other cafeteria (flexible) benefits plans will carry over from year to year. The Cafeteria (Flexible) Benefits Plan is chosen through a competitive bid process and is periodically subject to change.

(Reference: Guilford County Schools Cafeteria Benefits Plan Document, Guilford County Schools)

Dental Insurance

All permanent full-time employees of the school system are offered dental coverage. **All premiums are paid by employees.** Two dental plans are available and eligible employees may enroll in only one (1) plan. **The first plan is the Guilford County Schools Direct Reimbursement Plan. The employee must pay the bill and submit the claim, with a copy of the receipt, to the Plan Supervisor for a fifty (50) percent reimbursement. Claim forms are located on the Guilford County Schools web site. Secondly, Guilford County Schools offers an alternative dental plan. This plan allows the claim to be submitted to the insurance company; employee pays the remaining fee.** Employees may elect to have their spouse and/or eligible children covered by the same plan by paying a set monthly premium. **Unmarried children up to age 19 or up to age 26, if enrolled**

as a full-time student (12 or more hours per semester) at a state-accredited school or college, are eligible for coverage. Employees should file claims as soon as possible after services are received. **The annual enrollment period for dental insurance is usually September/October of each year. The effective date of coverage is January 1. When both spouses work for the Guilford County Schools, they should elect the split family coverage if one employee desires to cover their children. If the employment status of one spouse changes, the remaining employed spouse must contact the Benefits Office and change to the full paying dependent coverage premium within thirty-one (31) days.** Once enrolled, **NO** changes in coverage options may be made during the plan year unless there is a benefit election status change/qualifying event. Additional information is available through the Benefits Office.

(Reference: Guilford County Schools web site)

Term Life Insurance

The Guilford County Board of Education provides to all permanent full-time employees basic group **term life insurance coverage** in the amount of \$5,000. Employees may elect to purchase additional coverage for themselves, their spouse and/or eligible children with premiums being payroll deducted. **Unmarried children up to age 19 or up to age 26, if enrolled as a full-time student (12 or more hours per semester) at a state-accredited school or college, are eligible for coverage.** Coverage above \$130,000 for a new employee and coverage above \$30,000 for the spouse must be approved by Metropolitan Life Insurance Company after submission of a statement of health. If an employee desires additional coverage after the initial election is completed, he/she must be approved by Metropolitan Life. **There is no annual enrollment period for term life insurance.**

The term life insurance plan has an “Accelerated Benefits Option” feature which may allow partial benefits if an employee is diagnosed with a terminal illness by a medical doctor. The employee may change beneficiaries and lower coverage at any time. To increase coverage, at any time, a “Statement of Health” must be completed and approval must be granted by the life insurance carrier.

Whole Life Insurance is available through our Cafeteria (Flexible) Benefits Program. This plan features guaranteed: level premiums, cash values and reduced paid up life insurance at retirement. Coverage is portable and can be purchased on employee, spouse, children and grandchildren.

Comprehensive Legal and Identity Theft Protection

Guilford County Schools offers full-time employees a comprehensive legal plan that provides nationwide coverage and includes services such as will preparation, motor vehicle services, mortgage document assistance and IRS audit assistance. The Identity Theft Protection plan offers free credit reports, continuous credit monitoring and identity restoration. **The plan year is January 1 through December 31 of each year. Annual enrollment is held September/October of each year.**

Removing Children from Insurance Coverage

Dental and Life Insurance

Employees who have chosen to insure their children with dental and/or life insurance may do so until: the child turns 19 or if the child is a full-time student at a state accredited school or college, insurance coverage can be extended until age 26 or at the time of graduation, whichever comes first. One semester break per calendar year is allowed for a student to maintain a full-time student status. Summer School is optional and is not considered a semester. Children graduating from college must be removed before the first day of the month following the event so the employee will not be charged

an additional month with no coverage. Married children of any age cannot be insured for dental or life insurance. For more information contact the Benefits Office. **It is your responsibility to notify the Benefits Office when a dependent is ineligible for coverage. Examples of ineligible dependent status are divorce or a child graduating from college.** Removal of child's coverage is done by paper form. Forms are located on the Guilford County Schools' website, under "Forms and Handbooks".

Health Insurance

Adult children, who have reached the age of 26 or are eligible for other employer sponsored health benefit coverage, must be removed from the Plan. Removal can be done online by going to <https://gcsnc.hrintouch.com> . It is the employee's responsibility to notify the Benefits Office when a child or spouse is no longer eligible for coverage.

Continuation of Insurance Coverage Following Separation from Employment

Continuation of group health, dental insurance coverage, the medical reimbursement flexible spending account and vision insurance is available to employee, spouse and/or dependents under the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA-Health Insurance) and the Public Health Service Act (PHSA-Dental Insurance) as required by federal law. Certain qualifying events are governed by these COBRA regulations. Continuation of this coverage is paid by the member at a higher rate than the normal group rates, as allowed by federal law. **An employee separating from employment will receive a letter, from the Benefits Office, explaining termination of benefits. COBRA and PHSA are offered by the health and dental companies. For more information concerning the COBRA regulations, please contact your health insurance provider.**

Continuation/Conversion of Term Life Insurance Following Separation from Employment

Continuation of term life insurance coverage is available for the employee or family **only** through conversion or portability. Information is provided at separation.

Continuation/ of Whole Life Insurance Following Separation from Employment

Continuation of whole life insurance is available through direct billing to the employee's bank account. Information provided at separation.

HIPAA – Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act

The HIPAA Act is a federal law that was passed in 1996. Additional guidelines were issued December 4, 2002. A portion of this federal law is called the Privacy Rule. **Through the Privacy Rule, the federal government is seeking to protect and keep private an individual's personal health information (PHI).**

Our appropriate benefits plans are HIPAA compliant.

PHI cannot be released to others without **your written authorization. Authorization forms can be downloaded from the State Health Plan (see below) or from the Benefits Offices.**

An excellent source for additional HIPAA information can be found on the State Health Plan web site at <http://www.shpnc.org>

Liability Insurance

All employees of Guilford County Schools are covered by the Board of Education's School Professional Legal Liability Insurance Policy. Each claim has a \$1,000,000 limit of liability and an aggregate limit of \$1,000,000. The program covers legal liability for an act, error, or omission in

services rendered in the discharge of school district duties. The school system also carries general liability insurance coverage.

Workers' Compensation Insurance

Provisions of the Workers' Compensation Act are applicable to all paid school employees. Workers' Compensation provides medical benefits and a weekly compensation benefit equal to 66 2/3% of the employee's average weekly earnings for the year prior to the injury, up to a maximum established by the Industrial Commission each year.

When an employee is injured on the job, he/she must ensure that the immediate supervisor has knowledge of the injury **immediately** following the accident. The employer's Report of Injury to Employee (Form 19) **must** be completed and signed by the employee's supervisor and forwarded to the Benefits Office within five (5) days. The completed Employee Statement (Statement B) **must** accompany the Form 19. Forms are available at the schools and departments. A copy of the authorization form and the Form 19 must be given to the employee. Another copy, of the Form 19, must remain on file at the site for five years. All originals must be sent to the Benefits Office. **In addition to the forms, employees will be given a list of approved medical facilities to be used for their first or initial visit.**

If an injury requires medical attention, **an employee must be seen first or initially by a medical doctor at a medical facility approved by our Workers' Compensation Carrier.** Failure to use such a facility may result in delayed payment to the doctor and may result in the employee being responsible in full payment of any and/or all medical bills. Any treatment needed after the **first** or **initial** visit can only be **authorized by our Workers' Compensation Carrier.** Employees injured on the job in a compensable accident, in order to reach maximum medical improvement, requiring medical or therapy visits during regularly scheduled working hours shall not be charged leave for time lost from work for required treatment. Paid time should be limited to reasonable time for treatment and travel; any excess time will be charged as vacation/bonus or sick leave or leave without pay.

Eligible employees receive the Workers' Compensation weekly benefit, after the required waiting period of seven (7) calendar days, (including Saturday and Sunday), effective on the 8th day of the disability. During the seven-day waiting period, the employee may choose to use available sick leave, annual leave, or bonus leave in this order. The employee can also take leave without pay for the seven (7) day waiting period.

While on workers' compensation leave, an employee is in pay status and shall continue to receive total state service credit.

The weekly benefit may be supplemented by the use of partial sick or vacation/bonus leave, earned prior to the injury, in accordance with a schedule published by the Office of State Personnel each year. This will provide an income approximately equal to their take-home or net pay.

If the injury results in disability of more than 21 calendar days, the Workers' Compensation weekly benefit is allowed from the date of disability. While on Workers' Compensation leave, an eligible employee continues to accumulate vacation and sick leave if the employee earned such leave while working. Leave days earned while on Workers' Compensation leave will be added to the employee's leave account upon return to work. Absences for Workers' Compensation shall count as part of the employee's Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) entitlement for that year.

The employee is responsible for facilitating correct and timely processing of medical/prescription services by informing all concerned parties of the status of the claim and notifying same to contact/bill the appropriate carrier adjuster. Transportation costs may be eligible for reimbursement.

Any employee absent for more than ten (10) days due to workers' compensation compensable injuries must also complete a "Request for Leave of Absence" form.

Workers' Compensation claims must never be filed with a health insurance carrier. All treatment, tests, equipment, or prescriptions must have prior authorization before the appropriate carrier can pay them. Failure to follow Industrial Commission guidelines could jeopardize eligibility for Workers' Compensation benefits.

(Reference: The Provisions of the Workers' Compensation Act G. S. 115c-337; State Personnel Manual Employee Benefits and Awards section 6)

EPISODE OF VIOLENCE

Any permanent full-time employee who suffers an injury and is disabled while engaged in the course of his or her employment shall receive full salary if the injury or disability arose from an episode of violence and the employee did not participate in or provoke the violence. Employee must meet the definition of permanence by having been in full payroll status for six (6) consecutive months.

The salary shall continue for one year, the continuation of the disability, or the time during which the employee is unable to engage in his or her employment because of the injury, whichever period is shortest.

While receiving regular salary under this provision, the employee is not eligible to receive weekly salary benefits under Workers' Compensation. However, the employee may receive medical, hospital, drug and related expense payments from Workers' Compensation if applicable.

The employee is not required to use any paid leave (sick, annual, personal, etc.) if the approved absence is due to an episode of violence.

An employee experiencing an episode of violence must complete the same forms as in a Workers' Compensation claim. Refer to the Workers' Compensation section.

LONGEVITY

All qualified permanent full-time and part-time employees (20 hours or more a week) are eligible for yearly longevity payments after completing ten years of State of North Carolina service. Longevity payment is calculated according to a scale based upon annual state salary and years of qualifying service:

<u>Years Completed</u>	<u>Non-Teachers</u>	<u>Teachers</u>
10 but less than 15	1.50%	1.50%
15 but less than 20	2.25%	2.25%
20 but less than 25	3.25%	3.25%
25 or more years	4.50%	4.50%

Longevity payment is made the last working day of the employee's anniversary month.

MISCELLANEOUS BENEFITS

Employee Assistance Program

All full-time employees and part-time employees working four (4) or more hours per day are eligible to receive a cumulative total of three free visits per fiscal year for confidential short-term counseling services for help in resolving personal and family problems. Immediate family members can be included in the three free visits per fiscal year. All visits are confidential. Employees need only to call the provider, Cornerstone Psychological Services at (336) 540-9400 in Greensboro to schedule an appointment. Please identify yourself as an employee of Guilford County Schools. A child of an employee is eligible for services only until the child's nineteenth birthday or up to age 26 if the child is a full-time student.

Employees who retire or are terminated are eligible for the Employee Assistance Program Services for a period of six (6) months or to the end of the contract year during which they are separated, whichever is longer.

Savings Bonds

Beginning January 1, 2011, the U.S. Department of Treasury will stop issuing paper savings bonds through payroll deduction. Interested employees should go to www.treasurydirect.gov and create an account. TreasuryDirect can debit your personal bank account.

Social Security

All employees participate in the social security system. Contributions are made by both the employee and employer. Benefits may include retirement, pensions, disability payments, and survivor's insurance. The tax rate for contributions is determined annually.

401(k)

All full-time employees are eligible to participate, by payroll deduction, in the 401(k) program administered by the State of North Carolina through Prudential Retirement. Contact the Benefits Office for information and enrollment forms. Information may also be obtained from the Prudential Retirement web site at www.prudential.com/ncplans or call 1-866-627-5267 or 624-0151.

403(b) Annuities

All employees are eligible to participate in the 403(b) Plan available through payroll deduction. The 403(b) plan is administered by a third party administrator, JEM Resource Partners. Participants in the 403(b) Plan are assessed an administrative fee of \$1.50 per month via payroll deduction. For additional information call 1-800-943-9179 or visit JEM's website (<http://www.jemtpa.com/home>).

457 Deferred Compensation Plan

All permanent employees are eligible to participate in the State of North Carolina 457 Deferred Compensation Plan administered by Prudential. A 457 plan is similar to a 403(b) plan where contributions are made through payroll reduction, occur on a pre-tax basis and accumulate tax-deferred until withdrawn. The minimum monthly contribution is \$20. For more information call 1-866-627-5267

State Employees' Credit Union

All employees, except individuals employed through contracted services, may join the North Carolina State Employees' Credit Union. Upon obtaining membership, the employee's spouse, children, and

parents may become members. In addition, substitutes paid by Guilford County Schools are eligible to obtain membership in the credit union. Information is available from the State Employees' Credit Union's web site: www.ncsecu.org and from the Benefits Office

Theme Park Programs

Information regarding amusement park discounts is available from the State Employees' Credit Union web site at www.ncsecu.org.

RETIREMENT SYSTEM

Pension

All permanent full-time employees are required to join the Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System. Eligible employees contribute 6% of their gross salary (pre-tax) to the Retirement System. The Guilford County Schools may make a contribution as established by the North Carolina General Assembly for each permanent full-time employee. Monthly benefits at retirement are based upon the employee's four (4) highest consecutive years of salary, years of state service, and/or age at retirement. **After five (5) years of creditable service an employee is considered "vested" and may be eligible for benefits from the retirement system.** Full, unreduced retirement benefits may be received at age 65 with 5 years of service; age 60 with 25 years of service, or at any age with 30 years of service. Reduced benefits may be received at age 50 with 20 years of service or age 60 with 5 years of service. **If an employee was hired before October 1, 2006 and meets the age and service requirements for full or reduced retirement, the employee will be eligible for free health insurance. For employees first hired on or after October 1, 2006:**

- Full coverage as retired employees requires 20 or more years of retirement service credit
- Employees with 10 but less than 20 years of retirement service credit shall be eligible for coverage under the Plan on a partially contributory basis (50/50)
- Retired teachers, State employees, and members of the General Assembly with less than 10 years of retirement service credit are eligible for coverage under the Plan, on a fully contributory basis if first hired on or after Oct 1, 2006.

All retirements are effective the first day of the month. Licensed employees are asked to sign a resignation form and to give a 30 calendar day notice, so as to provide a smooth transition. Classified employees are asked to sign a resignation form and to give a 14 calendar day notice. Principals and Administrators are asked to sign a resignation form and to give a 60 calendar day notice.

Beneficiaries

It is extremely important that permanent full-time employees have a designating beneficiaries form on file with the retirement system. If the form is not on file, upon death benefits transfer to the employee's estate.

Change of retirement beneficiaries is possible at any time prior to retirement and under certain option provisions after retirement. If an employee has less than ten (10) years of service, the beneficiary(ies) can be changed through ORBIT, the Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System's secure website. If an employee has more than ten (10) years of service, the beneficiary(ies) can be changed by completing Form 2RC "Designating Beneficiary(ies) for Retirement System Contributions" and Form 2DB-"Designating Beneficiary(ies) for the Death Benefit".

Refund of Retirement Contributions

If an employee terminates employment with the State, the employee may request a refund of contributions (penalty assessed) or a rollover of contributions into an IRA (no penalty assessed) as an alternative to a monthly pension. The refund normally takes a minimum of sixty to ninety (60 to 90) days. Interim employees may not withdraw their funds during the months of June, July, August, or September. Interim employees may apply for withdrawal of funds after October 1.

Death Benefit

A death benefit between \$25,000 and \$50,000 is payable to a designated beneficiary after an employee has completed one year (365 days) as a contributing member of the Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System. The amount paid is determined by employee's annual salary. Employee retirement contributions are also paid to the designated beneficiary. The death benefit remains in place for 180 days following an employee's resignation.

ORBIT

Online Retirement Benefits through Integrated Technology is provided by the NC Retirement System. Active employees may register and gain access to current account information. Visit www.myncretirement.com to register.

For more detailed information; refer to the Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System's web site: www.myncretirement.com

(Reference: State Board of Education Policy, "Your Retirement Benefits: Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System of North Carolina")

Employee Disability

A comprehensive short-term and long-term disability income plan is provided at the employer's expense for permanent full-time employees who are members of the Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System and meet certain state service requirements. **Please note: donated leave may not be used beyond the 60th day of disability.**

The short-term disability plan is available to disabled employees with at least one year (365 days) of contributory retirement service within the last 36 months. It begins on the 61st day of disability and provides monthly income equal to 50% of one-twelfth of the annual base salary, local supplement (if applicable), and longevity for up to 365 calendar days, with a maximum of \$3,000 per month. The State Disability Income Plan does not allow outside earnings during the sixty- (60) days waiting period. Short-term disability benefits may be extended for as many as 365 days beyond the original short-term period if approved by the State Medical Board.

The long-term disability income plan begins after the short-term plan ends for the totally and permanently disabled permanent full-time employee with five years of contributory retirement service. The five years of service must be within the previous eight years. The long-term disability plan provides monthly income equal to 65% of one twelfth of the annual base salary, local supplement (if applicable), and longevity, up to \$3,900 per month until the employee

qualifies for unreduced retirement benefits. Long-term benefits, however, are coordinated with Social Security disability payments and Workers' Compensation benefits.

A permanently disabled employee may choose to apply for Retirement Disability if eligibility requirements are met. Contact the Benefits Office for details.

For more detailed information refer to the Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System web site: myncretirement.com click on Benefits Handbook under Retirement and then click on Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System Booklet.

(Reference: Disability Income Plan of the State of North Carolina, www.myncretirement.com)

LEAVE BENEFITS

Guilford County Schools employees are encouraged to utilize available leave benefits options when necessary. However, employees should carefully consider the impact that their absence(s) will have on the overall instructional program and upon the achievement of students. Even the best substitute employee cannot provide the high level of service provided by the regular employee. Every employee absence diminishes the overall quality of the instructional program.

In addition, unused accumulated sick leave and/or annual vacation leave can significantly enhance an employee's financial entitlements at retirement or upon separation from employment with the school district.

More detailed information is contained in the publication, "Guilford County Schools Employee Guide: Leaves and Absences," available on the Guilford County Schools web site.

Short-Term Leaves of Absence

A leave of absence for a period of up to ten (10) workdays shall be considered a short-term leave of absence. A short-term leave of absence may be with or without pay.

* Short-term leave of absence with pay - The appropriate supervisor has authority to approve a leave of absence with pay for a period of up to ten (10) days for appropriate reasons. Paid leave (annual leave, miscellaneous bonus leave, sick leave, personal leave and extended sick leave) shall be used in accordance with state regulations and may be advanced up to the amount that will be earned within the current fiscal year with the approval of the employee's supervisor.

* Short-term leave of absence without pay - The appropriate supervisor has authority to approve up to five (5) days of leave without pay for appropriate reasons. The appropriate supervisor's superior has authority to approve up to an additional five (5) days of leave without pay for appropriate reasons. A full day's salary reduction shall be made for each day the employee is absent. Multiple short-term leaves of absence without pay shall not be approved for more than ten (10) cumulative workdays per fiscal year (July 1- June 30). If additional leave is requested, the employee should follow the procedures for requesting long-term leaves of absence.

Long-Term Leaves of Absence

A leave of absence for a period exceeding ten (10) workdays shall be considered a long-term leave of absence. A long-term leave of absence may be with or without pay. **Guilford County Schools requires the employee to use available paid leave before going on leave without pay.** Sick leave, annual leave and personal leave may not be advanced when an employee is requesting a long-term

leave of absence. Only leave which is earned until such time as the employee goes off the payroll may be used.

- Long-term leave of absence with pay – The Benefits Office has authority to approve a leave of absence with pay for a period exceeding ten (10) workdays for the allowable reasons listed below. Paid leave (annual leave, miscellaneous bonus leave, sick leave, personal leave, and extended sick leave) shall be used in accordance with state regulations. During the period of paid leave, employees continue to earn full benefits.
- Long-term leave of absence without pay – The Benefits Office has authority to approve a leave of absence without pay for a period exceeding ten (10) workdays for the allowable reasons listed below.

Allowable reasons for which long-term leave of absence may be requested are:

1. Military leave, for active duty.
2. Parental leave, for the birth or adoption of a child or placement of a foster child for a period of up to twelve (12) calendar months;
3. Medical leave, for personal illness or temporary disability that prevents an employee from performing his or her usual duties, for a period up to twelve (12) calendar months in excess of sick leave provisions;
4. Family medical leave, in order to provide care for an immediate family member who is critically ill, for a period up to twelve (12) calendar months;
5. Educational leave, if the employee is enrolled in a full-time program at a college or university, in accordance with Administrative Policy GBRL, for a period up to twelve (12) calendar months;
6. Qualifying Exigency leave, when eligible employee's spouse, son, daughter or parent has been deployed to a foreign country as a member of the Armed Forces or has been notified of an impending call to such duty.
7. Military Caregiver leave for an employee who is a spouse, son, daughter, parent or next of kin of a Veteran or other covered service member recovering from a serious medical injury or illness sustained in the line of active military duty. In order for the care of a Veteran to qualify as Military Caregiver Leave, the Veteran must have served in active service within five (5) years proceeding the date on which he or she needs care.
8. Leaves under #2, #3, #4, #6 and #7 are also given in conjunction with FMLA, the federal Family Medical Leave Act.

Exceptions to the Period Exceeding Ten Days

A request for a leave of absence form must be completed and submitted to the Benefits Office, if the absence is for more than 10 days. The exceptions to this procedure are: military leave (for annual training and annual physical), the use of extended sick leave, and the use of voluntary shared leave. The "Request for Leave of Absence" form (HUM-F001) must be completed for each of these exceptions even if the absence is 10 days or less. The appropriate documentation for the type of leave requested must also be submitted to the Benefits Office for approval.

Death in Family

Employees may use sick leave for death in immediate family.

Leave Without Pay

Guilford County Schools requires the employee to use available paid leave before going on leave without pay. An employee may be granted a leave of absence without pay for periods as granted in the discretion of the Superintendent and in accordance with the rules and regulations adopted by the School Board. Extended leaves of absence may be granted in accordance with local rules and regulations. Whenever possible, employees shall give advance notice of requests for leave of absence as documented in the "Employees' Guide: Leaves and Absences" available on the Guilford County Schools web site under Human Resources/Forms and Handbooks. The local board may determine when the leave will begin or end, based on a consideration of the welfare of the students and the need for continuity of instruction.

(Reference: NC Benefits and Employment Policy Manual)

Other Employment While on Leave

Except for specific authorization found in the state disability plan, it is not the practice of the school district to authorize a leave and allow employees to accept other employment. Any exceptions to this practice should be requested by the employee at the time leave approval is sought. Any employee on an approved leave of absence should request approval from the Benefits Office prior to accepting other employment. The request will be reviewed and a letter of notification will be mailed to the employee. If an employee is receiving short-term disability and working at another job, name of employer, gross and net earnings and date of payment must be reported to the Benefits Office.

Return From Long-Term Leave of Absence

When an employee returns to work from an approved long-term leave of absence without pay, the school district will attempt to place that employee in his/her original position if possible. However, in such cases when this is not possible, the employee will be placed in an equivalent position at another location within the school district. **An employee returning to work from a medical leave (for self) must provide a note from the medical provider releasing the employee to return to work. An employee returning to work after an absence of one year or more must submit a new North Carolina Health Certificate to the Benefits Office. If insurance benefits were cancelled while on leave of absence, it is the employee's responsibility to re-enroll. An employee can call the Benefits Office for more information and assistance in enrolling in insurance benefits.**

Sick Leave

Sick leave is earned by all permanent employees at the rate of one (1) day for each monthly pay period they are working or on paid leave for one-half or more of the work days in the pay period (pro-rated for part-time - 50% or more). **This leave may be used for personal illness, injury, temporary disability, illness or death in the immediate family, or employee medical appointments.** For periods of ten (10) working days or less, employees must complete a "Leave Request" (form FIN-FO17) available in the school/department office to request/document the absence. The immediate site supervisor is authorized to approve requests from employees for use of accumulated sick leave for up to ten (10) consecutive days. **Requests for more than five (5) consecutive days must be accompanied by a doctor's statement. The appropriate supervisor or the Human Resources Department may require, at any time, a statement from a medical or other acceptable proof that the employee was unable to work.** For periods of more than ten (10) working days, employees must complete a "Request for Leave of Absence" (form HUM-F001) also available in the school/department office. The Benefits Office has authority to approve requests from employees for use of accumulated sick leave for a period exceeding ten (10) workdays.

Sick leave must be charged in half-day minimums and taken only within existing guidelines for personal illness, or an illness or death in the immediate family as defined by the State Board of

Education. Unused sick leave can be added to length of service for pension computation at retirement. (Reference: NC Benefits and Employment Policy Manual; Guilford County Schools Employee Guide: Leaves and Absences)

Extended Sick Leave

Permanent full-time or part-time classroom teachers and media specialists, who are absent due to their **own personal illness or injury** in excess of their accumulated sick leave shall be allowed extended sick leave of up to twenty (20) workdays throughout the regular term of employment. **Employees on extended sick leave receive full salary less the required substitute deduction. This deduction is mandatory whether or not a substitute is employed. The standard deduction is \$50.00 a day.** In order for a new employee to be eligible, he/she must have reported to work. **If the absence is 10 days or less, the employee must complete the “Request for Leave of Absence” form; (HUM-F001) available in the school/department office. If the absence is for more than 10 days, a Request for Leave of Absences form (HUM-F001) must be completed. Both forms require medical documentation. This information must be submitted to the Benefits Office for approval. Requests to use extended sick leave should be made no later than five (5) days after the extended sick leave begins. If this is not possible, employee must provide written justification to the Director of Benefits.**

Extended sick leave is not available beyond the waiting period for Worker’s Compensation Leave (7 days) and Short-Term Disability Leave (60 days).

Voluntary Shared Leave

The purpose of voluntary shared leave is to provide economic relief for employees who are likely to suffer financial hardship because of a **prolonged absence or frequent short-term absences, caused by a serious medical condition.** The serious medical condition must be documented by a medical doctor, and follow the definition and guidelines as set forth in the Family Medical Leave Act of 1993. **Only permanent full-time or part-time employees who have exhausted all accumulated paid leave (sick leave, annual leave, miscellaneous bonus leave if applicable) are eligible to receive donated leave. An employee need not exhaust personal leave and the 20 days of extended sick leave to be eligible for voluntary shared leave.**

An employee who is eligible to receive benefits from the State of North Carolina Disability Income Plan and/or a private supplemental disability insurance policy is not eligible to receive donated leave. Voluntary shared leave may be used during the required sixty (60) day waiting period for the Disability Income Plan or any applicable waiting period under a private policy.

The following two (2) conditions must be met before an eligible employee can request Voluntary Share Leave:

1. Must be absent for more than five (5) consecutive days or a series of more than five (5) days over a period of six (6) months **due to the same medical reason.**
2. Must be absent due to a serious medical condition (as defined by the Family Medical Leave Act of 1993) of self or immediate family member.

Employees may apply for donated leave by completing three forms:

- (1) “Application for Voluntary Shared Leave” (form HUM-F021)
- (2) “Request for a Leave of Absence” (form HUM-F001)
- (3) “U.S. Department of Labor” (forms WH-380E and WH-380-F).

Forms are located in the Benefits Office. The “Request for a Leave of Absence” form is used to verify a serious medical condition. Submit forms to the Benefits Office.

Application may also be made by a third person acting on the employee's behalf if the employee is unable to make application. The application must include a doctor's statement, and an authorization for release of medical information signed by the person who is suffering the medical condition (or parent or guardian of a minor). This release may also be signed by any legally authorized party.

Any eligible employee in the school system may donate annual vacation leave to any approved employee in the same school system. Family members may donate annual vacation leave, miscellaneous bonus leave or sick leave to immediate family members in the same school system, another N. C. school system, community college or state agency as defined by the State Board of Education.

Employees of a school system may donate annual vacation leave to the immediate family of a co-worker if the co-worker’s immediate family member is eligible for donated leave and works in another school system, state agency or community college.

In order to donate leave an employee must complete a "Authorization to Donate Leave” (form HUM-F020) and submit it to the Benefits Office. The form may be obtained from the Benefits Office.

Requests to use voluntary shared leave and requests to donate leave must be received in the Benefits Office before the leave begins or before the employee returns to work. If this is not possible, employee must provide written justification to the Director of Benefits.

Anyone who would like more information should contact the Benefits Office.

(Reference: NC Benefits and Employment Policy Manual, Guilford County Schools Employee Guide: Leaves and Absences)

Personal Leave

Personal Leave is earned only by permanent full-time or part-time classroom teachers and media specialists. All such full-time instructional personnel earn personal leave at the rate of .20 days for each full month of employment not to exceed two (2) days per year. Part-time personnel earn at a prorated share, the rate for full-time employees.

Personal leave may be accumulated without any applicable maximum until June 30 of each year. Eligible employees may carry forward to July 1 a maximum of five (5) days of personal leave, the remainder of the personal leave shall be converted to sick leave on June 30. At the time of retirement, accumulated personal leave may be converted to sick leave for creditable service towards retirement.

Personal leave may be used only upon the authorization of the employee’s immediate supervisor. Personal leave may not be taken on the first day the employee is required to report for the school year, on a required teacher workday, or days scheduled for State testing, or on the day before or the day after a holiday or scheduled vacation day, unless the request is approved by the principal. On all other days, if the request is made at least five (5) days in advance, the request shall be automatically granted subject to the availability of a substitute teacher, and the employee cannot be required to provide a reason for the request.

Eligible employees using accrued personal leave will receive full salary less the required substitute deduction, except for using personal leave on non-protected teacher workdays. Eligible employees using accrued personal leave on non-protected teacher workdays shall receive full salary.

To use a personal leave day, the employee must complete a “Leave Request” (form FIN-017) available in the school/department office.

Employees may transfer personal leave days between local school administrative units. The local school administrative unit shall credit an employee who has separated from service and is re-employed within 60 months from the date of separation with all personal leave accumulated at the time of separation. Local school administrative units shall not advance personal leave.

See “Use of Personal Leave Chart” page 69

(Reference NC Benefits and Employment Policy Manual; Guilford County Schools Employee Guide- Leaves and Absences; HB 15; HB 2436-Section 26.21a)

Annual Vacation Leave

The purpose of paid annual vacation leave is to allow and encourage all employees to renew their physical and mental capabilities and to remain fully productive. G.S. 115C-316 requires that the first ten (10) days of annual leave earned by 10 or 11-month employees during any fiscal year shall be scheduled to be used in the school calendar adopted by the local Board of Education. Employees are eligible to request additional available annual vacation leave during each year in order to achieve the stated purpose. State and local regulations determine when annual leave may be taken. Annual leave must be authorized by the immediate supervisor and the employee must complete a "Leave Request" (form FIN-F017) available in the school/department office to request/document the absence.

Bus drivers and instructional personnel who require a substitute normally may not take annual vacation leave at any time that students are scheduled to be in attendance.

All full-time and part-time permanent employees who work or are on paid leave (including paid holidays and when on Worker's Compensation) for one-half or more of the work days in a monthly pay period, earn annual vacation leave based on the length of total State of North Carolina service. Annual vacation leave for a part-time permanent employee shall be computed on a pro- rata basis.

Annual vacation leave shall be earned as follows:

<u>Years of State Service Employment</u>	<u>Days of Leave Earned per Month of</u>
Less than 2 years	1.00
2 but less than 5 years	1.15
5 but less than 10 years	1.40
10 but less than 15 years	1.65
15 but less than 20 years	1.90
20 years or more	2.15

Bus drivers who work less than 20 hours per week and who are not otherwise entitled to earn vacation as described above are entitled to earn one day per year (equal in length to one regular workday for each driver) if

- (a) they are employed to drive a regular daily route (i.e., they are not substitute drivers) and
- (b) they were employed as regular drivers the entire previous school year.

The Guilford County Schools requires annual vacation leave to be used in one-half or whole day units.

Annual vacation leave may be accumulated without any applicable maximum until June 30 of each calendar year. On June 30 accumulated annual vacation leave in excess of 30 days will be converted to sick leave so that only 30 workdays of annual vacation leave are carried forward to July 1 of each year. An employee with more than 30 days of annual vacation leave who separates from employment prior to June 30 is not eligible for this conversion and will be paid for a maximum of 30 days or 240 hours.

Bonus Vacation Leave

Bonus vacation leave was received in three special distributions during the 2002-2003, 2003-2004 and 2004-2005 school years. In each of the three special distributions, eligible employees in permanent full-time - 12 month positions received bonus vacation leave. The leave was received pro-rata if employed less than full-time and/or less than 12 months.

The bonus vacation leave balance is tracked separately and carries forward each year until used or paid out at retirement or separation. It is not included in the 30-day limit of the annual vacation leave which can be carried forward on June 30th each year and does not roll into sick leave.

Bonus vacation leave can be used under the same circumstances and provisions as annual vacation leave.

An employee who transfers between local administrative units or to or from a state agency must have all unused bonus vacation leave transferred to the new school system or state agency.

Upon separation from employment, any unused bonus vacation leave balance will be paid out at the daily rate at the time of separation. The payment is in addition to the annual vacation leave balance (up to 30 days) that is paid at separation.

Bonus vacation leave can be donated under the same rules and provisions as annual vacation leave is donated.

(Reference: Public Schools of North Carolina Benefits and Employment Policy Manual)

Holidays

Holidays are determined by the State Board of Education. The local board of education determines when holidays are scheduled in the school calendar. The Guilford County Schools develops and adopts employment calendars for ten-month and twelve-month employees each year that include the appropriate holidays.

Paid holidays are granted only to employees who are in the position on the day on which the holiday is scheduled or in pay status for one-half or more of the workdays of the month. Temporary employees are not entitled to paid holidays.

Religious Holidays

Absence from work for bona fide Religious Holidays may be allowed for a maximum of two days within any one school year with prior approval from the Superintendent or his/her designee. Bona fide Religious Holidays generally are considered to be those holidays that appear on the National Conference of Community and Justice "Interfaith Calendar." Any other request will require appropriate documentation. Written requests should be submitted to the Chief Human Resources Officer at least two (2) weeks in advance of the proposed absence. Absence for these Religious Holidays will be with full pay; however, the employee must agree to make up the amount of time for which his or her absence has been excused. The time must be made up at a time agreed upon by the employee and his or her immediate supervisor.

Absences will not be granted for bona fide Religious Holidays which fall on days that the school system is not in operation.

(Reference: Financial Policy and Procedures Manual)

Family and Medical Leave Act

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) an act of the federal government, allows eligible employees to take unpaid leave for up to twelve (12) weeks during each twelve-month FMLA leave year. **GUILFORD COUNTY SCHOOLS REQUIRES THE EMPLOYEE TO USE AVAILABLE PAID LEAVE BEFORE GOING ON LEAVE WITHOUT PAY.** FMLA may be taken for the following reasons:

- (1) the birth of a child of the employee and in order to care for the child;
- (2) the placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care;
- (3) taking care of the employee's spouse, child, or parent who has a serious health condition; or
- (4) taking care of a service member recovering from a serious injury or illness sustained in the line of active duty. This also applies to a Veteran, if the Veteran was on active duty within five (5) years of the date the Veteran needs care. Must meet eligibility.
- (5) a serious health condition of the employee that makes the employee unable to perform the functions of the employee's position.
- (6) The notification of spouse, son, daughter or parent being called to active duty or has been deployed to a foreign country as a member of the Armed Forces. This applies to **any** member of the Armed Forces whether reservists or full-time military personnel.

An employee is eligible for FMLA leave if both of the following conditions are met:

- (1) the employee has worked for the Guilford County Schools for at least twelve (12) months, which need not be consecutive; and
- (2) the employee has worked at least 1,250 hours for the Guilford County Schools during the twelve (12) month period immediately preceding the beginning of the FMLA leave.

The Guilford County Schools must maintain any employer-paid health benefits while the employee is on FMLA leave.

The FMLA leave year is a rolling twelve - month period measured forward from the date the employee first takes FMLA leave after completion of any previous FMLA leave year.

The full text of the Guilford County Schools FMLA policy is contained in the "Employees' Guide to Leaves and Absences" available on the Guilford County Schools web site.

Parental Leave

All full-time permanent or part-time permanent employees may take a leave of absence without pay for up to twelve (12) calendar months to care for a newborn child, a newly adopted child or a child placed in foster care. **GUILFORD COUNTY SCHOOLS REQUIRES THE EMPLOYEE TO USE AVAILABLE PAID LEAVE BEFORE GOING ON LEAVE WITHOUT PAY.**

Use of appropriate earned leave during the time of the leave (annual vacation leave, miscellaneous bonus leave, sick leave, extended sick leave, personal leave and voluntary shared leave) will not extend the 12-month period of parental leave to which the employee is entitled. However, the Board of Education may determine when the leave will begin or end, based on a consideration of the welfare of the students and the need for continuity of service.

Benefits under the Family and Medical Leave Act are available to eligible employees requesting Parental Leave.

An employee may apply for a parental leave by completing the "Request for a Leave of Absence Form (form HUM-F001). The employee's doctor must complete the "U.S. Department of Labor Form" (WH-380-E).

Please refer to the "Employees' Guide to Leaves and Absences" available on the Guilford County Schools web site for more detailed information with respect to requesting a Parental Leave.

Military Leave

The granting of military leave to full-time or part-time permanent employees is an obligation of the State to the defense effort of the nation and to the protection of the State itself. Generally, employees may be granted up to fifteen (15) days of leave with pay during the federal fiscal year for military training. An employee called to active duty will take a leave without pay unless he/she chooses to use available annual leave. **Important Note: The "Request for a Leave of Absence" (form HUM-F001) must be submitted to the Benefits Office for any amount of time away from the job due to military duties such as annual training, annual physical or active duty.**

Public school employees, including charter school employees, on leave of absence for state or federal military duty under honorable service status, for required training, or for special emergency management service shall be paid the difference in military base pay and public school salary, including non-performance based bonuses, when the military pay is less than the public school salary. **The employee must request differential pay within 12 months from the date of separation or discharge.**

All military leaves of absence will be administered in accordance with federal and state laws.

Please refer to the "Employees' Guide to Leaves and Absences" available on the Guilford County Schools web site for more detailed information with respect to requesting a Military Leave.

(Reference: Public Schools of North Carolina Benefits and Employment Policy Manual, Section 10; Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act; Reference: Guilford County Schools Employee's "Guide to Leave and Absences"; G. S. 115-C-302.1)

Medical Leave for Employee*

All full-time permanent or part-time permanent employees may take a leave of absence without pay for up to twelve (12) calendar months in excess of sick leave provisions for personal illness or temporary disability that prevents an employee from performing his or her usual duties. **Guilford County Schools requires an employee to use appropriate earned leave during the time of the leave (annual vacation leave, miscellaneous bonus leave, sick leave, extended sick leave, personal leave, and voluntary shared leave).** However, the Board of Education may determine when the leave will begin or end, based on a consideration of the welfare of the students and the need for continuity of service.

Benefits under the Family and Medical Leave Act are available to eligible employees requesting Medical Leave.

An employee may apply for a medical leave by completing the "Request for a Leave of Absence Form" (form HUM –F001). The employee's doctor must complete the "U.S. Department of Labor Form" (WH-380-E).

Please refer to the "Employees' Guide to Leaves and Absences" available on the Guilford County Schools web site for more detailed information with respect to requesting a Medical Leave.

Medical Leave To Care For Family*

All full-time permanent or part-time permanent employees may take a leave of absence without pay for up to twelve (12) calendar months to care for the employee's **immediate** family member with a serious health condition. **Guilford County Schools requires an employee to use appropriate earned leave during the time of the leave (sick leave, annual vacation leave, miscellaneous bonus leave, personal leave and voluntary shared leave).** However, the Board of Education may also determine when the leave will begin or end, based on a consideration of the welfare of the students and the need for continuity of service.

Benefits under the Family and Medical Leave Act are available to eligible employees requesting Medical Leave To Care For Family.

An employee may apply for a medical leave to care for an immediate family member by completing the Request for a "Leave of Absence Form" (form HUM –F001). The employee's immediate family member's doctor must complete the "U.S. Department of Labor Form" (WH-380-F).

***Employees who work less than four (4) hours per day are not considered part-time and are, therefore, ineligible for a medical leave. They must resign their position if they cannot work due**

to their own illness or that of a family member. However, employees who resign under these circumstances will be given consideration for rehire.

Please refer to the "Employees' Guide to Leaves and Absences" available on the Guilford County Schools web site for more detailed information with respect to requesting a Medical Leave to Care For Family.

Military Caregiver Leave

An employee who is the spouse, son, daughter, parent or next of kin of a member of the Armed Forces can now take up to 26 weeks of job-protected **unpaid** leave in a single 12 month period to care for the service member if the service member is recovering from a serious injury or illness sustained in the line of active duty. This also applies to Veterans if the Veteran was on active duty within five (5) years of the date the Veteran needs care. The leave can be taken intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule when medically necessary. **An employee may apply for a Military Caregiver leave by completing the "Request for a Leave of Absence Form" (form HUM-F001). The service member's doctor must complete the "U.S. Department of Labor Form" (WH-380).**

(Reference: NC Benefits and Employment Policy Manual)

Qualifying Exigency Leave

An employee can take up to 12 weeks of job-protected **unpaid** leave in a 12-month period because of any "qualifying exigency" arising out of the fact that an employee's spouse, son, daughter or parent has been notified of an impending call to active duty or has been deployed to a foreign country as a member of the Armed Forces. This applies to **any** member of the Armed Forces whether reservists or full-time military personnel. Supporting documentation maybe needed for approval of leave. An employee may apply for a Qualifying Exigency leave by completing the "Request for a Leave of Absence (form HUM-F001) and form WH-384.

(Reference: NC Benefits and Employment Policy Manual)

Educational Leave

Employees of the Guilford County Schools, who are eligible to take a leave of absence and are enrolled as a full-time students at college or university, should make every effort to schedule their classes in so far as possible after their regular duty hours.

If the employee has exhausted all measures and must schedule a class before the end of the work day the following options are available:

- A. In lieu of taking any professional days, a total of eighty (80) hours of release time may be taken for educational purposes. The employee should make a written request, including the class schedule, to his/her supervisor.
- B. If the employee must be absent for more than one hour any given day, a substitute is required. The cost of a one-half day substitute will be deducted from the employee's wages.
- C. Twelve-month employees enrolled in full-time summer school may use vacation time to account for the day(s) absent.
- D. Employees enrolled in internships will:

1. request placement in writing for fall semester by June 1 and placement for second semester by November 15 in conjunction with the college/university placement request.
2. be governed by the number of hours to be served in the internship by the sponsoring college or university.
3. present a proposal or plan, approved by the college or university, to the Executive Director of Human Resources for review. If the proposed plan cannot be accommodated during the school year in terms of before, during or after school hours, then the employee must secure a leave of absence from his/her position (full-time) to fulfill the internship requirement or request the Executive Director of Human Resources for placement in Guilford County Schools year-round summer programs, if appropriate placement is available.
4. Receive approval and be assigned to their current school/department or assigned to a different school/department by the Executive Director of Human Resources, after consulting with the principal/supervisor and the appropriate Executive Director.

E. Any approved request and schedule will be forwarded to the employee's personnel file.

To take an unpaid educational leave, an employee at least sixty (60) days in advance must: complete the "Request for Leave of Absence" form (HUM-F001), attach appropriate documentation, indicating a full-time registered student, and submit all documents to the Benefits Office. Once received the employee will be contacted for an appointment with the appropriate Benefits' Specialist.

Educational leave may be granted for full-time study as defined by an accredited college or university. The maximum length of an educational leave is one calendar year, except for employees participating in the North Carolina Principal Fellows' Program.
(Reference: Administrative Policy GBRL)

Failure to request, in writing, an educational leave sixty (60) days in advance could result in denial of the leave.

Please refer to the "Employees' Guide to Leaves and Absences" available on the Guilford County Schools web site for more detailed information with respect to requesting an Educational Leave.

Leave of Absence and Tenured/Probationary Teachers and Support Staff

Tenured employees approved for a leave of absence retain tenured status upon return from the authorized leave.

Probationary teachers and support staff must begin an entirely new probationary period (4 consecutive years) if a leave of absence, paid or unpaid, prevents the employee from completing four (4) **consecutive** years of 120 workdays (days actually at work) each.

An exception to this is if a probationary teacher or support staff in a full-time, permanent position does not work for at least 120 workdays in a school year because the employee is on sick leave, disability or both, that school year shall not be deemed to constitute:

1. A consecutive year of service for the teacher, or
2. A break in the continuity in consecutive years of service for the teacher.

Upon return to work, the employee would retain the same probationary contract status (P1, P2, etc.) as before the leave. The employee would not have to start a new probationary period.

Professional Leave with Deduction

All full-time or part-time permanent employees are eligible for professional leave. Permanent public school employees who have professional responsibilities, or who need to attend meetings of professional associations, may be absent with pay minus a salary deduction for substitute teachers. The deduction is mandatory whether or not a substitute is employed. Such absences must be approved by the Superintendent or his/her designee (usually the Principal at a school or designated administrative supervisor at other sites) and will be allowed for a period not exceeding three (3) successive days for in-state meetings and five (5) successive days for out-of-state meetings. Absences for this purpose may not exceed ten (10) days for the school year. The limitation shall not apply to a person who is a local or district president or president-elect, state or national officer of a professional education, or a person selected as the National Teacher of the Year. The Office of the Deputy State Superintendent shall upon request determine the eligibility of the professional association.

Professional Leave Without Deduction

Permanent public school employees attending meetings or performing duties as a member of the State Board of Education, the State Textbook Commission, the Board of Governors of the Governor's Schools or required attendance at a case manager's hearing shall receive full salary. Permanent public school employees completing assignments for, or serving on a commission or committee appointed by the Governor, the State Superintendent, the State Board of Education, or the General Assembly shall receive full salary. Substitutes for these persons will be paid from the same source of funds as the employee being replaced.

Officers of Professional Organization

Upon the recommendation of the local superintendent, local boards of education may grant leave with pay for elected officers of professional organizations, provided the organization pays the full salary and all benefit costs for the employee on leave. During such leave with pay, the employee will earn sick, personal, and annual vacation leave and receive paid holidays. Employees will be eligible to use leave as they would when in active status with the school system.

Community Responsibility

Upon approval of his or her supervisor, full-time or part-time public school employees may be granted leave to represent the school or administrative unit at community functions such as the funeral of a school child or his parent. Employees absent for these reasons shall retain full salary during the days absent.

Proper provisions shall be made for the continuation of the employee's regular work by making satisfactory arrangements within the system or by employment of a substitute. Substitutes employed for these absences shall not be paid from state funds.

Jury Duty

Full-time or part-time public school employees will retain full salary when absent from work to serve on a jury. The employee is entitled to regular compensation in addition to payment for jury duty.

Court Attendance

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

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

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

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

Elected Officials

Full-time or part-time public school employees serving as elected government officials may, with their supervisor's approval, choose to use appropriate earned leave to attend to the responsibilities of their elected office.

Parental Involvement in Schools Leave

Eligibility and Rate of Earning

In accordance with G.S. 95-28.3, any employee who is a parent, guardian or person in loco parentis may take up to four hours per fiscal year to attend or otherwise be involved at his or her child's school.

There is no requirement that the employer pay an employee while taking this leave. However, the local school district may allow the employee to use eligible accrued leave in lieu of non-paid parental involvement leave.

Conditions for Leave

Leave granted for this purpose is subject to the following conditions:

- (a) The leave shall be at a mutually agreed upon time between employer and employee,
- (b) The employer may require an employee to provide a written request at least 48 hours before the time desired for the leave, and
- (c) The employer may require that the employee furnish written verification from the child's school that the employee attended or was otherwise involved at the school during the time of leave.

Definition of School

For the purpose of this policy, "school" is defined as any:

- (a) Public
- (b) Private church school, church of religious charter, or nonpublic school that regularly provides a course of instruction,
- (c) Preschool, or
- (d) Child day care facility.

(Reference: G.S. 95-28.3)

WHO TO CALL LIST

The telephone numbers listed below are for your convenience, should you have questions regarding the subjects listed.

OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES

- 370-8340 Personnel services; Personnel grievances/appeals; Legal liaison; Personnel statistics; Employee disciplinary actions/terminations; Renewal/non-renewal recommendations; Legislative liaison
- 378-8821 Criminal records checks; Employee Investigations; Drug and alcohol testing (employees)

OFFICE OF BENEFITS

- 370-8348, 370-8349 or 370-8350 Receptionist; Salary Verifications (current employees); General Information
- 370-8166 Leaves of Absence
- 370-8165 Retirement; Retirement Seminars; Short-Term Disability; Long-Term Disability
- 370-8304 ID Badges
- 370-8351 Workers' Compensation; Longevity, OSHA
- 370-8352 or 370-8996 Insurance (health/dental/life); New employee benefits; Termination of benefits; Cafeteria benefits
- 370-8007 Verification of prior experience; Longevity; Unemployment claims
- 370-8092 Personnel Handbook; Wellness

OFFICE OF EMPLOYMENT

- 370-8342 Classified and licensed applicant files; Verification of applicant documents
- 378-8825 or 370-8318 Personnel files (active and inactive)
- 370-8318 or 370-8319 Recruiting; Student teacher and intern placements; Teaching fellows; Employee job fairs; Applicant screenings; Early contracts; Teacher Assistant Scholarship Loan; Screening Interviews

378-8820 or 370-8318 Substitutes

OFFICE OF TALENT DEVELOPMENT

335-3294 Mission Possible, Cumulative Effect; GCS-ACT;
Lateral Entry Resource and Advising Center; Value-Added Data;
Executive Evaluation; Administrative Cohort Programs

OFFICE OF HR OPERATIONS

370-8091 Allotments; Job Descriptions; Salary Schedules;
Salary assignments for certified and classified employees, etc.

OFFICE OF STAFFING

378-8806 See Below

All functions related to the staffing of licensed and classified positions within the school districts are handled by a staffing specialist assigned to work with each school and/or central office location. Those functions include but are not limited to: Processing permits to employ; Tracking vacancies; Issuing contracts and letters of employment; Processing extended employment agreements; Applying for teaching licenses; Tracking completion of license requirements; Assisting with Praxis Test requirements

Chart for staffing specialists' assigned schools and other sites is located on the Guilford County Schools web site under "Employees – Licensure Information – Staffing Specialists".

<http://www.gcsnc.com/HR/pdfs/Staffing%20Organization%20as%20of%2012-19-07.pdf>

Use of Personal Leave Chart:

Calendar Days	Workdays	Can Use Personal Leave without a Deduction?	Can Use Personal Leave With Deduction?	Can Use Annual Vacation Leave?
Instructional Days	180	No	Yes ⁽¹⁾	No
Protected Days ⁽²⁾	5		Yes ⁽¹⁾	Yes
Non-Protected Workdays ⁽³⁾⁽⁴⁾	7	Yes ⁽¹⁾⁽⁵⁾	Yes ⁽¹⁾	Yes
LEA Mandatory Workdays ⁽⁶⁾	3	No	No	No

Notes:

- (1) In accordance with Section 5.1.2. – Benefits & Employment Policy Manual
 - (a) Personal leave may be used only upon authorization of the immediate supervisor
 - (b) Unless approved by the principal, a teacher shall not take personal leave on the first day teachers are required to report for the school year, on required teacher workdays, on days scheduled for State testing, on the last working day before or the next working day after holidays or annual vacation days scheduled in the calendar.
 - (c) On all other days, if the request is made at least five days in advance, the request shall be automatically granted subject to the availability of a substitute teacher.
 - (d) A teacher who requests personal leave at least five days in advance cannot be required to provide a reason.
 - (e) Personal leave may be used on any instructional day or workday except as noted in (b) above.

- (2) G.S. 115C-84.2.(a)(4) – To allow teachers to complete instructional and classroom administrative duties.

- (3) Non-Protected Workdays – Workdays that are not specified as protected in 115C-84.2(4).

- (4) 7 of the 15 non-instructional days must be designated as days that teachers may take accumulated annual leave (optional workdays).

- (5) Limited to the accrued personal leave balance as of the leave date.

- (6) Workdays that the local board can designate as mandatory workdays; if not mandatory, non-protected workdays provision applies.

SECTION .0600 – CODE OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE AND CONDUCT FOR NORTH CAROLINA EDUCATORS

16 NCAC6C.0601 – THE PURPOSE AND APPLICABILITY OF THE RULES OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT FOR EDUCATORS

The purpose of these rules is to establish and uphold uniform standards of professional conduct for licensed professional educators throughout the State. These rules shall be binding on every person licensed by the SBE, hereinafter referred to as “educator” or “professional educator,” and the possible consequences of any willful breach shall include license suspension or revocation. The prohibition of certain conduct in these rules shall not be interpreted as approval of conduct not specifically cited.

*History Note: Authority G.S. 115C-295.3;
Eff. April 1, 1998.*

16 NCAC6C.0602 – THE STANDARDS OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT FOR NC EDUCATORS

(a) The standards listed in this Section shall be generally accepted for the education profession and shall be the basis for State Board review of performance of professional educators. These standards shall establish mandatory prohibitions and requirements for educators. Violation of these standards shall subject an educator to investigation and disciplinary action by the SBE or LEA.

(b) Professional educators shall adhere to the standards of professional conduct contained in this Rule. Any intentional act or omission that violates these standards is prohibited.

- (1) Generally recognized professional standards. The educator shall practice the professional standards of federal, state, and local governing bodies.
- (2) Personal conduct. The educator shall serve as a positive role model for students, parents, and the community. Because the educator is entrusted with the care and education of small children and adolescents, the educator shall demonstrate a high standard of personal character and conduct.
- (3) Honesty. The educator shall not engage in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation in the performance of professional duties including the following:
 - (A) statement of professional qualifications;
 - (B) application or recommendation for professional employment, promotion, or licensure;
 - (C) application or recommendation for college or university admission, scholarship, grant, academic award, or similar benefit;
 - (D) representation of completion of college or staff development credit;
 - (E) evaluation or grading of students or personnel;
 - (F) submission of financial or program compliance reports submitted to state, federal, or other governmental agencies;
 - (G) submission of information in the course of an official inquiry by the employing LEA or the SBE related to facts of unprofessional conduct, provided however,

that an educator shall be given adequate notice of the allegations and may be represented by legal counsel; and

(H) submission of information in the course of an investigation by a law enforcement agency, child protective services, or any other agency with the right to investigate regarding school-related criminal activity; provided, however, that an educator shall be entitled to decline to give evidence to law enforcement if such evidence may tend to incriminate the educator as that term is defined by the Fifth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

(4) Proper remunerative conduct. The educator shall not solicit current students or parents of students to purchase equipment, supplies, or services from the educator in a private remunerative capacity. An educator shall not tutor for remuneration students currently assigned to the educator's classes, unless approved by the local superintendent. An educator shall not accept any compensation, benefit, or thing of value other than the educator's regular compensation for the performance of any service that the educator is required to render in the course and scope of the educator's employment. This Rule shall not restrict performance of any overtime or supplemental services at the request of the LEA; nor shall it apply to or restrict the acceptance of gifts or tokens of minimal value offered and accepted openly from students, parents, or other persons in recognition or appreciation of service.

(5) Conduct with students. The educator shall treat all students with respect. The educator shall not commit any abusive act or sexual exploitation with, to, or in the presence of a student, whether or not that student is or has been under the care or supervision of that educator, as defined below:

(A) any use of language that is considered profane, vulgar, or demeaning;

(B) any sexual act;

(C) any solicitation of a sexual act, whether written, verbal, or physical;

(D) any act of child abuse, as defined by law;

(E) any act of sexual harassment, as defined by law; and

(F) any intentional solicitation, encouragement, or consummation of a romantic or physical relationship with a student, or any sexual contact with a student. The term "romantic relationship" shall include dating any student.

(6) Confidential information. The educator shall keep in confidence personally identifiable information regarding students or their family members that has been obtained in the course of professional service, unless disclosure is required or permitted by law or professional standards, or is necessary for the personal safety of the student or others.

(7) Rights of others. The educator shall not willfully or maliciously violate the constitutional or civil rights of a student, parent/legal guardian, or colleague.

(8) Required reports. The educator shall make all reports required by Chapter 115C of the North Carolina General Statutes.

(9) Alcohol or controlled substance abuse. The educator shall not:

(A) be under the influence of, possess, use, or consume on school premises or at a school-sponsored activity a controlled substance as defined by N.C. Gen. Stat. § 90-95, the Controlled Substances Act, without a prescription authorizing such use;

(B) be under the influence of, possess, use, or consume an alcoholic beverage or a controlled substance on school premises or at a school-sponsored activity involving students; or

- (C) furnish alcohol or a controlled substance to any student except as indicated in the professional duties of administering legally prescribed medications.
- (10) Compliance with criminal laws. The educator shall not commit any act referred to in G.S. 115C-332 and any felony under the laws of the United States or of any state.
- (11) Public funds and property. The educator shall not misuse public funds or property, funds of a school-related organization, or colleague's funds. The educator shall account for funds collected from students, colleagues, or parents/legal guardians. The educator shall not submit fraudulent requests for reimbursement, expenses, or pay.
- (12) Scope of professional practice. The educator shall not perform any act as an employee in a position for which licensure is required by the rules of the SBE or by Chapter 115C or the North Carolina General Statutes during any period in which the educator's license has been suspended or revoked.
- (13) Conduct related to ethical violations. The educator shall not directly or indirectly use or threaten to use any official authority or influence in any manner that tends to discourage, restrain, interfere with, coerce, or discriminate against any subordinate or any licensee who in good faith reports, discloses, divulges, or otherwise brings to the attention of an LEA, the SBE, or any other public agency authorized to take remedial action, any facts or information relative to actual or suspected violation of any law regulating the duties of persons serving in the public school system, including but not limited to these Rules.

*History Note: Authority G.S. 115C-295.3;
Eff. May 1, 1998.*

We hope that this Handbook will serve as a useful instrument in your search for general information and a guide to specific policies and procedures when more details are needed. Any suggestions for improvement or changes may be forwarded to any committee member.

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