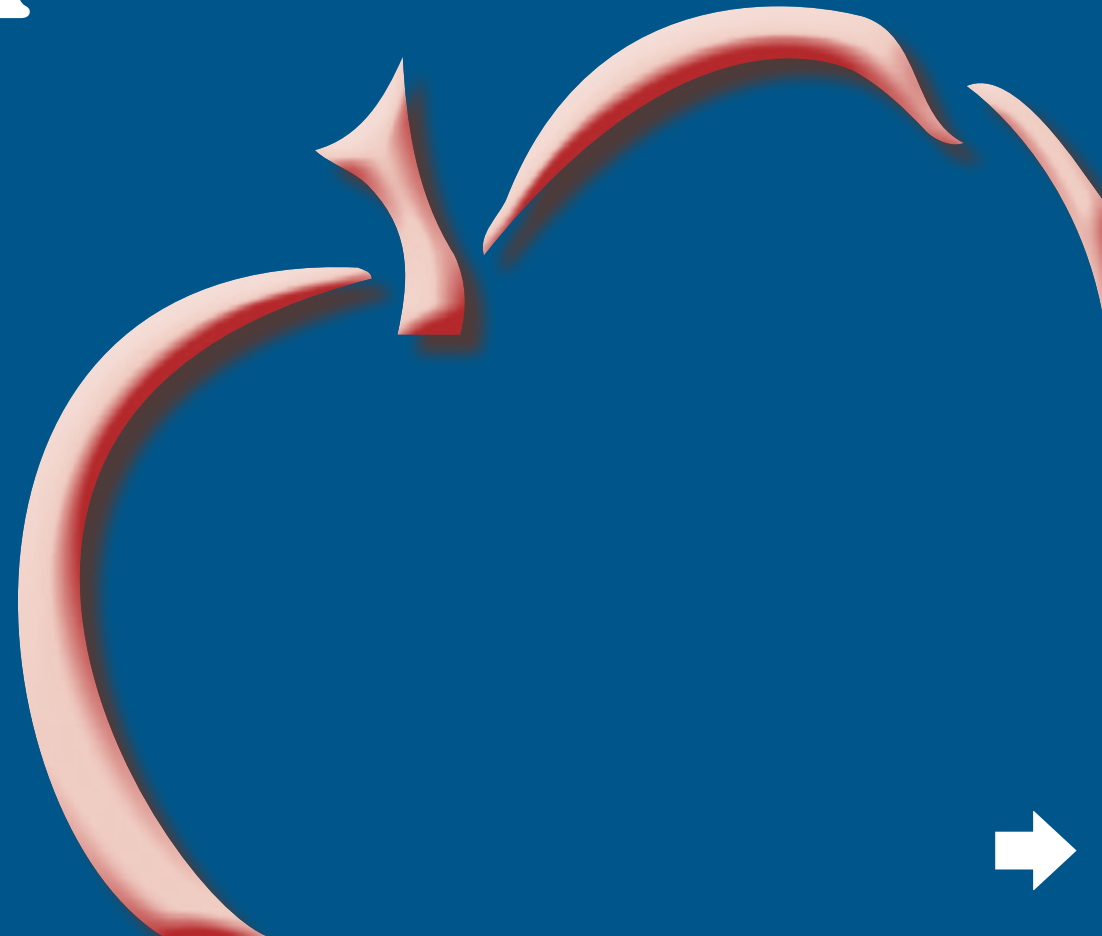


Anne Arundel County Public Schools
Division of Human Resources

Employee Handbook





Dear Anne Arundel County Public School Employee:

The Employee Handbook provides pertinent information Anne Arundel County Public School employees need to know, including references and resources to assist in your employment with the school system.

I encourage you to read this valuable handbook and to familiarize yourself with its contents. We have made every effort to provide you with a comprehensive overview of the school system and its operations, and we hope you utilize this handbook as a helpful resource when questions or concerns arise.

Anne Arundel County Public Schools has a talented and committed workforce that strives to ensure academic success for all children. By remaining focused on our Strategic Plan, our system will continue to achieve its goals.

Thank you for your commitment and tireless efforts on behalf of the students we serve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Florence G. Bozzella".

Florence G. Bozzella
Executive Director of Human Resources

In the event that any information contained in this Handbook conflicts with law, Board of Education policy or Negotiated Agreements, it is superseded by those documents.



Table of Contents

Introduction

Disclaimer	1
Overview	2
The Board of Education	3

Employee Ethics

An Overview of Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees	4
Child Abuse/Neglect Reporting	6
Dating between Employees & Students	8
Drug, Alcohol and Tobacco-Free Workplace	9
Employer Responsibilities	10
Employee Rights/Obligations	10
Investigations	10
Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment	11
Responsible Use of Computers and Electronic Communication Tools and System	12
Self Reporting Charge/Arrest Conviction	19

Terms of Employment

Absenteeism	20
Access to Personnel Files	20
Criminal Background Checks and Fingerprinting	21
Dress Code for Central or Satellite Offices	22
Duty Hours	22
Employment Process	22
Employee Categories	23
Grievance Procedure Summary	24
Job Descriptions	25
Leaves of Absence	26
Mileage Reimbursement	27
Overtime	27
Pay Periods	27
Payroll/Benefits Information	27
Performance Evaluation	28
Recruitment and Staffing	28
Reduction in Force	28
Reasonable Accommodation	28
Resignation	29
Salary	29
Sick Leave/Personal Business	29
Staff Awards and Recognition	30
Teacher Certification	31
Termination	31
Transfer	32
Tuition Reimbursement	32
Verification of Employment	32
Weather Related School Closings and Delayed Openings	33



Table of Contents

Employee Benefits

AACPS Employee Discount Program	36
Employee Assistance Program (EAP)	36
Flexible Spending Account Program	36
Health Insurance Portability Accountability Act (HIPAA)	37
Healthcare Plans	37
Leave Benefits	38
Life Insurance Benefits	40
Long-Term Care Program	40
Maryland College Savings Plans	41
Other Voluntary Benefits	41
Pay & Banking Information	42
Retirement Benefits	44
Supplemental Retirement Plans – 403(b), 457(b)	
Deferred Compensation Plans	45
Workers' Compensation	45

Employee Responsibilities

Be Courteous	46
Be Health Conscious in the Workplace	47
Be Punctual/Sign In & Sign Out	48
Keep Us Up-to-Date	48
Respect Confidential Information	49
Restrict Personal Phone Calls & Personal Computer Use	49

Safety	49
School Security	50
Work Quality	50

Quick Response Phone Numbers

51



Disclaimer

The Anne Arundel County Public School System is a large and changing system. As such, the Superintendent and Board of Education reserve the right to amend, modify, or delete provisions in this Employee Handbook without prior notice. These changes will occur administratively in the normal process of change or through direct Board of Education action.

This handbook is designed as a general guide for school system employees, whether full- or part-time, probationary or non-probationary, or employed in a temporary or seasonal capacity (i.e. substitute teacher, substitute custodian, emergency coach), to provide basic information about matters of interest and concern to employees and the school system leadership. The handbook contains brief descriptions of many items and often contains references to negotiated agreements, administrative policies and regulations, and school system offices. The handbook is not intended to replace these resources, but rather to provide a one-document summary and

reference point of appropriate items which would be useful to all employees and especially to those new to the system.

The handbook is not a contract. In fact, only the Board of Education has the authority to enter into a contract with an employee. In addition, the handbook does not replace or supersede any negotiated agreement, Board of Education policy or administrative regulation. The Board of Education and the Superintendent reserve the right to modify or amend any Board of Education policy or administrative regulation at any time.

If there is any inconsistency between the contents of this handbook and Board of Education policy or administrative regulations, Board of Education policy and administrative regulations will govern.

Overview

Welcome to Anne Arundel County Public Schools, the fifth largest school system in Maryland in terms of student enrollment and one of the “top fifty school systems” in the country. Located on the magnificent Chesapeake Bay, Anne Arundel County is near the cities of Baltimore and Washington D.C. It encompasses urban, suburban, and rural areas.

Anne Arundel County Public Schools offer a comprehensive system-wide curriculum from kindergarten through 12th grade. Curriculum documents that define the instructional program at each grade level are available for review at each school.

A prekindergarten program for four year olds is offered in selected schools.

At the elementary level, students receive a balanced program that includes integrated language arts, reading, mathematics, science, social studies, art, music, media, instructional technology, health, and physical education. Strings instruction begins in the third grade, and instrumental music instruction begins in the fourth grade.

The basic academic subjects of English/language arts, reading, mathematics, science, and social studies are provided in middle school and high school. Secondary students also receive instruction in foreign language, instructional technology, art, music, physical education and dance, health, library media, and career and technology education, including industrial arts and family and consumer sciences.

At the high school level, students may specialize in career and technology programs offered at the county’s two centers of applied technology.

Students have enrichment opportunities through academic offerings as well as through the school system’s outdoor education program. Outdoor education, which serves students in kindergarten through 12th grade, charges fees based on students’ length of stay at the outdoor centers.

A continuum of special education service is provided in all schools to ensure educational access and success for students with disabilities. Special education services and support from school counselors, pupil personnel workers, and psychologists are provided in all schools.

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) services are provided in all schools, based upon need. Additional educational opportunities are provided through summer school and evening high school for elementary and secondary students. A summer school fee schedule is published each spring.

The county’s diverse student population of approximately 76,300 is educated by a staff of approximately 5,662 teachers, the majority of whom have continued their professional development to attain masters’ equivalencies or higher.

The Board of Education

Programs and policies of the public schools are established by an nine-member Board of Education.

Nine board members serve overlapping terms of five years each and are appointed by the Governor. Board members may serve two consecutive terms.

The ninth member is a high school senior elected by student government representatives as their nominee to the Governor to serve a one-year term. The student member is a fully-participative, voting member of our Board.

The day-to-day administration of the school system is the responsibility of the Superintendent of Schools, who is appointed by the school board. There is no limit to the number of terms a superintendent may serve.

An Overview of Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees

All employees of the Anne Arundel County Public School System are expected to make every effort to create an atmosphere that nurtures the educational process and provides a safe environment for employees and students. All employees shall demonstrate responsible and ethical conduct toward students, fellow employees, parents, and the community.

These standards are intended to define ethical conduct for all employees of the Anne Arundel County Public School System and to provide guidelines for professional conduct expected by the Board of Education and the community it serves.

Employees should understand that not all inappropriate, improper, or unethical conduct may be included in this publication. Employees are expected to use best judgment in all practices of their employment relationship with Anne Arundel County Public Schools.

I. Employee Ethical Conduct

The employee shall maintain the highest ethical standards by respecting and obeying the applicable laws of the State of Maryland, demonstrating personal integrity, and displaying absolute honesty toward fellow employees, students, parents, and the community.

1. Employees shall not misrepresent themselves or their position.
2. All employees will exercise fiscal responsibility with public funds entrusted to their care.
3. No employee shall use his/her institutional or professional position for personal or partisan gain in communications, interactions, or

exchanges with fellow employees, subordinates, or any member of the public.

4. All employees shall adhere to all Board of Education policies, school system procedures, and legal standards of the State of Maryland.
5. All employees have the right and responsibility to recognize illegal or improper situations and seek their resolution. Where necessary, in accordance with the appropriate negotiated agreement and Board of Education policy, employees have the responsibility to report such behavior to their supervisor.
6. No employee shall discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or familial status.

II. Ethical Conduct toward Colleagues

1. All employees will treat colleagues in a dignified and just manner and ensure equitable treatment for all employees.
2. No employee shall disclose confidential information concerning colleagues unless disclosure is for professional purposes or required by law.
3. While performing professional duties, no employee shall make a false statement concerning a colleague or the colleague's actions.

III. Ethical Conduct toward Students

1. All employees shall make every reasonable effort to deal considerately with each student and shall seek to resolve all matters in a fair and just manner.

An Overview of Standards of Ethical Conduct cont.

2. No employee shall disclose confidential information concerning students unless disclosure is for professional purposes consented to by the student's parents or the student, if the student is at least 18, or required by law.
3. Employees shall exhibit professional and appropriate relationships with students.
4. Employees must not fraternize or socialize with students on a one-to-one basis after school hours and off school grounds, including phone calls, written communications (letters, notes, emails, text messages), social or visual media of an intimate or sexual nature, except as provided by Board Policy or Administrative Regulation.
5. No employee of Anne Arundel County Public Schools shall exclude a student from participating in any program, deny benefits or grant an advantage to any student on the basis of race, sex, age, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or familial status.
6. Employees must comply with Board Policy and Administration Regulations concerning employee and student interaction and confidential student records.

IV. Ethical Conduct toward Parents and Community

1. All employees will make every effort to understand community standards and recognize cultural influences and how they affect the educational process.
2. No employee shall interfere with a student or parent in the exercise of their political and citizenship rights and responsibilities.

3. In the normal course of their activities, all employees shall present a positive image of the school system to the community.

V. Standards Test

Whenever employees are confronted with a matter of right and wrong that requires a decision concerning personal behavior, the following questions should be used to guide their actions:

- Are my actions illegal?
- Do my actions violate school board policy or procedures?
- Do my actions violate the community standards for proper behavior?
- Do my actions interfere with the proper image of a professional employee of the school system and/or reflect upon my fitness to perform my assigned duties?

If the answer to any one of these questions is “YES” **do not engage in the behavior!**

(Printed with permission of the Utah Professional Advisory Commission.)

Under no circumstances may an employee of the Anne Arundel County Board of Education be involved in any of the following activities or behavior:

- Immorality
- Misconduct in office, which includes knowing failure to report suspected child abuse in violation of 5-704 of the Family Law Article
- Insubordination
- Willful neglect of duty

Child Abuse/Neglect Reporting

BOE POLICY: JEF – Child Abuse/Neglect - Reporting

All employees of the Anne Arundel County Public School System must immediately file a report with the Department of Social Services (DSS) when they have reason to believe that a child has been neglected, or physically, or sexually abused, or that the child has been the subject of a mental injury.

Oral reports must be made immediately to the Department of Social Services (DSS) upon receiving information of alleged abuse or neglect. Written reports must be completed within 48 hours after an oral report.

The failure by a school system employee to report suspected abuse/neglect in accordance with the law and Board of Education Policy 904.05, Child Abuse/Neglect – Reporting, will result in disciplinary action, which may include written reprimand, suspension, dismissal, and loss of certification.

Defining Child Abuse and Neglect:

PHYSICAL ABUSE:

The physical injury of a child, under the age of 18, by a parent, a person with permanent or temporary care, custody or supervision, or a household or family member.

SEXUAL ABUSE:

Any act or acts involving sexual molestation or exploitation, including incest, rape, carnal knowledge, sodomy, or unnatural or perverted sexual practices on a minor child by a parent, a person with permanent or temporary care or custody or supervision, or a household or family member.

NEGLECT:

The leaving of a child unattended, or any other failure to give proper care and attention to a child by any parent or other person who has permanent or temporary care of the child.

MENTAL INJURY:

The observable, identifiable and substantial impairment of a child's mental or psychological ability to function.

Procedures for Reporting Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect:

- Step 1: Whenever possible, reporters should complete the "Report of Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect" form so that all pertinent data are readily available at the time of the oral report. Failure to have all the necessary information may result in delays.
- Step 2: Contact Child and Adult Welfare Unit of the Department of Social Services (DSS) at **410-421-8400** to file the oral report. This number is to be used at all times, including evenings, weekends, and holidays.
- Step 3: At the same time, or immediately following the initial call to DSS, the Anne Arundel County Public School System employee will report all related information to the principal or designee.

Child Abuse/Neglect Reporting cont.

Step 4: If the suspected abuser is an Anne Arundel County Public School System employee or volunteer in a school, following the initial call to DSS, the reporter, principal, or designee must immediately contact the Office of Investigations at 410-222-5286.

If the suspected abuser is NOT an employee or volunteer for the Anne Arundel County Public School System, following the initial call to DSS, the reporting person, school principal, or designee must go to the [Employee Intranet > Forms > Student Services Forms > Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Form](#) and complete an electronic report.

Ensure you click the submit button when you complete the form. If you have questions contact Guidance and Counseling at e 410-222-5280 and 410-222-5282.

Step 5: The completed “Report of Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect for DSS” must be mailed within 48 hours to the addresses noted on the form. Additional information on the reporting of Child Abuse/

Neglect can be found on the Employee Intranet or in the HELP Manual. Information about [Board Policy or Administrative Regulations regarding Child Abuse/Neglect](#) can be found on the Internet.

Dating between Employees & Students

BOE POLICY: GBV – Dating between Employees and Students

Employees and adult volunteers shall exercise reasonable care in protecting students from harm. Employees and adult volunteers shall exhibit professional and appropriate relationships with students (Board of Ed. Policy GBV).

Definitions:

Dating between employees or adult volunteers, regardless of where the dating occurs, and students includes, but is not limited to, a social appointment, engagement, or occasion, pre-planned or not, between an employee or adult volunteer and a student where the purpose is to initiate or continue an intimate personal relationship for personal pleasure or sexual gratification.

Sexual relationships include, but are not limited to, sexual contact or conduct, in person or through communication, occurring between or involving two or more persons. Examples include:

- inappropriate touching or fondling
- intimate kissing
- phone calls, written communications (letters, notes, emails, text messages), social or visual media of an intimate or sexual nature
- allowing, permitting, encouraging or engaging in obscene or pornographic discussion, oral or written, display, or photography
- accepting or giving gifts of a sexual/intimate nature
- filming or depiction of a child as prohibited by law
- communications that include intentional sexual innuendoes
- any kind of sexual penetration, sexual molestation, sexual exploitation
- sexual intercourse

1. Employees and adult volunteers shall not date or have sexual relations with any student.
2. Under unusual circumstances, exceptions to this policy may be granted with regard to adult students attending Evening High School and the Maryland External Diploma program. Written applications for exceptions may be submitted by the employee or adult volunteer to the Office of the Superintendent. No exception will be granted where the employee or adult volunteer has direct responsibility or supervision for the student.
3. Principals/supervisors shall review this policy with employees and adult volunteers at the beginning of each school year. Information concerning this policy shall also appear in the Student Handbook each school year.
4. A violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action, which may include written reprimand, suspension or dismissal.

Drug, Alcohol and Tobacco-Free Workplace

BOE POLICY: GAC – Drug, Alcohol, and Tobacco-Free Workplace

All work sites within the jurisdiction of the Board of Education are designated as drug, alcohol and tobacco-free workplaces. Compliance with the standards of conduct in the policy is mandatory. Violations of the policy will result in notification to appropriate law enforcement agencies and in the imposition of disciplinary sanctions, which may include suspension or termination of employment.

All employees are required to report any arrest or conviction for the illegal use of drugs or alcohol related incidents to their supervisor, within five (5) days.

All worksites within the jurisdiction of the Board of Education are designated as smoke-free workplaces.

The sale or use of tobacco in any form is prohibited at all times in all system-owned or leased buildings and vehicles, and on all system-owned or leased grounds. Violations of this policy will result in disciplinary sanctions.

The complete policy statement and its companion administrative regulation can be found in the Board of Education's Policies and Regulations Manual under GAC, Drug, Alcohol and Tobacco-Free Work Environments.

Drug Testing

Employees will report to work in condition fit to perform their assigned duties. Reporting to work, or to any Anne Arundel County Public School facility or sponsored event, under the influence of, or showing signs of the use of drugs or alcohol is a violation of Anne Arundel County Board of Education policy and will subject the employee to disciplinary action which may include suspension or termination of employment.

Supervisors may recommend to the Superintendent or designee that an employee submit to drug or alcohol testing when the department head or supervisor is convinced that there is reasonable suspicion that the employee has used, or is using, alcohol or illegal drugs on Anne Arundel County Board of Education property, or is impaired in any way on Anne Arundel County Board of Education property.

Employer Responsibilities

1. The employer must consider the discipline process as a corrective tool to modify unacceptable behavior.
2. The employer must ensure that employees are treated fairly and consistently.
3. The employer must ensure that employees have been made aware of or should have been aware of a directive, policy, regulation, and operating procedures.
4. The employer has an obligation to investigate violations of rules, regulations, and policies.
5. The employer should use progressive discipline, as appropriate. In cases of egregious conduct, suspension or termination may be warranted without the use of progressive discipline.

Employee Rights/Obligations

1. Employees have a right to consistent and predictable employer responses to violation of rules.
2. Employees have a right to fair discipline based on facts.
3. Employees have a right to reasonably question the facts and present a case.
4. Employees have a right to appeal the disciplinary decision.
5. Employees have an obligation to cooperate with an internal investigation.
6. Employees have a right to obtain their own representation.

Investigations

BOE POLICY: BAG – Investigations and Due Process

Neither the Board of Education as a whole nor any individual member will investigate or act on formal communications or complaints from staff, parents, or other citizens until a referral has been made to the Superintendent.

Only if satisfactory resolution has not been made by the Superintendent will formal communications and complaints be considered by the Board of Education. In that case, the aggrieved party may request a hearing. The Board of Education may consider the appeal itself or refer it to a hearing examiner.

No Board of Education employee will be given a hearing by the Board of Education while a grievance on the subject is being processed in accordance with the formal grievance procedure or while any other administrative appeal by the employee on the subject is proceeding at a level which may lead to Board of Education action.

Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment

BOE POLICY: GAGG – Non Discrimination and Anti-Harassment - Personnel

BOE POLICY: JCCA – Bullying/Cyberbullying/Harassment and Intimidation/Hazing/Bias Behavior

The Board of Education of the Anne Arundel County Public School System is committed to providing all employees with a safe and supportive work environment that is free from discrimination and harassment. The Board of Education opposes and prohibits discrimination and harassment on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, or marital status. This policy applies to all supervisory and non-supervisory personnel.

Harassment is defined as verbal or physical conduct that has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with employment based on an individual's membership in the foregoing protected classes. Harassment can include any unwelcome verbal, written, electronic communication (such as, but not limited to, e-mail, social media and blogs that are related to the work environment), or physical conduct regardless of methodology of transmission, which offends, denigrates, or belittles any individual. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

Unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct directed at the characteristics of a person's:

- **race or color**, such as nicknames emphasizing stereotypes, racial slurs, and negative references to racial customs.
- **sex**, such as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexual gossip or personal comments of a sexual nature, sexual jokes, demanding sexual favors, forcing sexual activity by threat of punishment or offer of reward, obscene graffiti, display-

ing pornographic materials, and offensive touching, grabbing, kissing, hugging or restraining someone's movement in a sexual way.

- **national origin**, such as derogatory comments regarding surnames, language, or ethnic slurs.
- **religion**, such as derogatory comments regarding religious tradition or religious clothing.
- **disability**, such as manner of speaking or movement.
- **sexual orientation**, such as name calling and imitating mannerisms.

Employees alleging discrimination or harassment by an employee should notify a supervisor promptly. Supervisors must notify the Office of Investigations of all reports of discrimination and harassment and proceed at that office's direction. If an employee's immediate supervisor is the alleged perpetrator, the employee should either report the allegations to the supervisor's supervisor, or report the matter directly to the Office of Investigations at 410-222-5286.

All complaints of discrimination and harassment shall be investigated in accordance with procedures specified in the administrative regulations created to implement this policy. The school system shall discipline or take other appropriate action with regard to members of the school community who engage in discrimination and harassment, in accordance with these policies and their respective administrative regulations. AACPS strictly prohibits retaliation against any employee for the filing of a complaint.

Responsible Use of Computers and Electronic Communication Tools and System

Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) acknowledges that the principles of freedom of speech and privacy of information have important implications relating to computers and electronic communication services. Accordingly, AACPS has adopted Security Policies, Administrative Regulations, and Acceptable Use Policies (AUP) to reflect these values within the context of its legal and ethical obligations.

To ensure that these policies and procedures are followed, AACPS reserves the right to monitor the use of computer and electronic communication resources. All electronic communications transmitted to or from the AACPS network are considered the property of AACPS and users are not entitled to any expectation of privacy with regard to the information contained in such communications.

Purpose

This document communicates the rules that define the acceptable use of computer equipment and electronic resources for AACPS. These rules are in place to protect the school system, its employees, students, and individuals who have legitimate need to use computer resources within AACPS. Inappropriate use potentially exposes AACPS to risks such as virus attacks, compromised network resources, and costly legal challenges.

Effective security is a team effort involving the participation and support of every AACPS employee and student who interacts with computer resources as part of their normal daily routine. It is the responsibility of every computer user to understand these rules and to conduct their activities accordingly.

Scope

These rules apply to employees, contractors, consultants, temporary employees, volunteers, students, and any other persons who have been granted access to AACPS electronic resources. All computer resources that are located within Anne Arundel County Public Schools' property, regardless of whether they are owned or leased by the school system, another organization or another individual, are included. Laptop computers, PDAs, cellphones, and other remote messaging or computing devices are also included regardless of their physical location.

Responsible Use of Computers and Electronic Communication Tools and System

Board Policy and Administrative Regulations Overview

Board Policies may be found on www.aacps.org/boardpolicies

Board Policy – DI

This document defines the AACPS Board Policy and criteria under which computer technology and associated resources will be used and what recourse may be taken should those criteria not be followed.

It also establishes that the responsibility for both ethical behavior and the protection of computer resources rests with the individuals using them.

Administrative Regulation DI-RA

The administrative regulation provides the detailed procedures that are necessary in implementing Board Policy DI. The scope of computer ethics and security is defined in detail. Other areas addressed in detail are personnel (employees, volunteers, contractors, and students), operational procedures, communications, and user awareness.

Administrative Regulation: IHB-RA

As an addendum to Policy IHB for Supplemental Materials, this administrative regulation sets forth proper procedures for the use of telecommunication resources as supplemental instructional materials. Adherence to provisions outlined in the publication “Procedures for the Evaluation and Selection of Instructional Materials” is established in this administrative regulation.

Administrative Regulation: JCC-RA – Student Conduct

Policy JCC, Student Conduct, is accompanied by this administrative regulation. It defines appropriate student behavior in the use of computers and computer networks. The requirement for a permission use form signed by the student’s parent or legal guardian is established here as a prerequisite to allowing the student access to computer networks and the Internet.

Also, provision is made for the denial of access to telecommunications resources for those students who fail to comply with the requirements of this regulation.

Refer to the AACPS Acceptable Use Policy.

(www.aacps.org/html/Parents/internet_accept.asp).

Finally, employees should make themselves aware of the provisions set forth in Board Policy and Administrative Regulations JCCA and JCCA-RA, Bullying/Cyberbullying/Harassment and Intimidation/Hazing/Bias Behavior.

Privacy Limitations and Record Disclosure

Users of the AACPS network should be aware that the data they create on AACPS systems remain the property of AACPS. Because of the need to protect the AACPS network infrastructure, management cannot guarantee the confidentiality of information stored on any computer or network device.

The release of sensitive confidential information can be devastating not only to the individual but also to the school system as a whole and is not tolerated. Employees shall make every effort to ensure that sensitive confidential information is kept sensitive and

Responsible Use of Computers and Electronic Communication Tools and System

confidential. Every precaution shall be made to maintain the integrity of sensitive confidential information if it resides on any computing device that is capable of being transported beyond the property of Anne Arundel County Public Schools. Furthermore, efforts should be made to avoid the transporting of sensitive confidential information, if at all possible. Sensitive confidential information is defined as but not limited to: any information, likeness, picture, name, address, grade, status, etc. of any student of Anne Arundel County Public Schools.

Electronic information including email, whether or not created or stored on AACPS equipment, may constitute a school record subject to disclosure under law or as a result of litigation under certain circumstances. When a request for disclosure is presented, AACPS will closely evaluate all such requests against the precise provision of laws concerning disclosure and privacy, or other applicable laws; therefore, users should be aware that AACPS does not guarantee protection of personal electronic mail or other information residing on AACPS facilities.

Electronic Communication Tools & Systems

Electronic communication tools and systems may include but are not limited to:

1. All electronic communication resources and information storage devices provided by AACPS
2. All users using those resources
3. All AACPS records transmitted in the form of elec-

tronic communications including electronic mail and mail services such as Exchange/Outlook Public Folders, bulletin boards, mail list systems, instant messaging, newsgroups, and electronic publishing services such as the WEB.

Acceptable Use of Computers, Electronic Communication and WEB Resources

You may send and receive electronic mail, create mail lists, create databases, and develop a web site to enhance instruction, perform research, and pursue other learning opportunities. You must develop web sites in accordance with the “**AACPS Guidelines for Developing WEB Pages**” as published on the AACPS web site (www.aacps.org/aacps/boe/tech/webguidlin/guidlines.asp).

Personal use of computers, electronic communications and WEB resources are expressly prohibited unless approved by the Technology Division’s, Chief Information Officer.

Unacceptable Uses of Computers, Electronic Communications and Internet

(include but are not limited to the following:)

- a. Breaking the law such as copyright infringement, disrupting internal or external networks and systems, cyber-stalking, perpetuation of hate-crime related harassment, or other actions that could result in criminal or civil litigation
- b. Using electronic communications to violate AACPS policies or administrative regulations such as sexual harassment

Responsible Use of Computers and Electronic Communication Tools and System

- c. Disrupting any network or systems operation, for instance by transmitting computer viruses, sending spam or chain mail, or accessing others' transmission or files
- d. Bypassing, disabling, or removing any security applied by AACPS Technology network administrators
- e. Falsely assuming any form of identity such as email address, network user id, identification card or other device intended to authenticate identity
- f. Releasing personal information of others to inside or outside parties without the consent of the information holder. An information holder is defined as a user who is in possession of a particular electronic communication record regardless whether this user is the originator or the recipient of the content of the record
- g. Tampering with any private communication such as email, web sites, and wireless LAN
- h. Using your account on behalf of an outside organization not affiliated with or recognized by AACPS
- i. Conducting a business with electronic communication service provided by AACPS
- j. Making it appear AACPS endorses an outside organization when it does not
- k. Giving the appearance that you represent AACPS if you are not authorized to do so
- l. Inspecting other users' electronic communication without consent
- m. Seeking out, using, or falsifying personal information about others
- n. Revealing, releasing, giving or selling such personal information to third parties
- o. Creating or forwarding "chain letters," or other "pyramid" schemes of any type
- p. Loading unauthorized software, such as games or unlicensed programs
- q. Connecting a computer or other electronic device to the network without authorization
- r. Adding or removing computer components for any reason
- s. Using any electronic communications device in any manner that can be deemed harmful to juveniles which is defined as: the quality of any description or representation, in whatever form, of nudity, sexual conduct, sexual excitement, or abuse, when it:
 - 1. Predominantly appeals to the prurient, shameful, or morbid interest of juveniles
 - 2. Is patently offensive to prevailing standards in the adult community as a whole with respect to what is suitable material for juveniles
 - 3. Is, when taken as a whole, lacking in serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value for juveniles
- t. If any AACPS employee, student, or network user becomes aware of any inappropriate use of network resources, the person is expected to bring it to the attention of a responsible teacher, principal, or program manager, who will determine if any applicable policy or regulation has been violated and take the appropriate action
- u. Using any electronic computing device/system to endorse or oppose a candidate for public office

Responsible Use of Computers and Electronic Communication Tools and System

- v. Student and teacher use of Social Networking sites (ie: MySpace.com), unapproved blogging sites, Wikis, Forums, etc. without permission or consent as required by Policy GAOO and Regulation GAOO-RA
- w. Non-Instructional live streaming (radio, music sites, videos, video clips, TV) is not permitted in the school or office due to bandwidth constraints

WEB Page Considerations

WEB based communications require an understanding of the global environment. In an effort to mitigate legal and/or ethical difficulties, each user must be aware of the following:

- a. Personal information on published web pages is not private.
- b. Any personal information of students or adults (such as private pictures and identification information) should not be posted on web pages without expressed permission.
- c. AACPS system security personnel may subject the transaction information created during a user's access to the WEB to viewing.
- d. Certain WEB sites may try to place small files or "cookies" in your local system that are used by others to track the accessed WEB pages.

Email Considerations

AACPS cannot protect users from receiving unwanted electronic mail or communications they may find offensive. All users are strongly encouraged to exercise the same personal and professional courtesies, considerations, and precautions in electronic mail as they would in other forms of communication. In any instance in which confidential information is involved, AACPS personnel should not transmit such information through electronic means. **Privacy to information is not guaranteed.**

Staff should consider the following when utilizing electronic mail:

- a. Employees are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times.
- b. Electronic mail intended for specific individuals can often be forwarded and widely re-distributed by the recipients.
- c. A reply intended to address the originator of the message on a message bulletin board, discussion forum, or the like may potentially be viewed by all subscribed members.
- d. Forwarded electronic mail may be intercepted and modified.
- e. Senders of electronic mail may be able to disguise their identities.

Responsible Use of Computers and Electronic Communication Tools and System

- f. Unless “authenticated” mail systems are in use, no electronic mail received is guaranteed to originate from the purported sender.
- g. An electronic mail, which is deleted from a computer or an electronic mail account, may still be retained on backup facilities, and thus be subject to disclosure required by law.
- h. As with print documents, receivers of electronic mail messages should check with the purported sender to validate authorship or authenticity.
- i. Student use of electronic mail is allowed for instructional purposes only when using teacher-moderated email services such as Gaggle.Net or ePALS.com, in accordance with Policy JCCC and Regulation JCCC-RA and Policy GAOO and Regulation GAOO-RA.

Electronic mail encryption technology enables the encoding of electronic mail messages sent and are guaranteed to be readable by only individuals who possess the right key to decode the encrypted messages. Implications dealing with the growing use of these technologies are not currently supported in the infrastructure and/or sufficiently understood to warrant the formulation of an AACPS guideline at this time. However, users should be aware that these technologies will become generally available and probably will be increasingly used and deployed in the future.

Maintaining Security Awareness

The major best practices to preventing a security breach are:

- a. Use passwords and other approved measures by AACPS to protect your private material and information.
- b. Do not share your account and passwords with others.
- c. Commit your passwords to memory rather than writing them down somewhere.

- d. Use a password that is at least 8 characters in length and utilizes upper and lower case letters, numbers, and special characters.
- e. Do not open attachments to email without validating the source.
- f. Do not attempt to defeat the security measures that are in place.
- g. Do not leave your computing device unattended without locking the device from unauthorized access.

Employee Sanctions

Violations of policy may result in administrative sanctions that may include prohibited or restricted use of AACPS electronic communications and computer resources. In addition to administrative sanctions, violators are subject to certain disciplinary actions including criminal charges that may result in termination of employment, contract, or volunteer agreement.

Student Sanctions

Students are subject to disciplinary action for computer misconduct as defined in the “Home/School Connection Student Handbook.” Briefly, four levels of offenses are defined that students should be aware of when using AACPS computer equipment and communications resources.

Responsible Use of Computers and Electronic Communication Tools and System

Instructional Classroom Use of Electronic Communication Tools and Systems

Due to the dynamic nature of electronic resources (such as the Internet, mobile applications, etc.), teachers are required to review all resources prior to classroom use for instructional and age level appropriateness. During student use of any electronic resources, teachers will provide active supervision and continuous monitoring. Staff must also provide guidance and instruction to students related to the appropriate and ethical use of electronic and computer resources.

See the Instructional Technology area on the AACPS Intranet (login required) for current guidelines, practices, and related memos.

- Unless the teacher has bookmarked or assigned sites that have been Materials of Instruction (MOI) approved at the school level, **elementary and middle school students** are expected to use:
 - recommended search engines and sites that can be found on the AACPS web site and the Intranet in Office of Instructional Technology area
 - the Technology Connections or
 - links provided in AACPS curriculum department resources.
- Online subscriptions (including free demos) and all software must have approval through a **county-based Materials of Instruction (MOI) Evaluation Committee** and then tested in the Technology test bed **prior** to purchase. Begin this process with Media Services, 410-222-1020.
- Sites affiliated with an assignment must be approved by a school or county-based Materials of Instruction (MOI) evaluation committee. Sites should be checked at least two links down and form completed with signatures from three teachers and an administrator. Please consider accessibility features for all students. **See Library/Media site or the Intranet for the MOI form.**
- Independent Access, for **High School Students only**, is permitted with active teacher supervision and in compliance with the above stated conditions. It is recommended that all assigned sites have MOI committee approval at the school level or county level.
- All student use of computers should be accompanied with active teacher supervision – teachers circulating throughout the room, checking for multi-tasking, providing instructionally based technology activities for stations, etc. This includes after-school activities.
- Student and teacher use of Social Networking sites, blogging sites, Wikis, Forums, etc., and live streaming (radio, music sites, videos, video clips) must be approved and monitored. Teachers may be required to successfully complete certain AACPS courses to use these resources for instructional purposes.
- Student email is allowed for instructional purposes only when using teacher-moderated email services such as Gaggle.Net or ePALS.com.

Self Reporting Charge/Arrest Conviction

BOE Policy: **GANN – Self Reporting Charge/Arrest/Conviction**

The Board of Education of Anne Arundel County insists upon maintaining a safe environment for its students and employees. Because employees occasionally are subject to criminal sanctions for conduct both on and off duty as a result of violating local, state, and/or federal laws, AACPS must be informed of all such charges, arrests, and convictions in order to assess each individual situation and maintain safety for all parties involved. It is, therefore, mandatory that each employee self-reports all charges, arrests, and convictions in accordance with Administrative Regulation GANN-RA.

An employee, whether full-time or part-time, probationary or non-probationary, or employed in a temporary or seasonal capacity (i.e. substitute teacher, substitute custodian, emergency coach), shall report the following charges, arrests, or convictions to the Office of Investigations within 24 hours, absent extraordinary and compelling circumstances as determined in the sole, exclusive, and reasonable discretion of the Office of Investigations.

The complete policy statement and its companion administrative regulation can be found in the Board of Education Policies and Regulation Manual under GANN, Self Reporting Policy.

a. **Charges, arrests, and convictions (or the equivalent in any jurisdiction) to be reported:**

- (1) Crimes against person(s) which puts a person(s) at risk
- (2) Crimes of a sexual nature

- (3) Crimes involving weapons
- (4) Crimes involving drugs
- (5) Crimes against property
- (6) Crimes involving religious and ethnic matters (hate crimes)
- (7) Crimes involving money/fiscal matters
- (8) Crimes involving animal cruelty

b. **Criminal Traffic Violations to be reported:**

- (1) Driving under the influence of alcohol (DUI)*
- (2) Driving while impaired by alcohol (DWI)*
- (3) Driving while impaired by alcohol and drugs*
- (4) Driving while impaired by controlled substances*
- (5) Driving with a suspended/revoked license
- (6) Driving uninsured
- (7) Driving while not licensed
- (8) Leaving the scene of an accident (hit and run)
- (9) Reckless driving
- (10) Negligent driving
- (11) Fraudulent use of a license
- (12) Failure to remain at scene of accident involving bodily injury
- (13) Failure of driver to stop after unattended vehicle damage
- (14) Manslaughter by automobile
- (15) Fleeing from or attempting to elude police officers

** Must be reported currently under Superintendent's Regulation GAC-RA: Drug-, Alcohol-, and Tobacco-Free Work Environment.*

Absenteeism

Employees must notify the immediate supervisor of an impending absence. Notice of absence due to illness is expected at least one hour prior to the time an employee is to report for duty. Notice of absence for personal business or annual leave must be submitted at least 24 hours in advance for approval.

Access to Personnel Files

BOE POLICY: GAB – Personnel Records

All employees have an Official Personnel File (OPF) that is maintained at the Central Office.

Access to an employee's OPF is limited to the employee, the employee's designated representative, administrative and supervisory personnel, and Human Resources personnel. Reference Board Policy GAB and Board Regulation GAB-RA for further information.

All employees have a right to review their OPF by making an appointment with the Division of Human Resources/Employee Records File Room (ERFR) in the Central Office. Requests must be submitted in writing and submitted via fax or email. In addition, individuals who have been given written consent by the employee to review their OPF must also provide a copy

of a release authorization signed by the employee prior to the file review. All individuals requesting file reviews must allow 48 hours advance notice before they can come and review the file. File reviews are only conducted at the Division of Human Resources/Employee Records File Room (ERFR) at the Central Office. Therefore, employees and employee appointed individuals cannot remove the file, nor review the file unsupervised. Request for the removal of documents must be made in writing by the employee only in accordance with applicable negotiated agreements. Employees who require copies from their file must submit such requests in writing to the Division of Human Resources/Employee Records File Room (ERFR) in the Central Office either by confidential fax or email. A copying fee will be charged for any requests for copies of documents from the OPF. Picture identification must be presented at the time of the file review. Additional information or questions can be directed to the Employee Records File Room (ERFR) at 410-222-5098 or sent via email.

Confidential Fax Numbers:

443-458-0138

443-458-0137

Employee Records File Room (ERFR) Email Address:

ERFR@aacps.org

Criminal Background Checks and Fingerprinting

All new employees of Anne Arundel County Public Schools are required to undergo a background investigation conducted through county, state, federal, and commercially sourced agencies to determine employment eligibility.

The background investigation process requires that each employee complete a disclosure statement and be fingerprinted before beginning employment. The background investigation consists of checks of one or more of the following: public court records, Anne Arundel County Department of Social Services, the State of Maryland Criminal Justice Information System, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation for verification of all disclosure statement information.

All processing of these fingerprinting checks is done on an appointment basis only and can be arranged by calling 410-222-5045. A processing fee is required to be paid by the employee.

Current employees are subject to a periodic update of their background and may be required to resubmit disclosure and/or fingerprinting cards. No fee is charged for an update requested by the school system.

Dress Code for Central or Satellite Offices

It is important that school system employees present themselves in a professional manner at all times. By doing so, they demonstrate pride in themselves and respect for their workplace and those who visit and do business here.

All employees are expected to dress in professional business attire. Good taste in grooming, clothing, and hair style is the responsibility of each individual. Extremes in attire and appearance should be avoided. Sports and social fashion are not appropriate office apparel.

Duty Hours

Duty hours vary widely depending upon the employee's job group and work location. The immediate supervisor of the employee is generally responsible for establishing the duty hours, provided that the work day and work week parameters established by the negotiated agreement under which the position falls are not violated.

Employment Process

The Division of Human Resources oversees the process of employment of individuals to ensure continued delivery of services to students as well as to employees of Anne Arundel County Public Schools. The process is well defined for each type of employee. The process usually includes the posting and advertising of vacancies. The Office of Professional Growth and Development provides an annual New Teacher Orientation Program.

All new employees attend a mandatory New Employee Processing Session. At this time, all paperwork is completed, including tax forms, direct deposit, Form I-9, etc. New Employee Processing Sessions are held twice per week and are for new permanent employees and new temporary employees.

An orientation session for substitute teachers is conducted by the Division of Human Resources. The Division of Transportation and the Division of Food Services provide orientation for new employees in their respective areas.

All new employees serve an initial probationary employment period. This period varies in length and conditions depending upon the employee job group.

Employee Categories

Most employees of Anne Arundel County Public School System are part of one of six employee groups:

Unit I (TAAAC)

includes teachers, media specialists, school counselors, pupil personnel workers, school psychologists, speech pathologists, social workers, occupational therapists and physical therapists, and other positions directly related to the instructional program

Unit II (AEL)

includes principals, assistant principals, subject area coordinators, special assistants, and other Central Office based personnel directly involved with the administration of the instructional program

Unit III (AFSCME)

includes positions in such areas as maintenance, custodial, food services, and transportation

Unit IV (SAAAAC)

includes positions such as teacher assistants, secretaries, clerks and technicians, and other school-based and Central Office based personnel working in a supporting capacity

Unit V (Professional Support)

includes professionals working in positions which support the business of Anne Arundel County Public Schools, such as payroll, benefits, budget, school construction, transportation, food services, data processing, and senior managers

Unit VI (Executive Staff)

includes positions such as Deputy Superintendent, Chief of Staff, Chief Officers, assistant superintendents, and directors

The Anne Arundel County Public School System also employs a large number of temporary, hourly, and per diem employees who do not belong to one of the six employee groups. Per diem employees include, but are not limited to, substitute teachers, home and hospital teachers, and interpreters.

Grievance Procedure Summary

A grievance is a claim by an employee that the employee has been directly and adversely affected by a violation, misinterpretation, or misapplication of the provisions of the applicable negotiated agreement concerning salaries, hours, or working conditions. Decisions of the Superintendent or the Board of Education involving Board policies or controversies or disputes regarding the rules and regulations of the Board may not be grieved. The grievance procedure provides an opportunity to resolve these issues at the lowest possible administrative level. The goal is to find equitable and mutually agreeable solutions in an informal and confidential manner. The basic procedure requires that, within a specified period after the incident, the employee first discuss the issue with the administrator who made the decision or interpretation of policy. Beyond this discussion, provisions exist for the employee to put the concern in writing and receive a written reply within a specific period of time. If the disposition of the grievance at the first formal level is not satisfactory with the grievant, the grievant may appeal to the next level. This appeal process may continue through several steps involving a disposition by the Superintendent and possibly the Board of Education. Employees may bring representation with them at any point in the process.

Notwithstanding the above summary, each negotiated agreement details this procedure for the appropriate group of employees. The procedures, timelines, and processes are somewhat different in each agreement. For those employees not in a negotiating unit, Board of Education Policy GAHH details the employee complaints and grievance procedure.

Neither the Board of Education nor any member of the administration will take reprisals against any party for participating in the grievance procedure.

Reference grievance procedure in negotiated agreements:

TAAAC _____ Article 19
AEL _____ Article 16
AFSCME _____ Article 3
SAAAAC _____ Article 2
BOE policy _____ GAHH

Job Descriptions

BOE POLICY: GAA – Classification of Positions

A job or position description is a statement of major tasks which are typical of the scope and complexity of the work performed.

The maintenance of adequate position descriptions to ensure sound classification is a mutual responsibility shared by non-supervisory employees, supervisors, and the Division of Human Resources. The responsibility of each is generally described as follows:

- a. The employee is responsible for bringing to the attention of the supervisor or the Division of Human Resources any continuing differences between work assignments and the job description which substantially affect the accuracy of the official description of duties for the position.
- b. The supervisor is responsible for making job assignments, for seeing that they are properly described and made known to the Division of Human Resources, for informing the employee of the duties of the position, and for promptly reporting any change to the Division of Human Resources.
- c. The Division of Human Resources is responsible for establishing procedures and lines of communication to ensure that changes are promptly reported and that required action is taken to correct classification errors and misassignments.

Leaves of Absence

Employees may be entitled to leaves of absence of varying types and under varying conditions depending upon the employee group and their eligibility as defined by their applicable negotiated agreement. Detailed information is provided in the negotiated agreement governing each employee group. A leave of absence may be granted for reasons such as personal illness, maternity, care of an infant, and academic study. A leave of absence may be requested and granted for an extended period of time (generally one year), and it is taken without pay with the option to continue benefits.

Sabbatical Leave

A sabbatical leave of absence is available to qualified employees of Anne Arundel County Public Schools. Eligibility and application requirements are described in the negotiated agreements. Sabbatical leave may be granted for full-time academic study of at least 12 semester hours per semester or for the purpose of completing a doctoral dissertation. While on leave, an employee is paid at 50 percent of the rate of salary which would have been received if the employee remained on active duty. Sabbatical requests must be received prior to November 1st for the next school year. The request must be in writing to the Director of Human Resources and include the candidate's name, current location, reason for sabbatical, where the candidate will be attending, and length of sabbatical (full or half year). Upon return to active duty, the employee is reassigned to a position equal to the one they vacated and receives experience credit for the year spent on sabbatical leave. Fringe benefits are continued for the employee while on sabbatical leave. Forms for requesting Sabbatical Leave are located on the [employee intranet](#).

Other Forms of Leave

Employees are entitled to short-term leaves of varying types and under varying qualifying conditions depending upon the employee group. Detailed information is provided in the negotiated agreement governing each employee group. A short-term leave is granted for reasons such as illness, vacation, jury duty, personal business, religious observance, court summons*, and bereavement. Leave categories such as sick, vacation, and personal business are charged against an employee's accumulated leave balance. Other types, such as bereavement, jury duty, and religious observance are not charged against an employee's accumulated leave balance.

Employees may be placed on administrative leave by the Superintendent of Schools.

Employees may not take leave without pay for vacation or personal business.

Employees are expected to manage their leave balances and leave options. Failure to do so could result in accrual of "Absence without Authorized Leave" (aka Lost Time) which is subject to the progressive discipline process. See also [Employee Handbook: Employee Benefits: Leave Benefits](#)

**Leave for court summons is granted in accordance with the applicable negotiated agreements. It is expected, however, that leave granted will be related to matters directly related to the employee's position in Anne Arundel County Public Schools and for those work related cases where the employee is found not guilty.*

Mileage Reimbursement

All employees are reimbursed for use of private vehicles while performing authorized school system business. Mileage rates are typically at the IRS mileage reimbursement rate. See Employee mileage reimbursement memo for more details.

Overtime

Certain staff members, generally classified personnel who are represented by the AFSCME or SAAAAC negotiating groups, may, from time to time, be asked to work hours beyond their regularly scheduled time. The terms of the appropriate negotiated agreements address the pay status which would be appropriate for compensating employees for overtime hours. An employee with a question about overtime should first seek the assistance of the immediate supervisor. The pay status may be verified by the Division of Human Resources.

Pay Periods

Payday occurs on a bi-weekly basis every other Wednesday. Permanent 12-month employees are paid up-to-date with the exception of Unit III (AFSCME) employees whose pay is always two weeks behind. New teachers are paid over 12 months (26 pays). Teachers who are still paid over 10 months (22 pays) may elect to change their pay status to 26 pays in June to effect the following school year. Temporary and substitute employees are paid two weeks behind.

Payroll/Benefits Information

The Payroll Office of the Division of Human Resources Operations is responsible for paying all employees. Employees are paid via direct deposit. At the time of employment, employees are required to fill out forms for direct deposit, federal and state tax withholding, beneficiary, and health insurance elections if eligible. Employees may submit changes to their direct deposit account and tax withholdings at any time. Forms are available online.

Performance Evaluation

One of the most important processes affecting employees is the performance evaluation. Throughout the year, ongoing discussions between supervisors and employees provide an excellent opportunity to assess the work situation and to define future goals, a plan of implementation, and training needs. Each employee is evaluated according to a schedule outlined in the respective unit contracts and all evaluations become part of the employee's personnel file. Employees will receive a copy of all such evaluations. Employees should refer to the contract for their negotiating unit for the details which specifically relate to them

Recruitment and Staffing

Anne Arundel County Public Schools is committed to diversity, equal opportunity, and non-discrimination. Anne Arundel County Public Schools actively recruits teachers and administrators in an ongoing process. During the school year, recruiters visit college campuses to meet prospective applicants, and conduct interviews. Applications are screened by the Division of Human Resources. Based on staffing allotments determined by the Office of School Performance in conjunction with the Budget Office, the Division of Human Resources refers qualified teacher applicants to principals for additional interviews.

In addition, Anne Arundel County Public Schools recruits and employs staff in positions including, but not limited to: clerical support, maintenance and operations support, technology, and other areas as deemed essential to school system operations. Vacancy information is available online at www.aacps.org/humanresources/index.asp

Reduction in Force

A reduction in staff may occur for such reasons as insufficient student enrollment to warrant the current staff, program elimination, and cuts in funding. When a reduction in staff becomes necessary, the provisions of the appropriate negotiated agreement will be followed.

Reasonable Accommodation

In compliance with Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act, AACPS provides reasonable accommodations to otherwise qualified employees with disabilities. A reasonable accommodation is any change in the work environment or in the way a job is performed that enables a person with a disability to enjoy equal employment opportunities.

Effective October 1, 2013, in accordance with Article 20 of the Annotated Code of Maryland, employees who become temporarily disabled as a result of pregnancy, are entitled to reasonable accommodations.

Any employee who requires a reasonable accommodation for his/her disability should contact the AACPS Division of Human Resources at 410-222-5286.

Resignation

Employees are encouraged to advise their immediate supervisor of a planned resignation as early as possible. Employees under contract (i.e. Unit I and Unit II) are required to give notice as required by their contract. Non-tenured teachers must give notice no later than May 1 each year. Other employees are expected to give no less than two weeks notice. The appropriate resignation form is available on the Intranet, and is called the Request for Retirement/Resignation/Leave of Absence–All Employees available on www.aacps.org/HR/Employment/Forms. Fax completed form to 410-222-5600.

Salary

There are numerous salary scales for Anne Arundel County Public School employees. Salary scales are published in the annual Operating and Capital budget document and are also available on-line at www.aacps.org/humanresources/salaryscales.asp. Employees who have a question regarding salary should contact the Recruitment and Staffing Office in the Division of Human Resources at 410-222-5088.

Sick Leave/Personal Business

Sick leave may not be taken in conjunction with personal business leave to avoid providing the required doctor's certificate for sick leave in excess of three days, to allow employees to take an "extended vacation" during the school year, or for any other purpose that violates the spirit and intent of sick leave policy. The sole purpose for the use of sick leave is to allow employees to be absent from work due to their own illness or the illness of family members. Employees should refer back to rules for requesting leave, use of leave and leave accrual in the negotiated agreements. See also **Employee Handbook: Employee Benefits: Leave Benefits**

Staff Awards and Recognition

During the school year, the county Board of Education honors one school-based, support employee and one school-based, professional educator each month in its Employee of the Month and Educator of the Month awards program.

Employees are nominated by co-workers and supervisors using nomination forms provided by the Board. Honorees are presented with their awards during monthly Board meetings. Nomination forms are available in school offices or by calling the Executive Assistant to the Board at 410-222-5311.

Anne Arundel County Public Schools participate in the Maryland Teacher of the Year program, which annually honors teachers from around the state. The local Teacher of the Year receives monetary awards and recognition from the school system and area businesses and Development Office at 410-222-2908.

Anne Arundel County Public Schools participate in the Milken Educator Awards in Maryland Program which each year brings statewide recognition and substantial monetary rewards to five outstanding Maryland educators. Each school system is asked to nominate one outstanding principal and one outstanding teacher for consideration.

Anne Arundel County Public Schools participate in The Washington Post educational recognition programs:

- **Distinguished Educational Leadership Award** honors an exemplary school principal from the school system each school year;

- **Agnes Meyer Outstanding Teacher Award** honors an exemplary classroom teacher from the school system each school year; and

- **Grants in Education** awards \$300 mini-grants each year to ten county educators for programs that extend and enrich classroom instruction.

For information on The Washington Post programs, call the Development Office at 410-222-2908.

Employees at AACPS are also recognized for their service to the school system. Each November, the AACPS Service Award Program recognizes employees for service intervals of 2, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, and 45 years.

Teacher Certification

All teachers in the state of Maryland are required to hold a certificate issued by the Maryland State Department of Education. Certificates are issued on the basis of successful completion of appropriate academic work and required examinations. A Standard Professional Certificate is issued for five years and may be renewed one time only by completing six semester hours of approved credit and submitting a Professional Development Plan. The requirements of the Advanced Professional Certificate must be satisfied no later than the expiration date of the second Standard Professional Certificate. The Advanced Professional Certificate requires three years of successful teaching experience and completion of either a master's degree or a master's equivalency. The Advanced Professional Certificate is issued for five years and is renewed by completing six semester hours of appropriate credit and submitting a Professional Development Plan.

Teachers are responsible for maintaining their certification and meeting all requirements for renewal in a timely manner. MSDE currently charges a \$10 fee for the issuance of all certificates.

More information regarding certification can be located on the [Employee Intranet > Human Resources > MD Certification](#) or by contacting the appropriate Certification Specialist in the Division of Human Resources.

Certification questions are assigned based on

Last names A-K call 410-222-5077

Last names L-R call 410-224-6268

Last names S-Z call 410-222-5079

Termination

Under various circumstances, it may be deemed appropriate to terminate the employment of an Anne Arundel County Public School employee.

- The Superintendent of Schools or designee may terminate, with cause, the employment of any classified employee, pursuant to the Superintendent's authority under the Education Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland.
- On the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education may suspend or dismiss a teacher, principal, supervisor, assistant superintendent or other professional staff (Annotated Code of Maryland 6-202).
- The employment of an individual who does not return from a leave of absence at the prescribed time may be terminated.
- The employment of a teacher with a one-year provisional contract is subject to automatic contract termination on June 30 of each year.
- The employment of an individual working in a per diem, hourly, or temporary capacity, such as a substitute teacher, interpreter, etc., is subject to termination at any time to meet the needs of the school system.

In all situations, employees are entitled to due process under the law.

Transfer

The transfer of an employee may be considered voluntary, involuntary, or administrative. The provisions governing the transfer of an employee are found in the negotiated agreement under which the position is classified. The Superintendent has the statutory authority to assign certificated and non-certificated employees to their positions within the schools and to transfer or reassign employees as required by the need of the school district.

Tuition Reimbursement

Employees may be eligible for tuition reimbursement for courses taken that will improve their job performance or apply toward certification requirements. Tuition reimbursement benefits can change annually based on negotiations between the Board of Education and the different bargaining units. For up-to-date information pertaining to your specific circumstances please refer to the Tuition Reimbursement summary under the Human Resources tab on www.aacps.org web site. For any additional questions, you may call the Certification Office in the Division of Human Resources at 410-222-5078.

Verification of Employment

Requests for Verification of Employment are grouped in three categories:

- **New Hires** – (prior to or within 30 days of start date) must be submitted via confidential fax at 443-458-0137 or via e-mail at ERFR@aacps.org.
- **All other verifications of employment** – are completed through The Work Number. Call 1-800-367-5690 or visit the website at: www.TheWorkNumber.com.
- **Special Forms** – such as lost wages, verification of previous teaching experience, disability paperwork, etc. must be submitted in writing via confidential fax at 443-458-0138.

Weather Related School Closings and Delayed Openings

Every year the Deputy Superintendent of Schools releases a memo regarding ‘Emergency Guidelines for Delayed Opening and Closing of Schools and the Central Offices’. This memo outlines the school and office delayed opening and closing guidelines of emergency situations, including inclement weather conditions. Directions for employee reporting with school closings and any change in school hours are included for all units and positions. Current and past memos regarding this issue are found through the [Employee Intranet > Human Resources > Memos](#).

Emergency School Closings, Early Dismissals, Late Openings & Special Operational Delays

Changes to school schedules caused by inclement weather or other emergency conditions are announced through the Connect-ED automated telephone notification system, on major area radio and television stations, including AACPS-TV (Channel 96 on Comcast and Broadstripe, and Channel 36 on Verizon), and are posted on the school system’s web site (www.aacps.org). In addition, announcements are posted (and you may sign up for e-mail alerts) at Schools Out (www.schoolsout.com) and/or the Baltimore Sun (<http://essentials.baltimoresun.com/macro/school-closings>). **The school system’s web site and AACPS-TV remain the best places to check for accurate, up-to-date information.** Please do not call the school or central offices to find out about closings and other emergency-related schedule changes.

A “code red” announcement means that all school offices and central offices are closed. A “code blue with liberal leave” announcement means that schools are closed for students and teachers, and that school office and Central Office employees may report to work up to two hours late. More detailed information will be distributed in a memo on an annual basis regarding employee work schedules during weather related schedule changes. There will be no announcement if school hours are not being adjusted. No special broad-

cast is made for an early closing or late opening that previously has been published in the school calendar.

Employee phone numbers used by the Connect-ED system are pulled from the Human Resources database (GHRIS). At present, Connect-ED calls are delivered to the number on file with Human Resources. It is critical to keep emergency contact numbers and email addresses up to date.

Inclement Weather Telephone Recorded Messages

- A. Hello, you have reached the Anne Arundel County Public Schools. There is no one available at this time to respond to your concerns. However, you may wish to know the following: Anne Arundel County Public Schools will open **two hours late** today (month, day, year). Morning kindergarten and prekindergarten classes are cancelled. Buses will arrive at their regular stops two hours later than the usual time. Walking students should exercise extreme caution.
- B. Hello, you have reached the Anne Arundel County Public Schools. There is no one available at this time to respond to your concerns. However, you may wish to know the following: Anne Arundel County Public Schools will be **dismissed two**

Weather Related School Closings and Delayed Openings cont.

hours early today (month, day, year). Afternoon kindergarten and prekindergarten classes are cancelled. Buses will be arriving at their usual bus stops approximately two hours earlier than the usual time.

- C. Hello, you have reached the Anne Arundel County Public Schools. There is no one available at this time to respond to your concerns. Business hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Please call again during those hours. Thank you.
- D. Hello, you have reached the Anne Arundel County Public Schools. There is no one available at this time to respond to your concerns. However, you may wish to know the following: All Anne Arundel County Public Schools will be **closed** today (month, day, year). For employees, **Code Blue** is in effect.
- E. Hello, you have reached the Anne Arundel County Public Schools. There is no one available at this time to respond to your concerns. However, you may wish to know the following: All Anne Arundel County Public Schools will be closed today (month, day, year). For employees, Code Red is in effect.

Tornadoes

In the past, tornadoes have touched down in Anne Arundel County. In order to provide a timely warning for these severe weather conditions, all Anne Arundel County Public School facilities have a NOAA weather radio. Each school is required to develop a tornado sheltering plan. A drill is conducted each March to review and test this plan.

Basements offer the best protection in a tornado. Schools without basements should use the interior most rooms and hallways on the lowest floor and away from windows. If a tornado is spotted or a tornado **warning** (a tornado has been spotted in the covered area) is issued, move students to the these designated tornado shelter locations. Everyone should remain in tornado shelter until the warning is lifted. Have students and staff lie low with hands covering the back of the head to reduce neck injury. Make special provisions for disabled students.

General System-wide Rule:

When a tornado **watch** (conditions are conducive to tornado development) is issued by the weather service, all students and staff in portable classrooms should be moved into the main school building until the watch is lifted.

In the event of a tornado **warning**, schools shall, in the morning, receive and shelter students, staff, and bus personnel. No student shall be dismissed from school during the time that a tornado **warning** is in effect. Transportation services will cease countywide at the commencement and restart at the conclusion of the **warning** period. Upon expiration of the tornado warning, transportation services will resume on a delayed basis, without changes to pick-up or discharge sequence.

Weather Related School Closings and Delayed Openings cont.

Bus Operations Rule:

A. If A Tornado Warning Is Issued During Pick-Up Times:

1. Tornado Observed:

If conditions indicate that a tornado is in the immediate vicinity, the vehicle operator is to cease student pick-up and seek appropriate shelter for all vehicle occupants.

2. Tornado Warning Without a Sighting:

Absent conditions indicating that a tornado is in the immediate vicinity, vehicles in the process of picking up students will continue to pick up all students for the trip and proceed to the school destination. Upon arrival at the destination school, the vehicle is to stop all operations until the expiration of the tornado warning. The operator and student passengers are to seek shelter at the school.

If the operator receives notice of a warning at a school site or at a time prior to pick up of student passengers, the operator is to discontinue operations immediately and seek shelter.

3. Resumption of Service:

Upon expiration of the tornado warning, the operator will resume operations, albeit late, without change to sequence.

B. If A Tornado Warning Is Issued During Student Discharge Times:

1. Tornado Observed:

If conditions indicate that a tornado is in the immediate vicinity, the vehicle operator is to cease student discharge and seek appropriate shelter for all vehicle occupants.

2. Tornado Warning Without a Sighting:

Absent conditions indicating that a tornado is in the immediate vicinity, vehicles in the process of discharging students will continue to discharge all students for the trip and proceed to the next school destination, if any. Upon arrival at the next school destination, the vehicle is to stop all operations until the expiration of the tornado warning. The operator is to seek shelter at the school.

If the operator receives notice of a warning at a school site or at a time prior to departure from a school, the operator is to discontinue operations immediately and seek shelter at the school site.

3. Resumption of Service:

Upon expiration of the tornado warning, the operator will resume operations, albeit late, without change to sequence.

AACPS Employee Discount Program

AACPS has partnered with various businesses to provide discounts on products and services to all AACPS employees.

Regular Discount Offers provide an added-value or actual discounts that are greater than those offered to the general public *and* include additional support to the school system.

All AACPS employees are encouraged to access the AACPS Discount Program at www.aacps.org/humanresources/empldiscount.asp.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

AACPS offers a free Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to all permanent employees. The EAP provides employees and their household members with free, confidential telephonic or face-to-face counseling to help with family, personal, or work-related problems. Call Business Health Services at 800-327-2251.

Flexible Spending Account Program

AACPS sponsors a Section 125 flexible spending account program in accordance with IRS guidelines. The AACPS FSA program includes a Healthcare spending account and a Dependent Care spending account. Employees may enroll within 31 days of hire or during any open enrollment period. Reenrollment every year during Open Enrollment is required to participate. Deferrals are taken on a pre-tax basis and retained in an account for the employee's benefit. The Dependent Care Spending account may be used for day care expenses for children under age 13 (other special provisions also apply) and the Healthcare Spending Account is used for expenses that are not covered through the insurance plans (i.e., prescription co-pays, office visit co-pays and deductibles, unreimbursed dental and vision expenses, and qualifying over-the-counter medications, etc.). Details of these programs are discussed in the Benefits Guide and in the FSA enrollment material.

Health Insurance Portability Accountability Act (HIPAA)

The Healthcare Insurance Portability Act (HIPAA) of 1996 provides employers and insurance companies with a set of regulations that pertain to healthcare benefits. One of HIPAA's requirements require employers and insurance companies, as applicable, to issue a benefits certificate to terminating employees that have had health coverage. Effective April 14, 2003, modifications to this law require employers, insurance companies, and medical providers, to take greater steps to ensure the privacy of members' confidential healthcare information. As a result, AACPS prepared and distributes a Privacy Notice to all employees and retirees outlining compliance with this law. All new hires receive this information in their benefits package. HR/Benefits is responsible to ensure such compliance.

Healthcare Plans

Full and part-time permanent employees are eligible to participate in AACPS sponsored healthcare options. Coverage for eligible dependents is provided after documentation of relationship is received. The following medical plans are currently provided by AACPS to existing employees: CareFirst Blue Choice HMO Open Access and Blue Choice Triple Option Open Access Plan. All employees participating in the medical plans have prescription benefits through CareFirst's prescrip-

tion partner CVS/Caremark Prescription Service. In addition, all employees enrolled in medical coverage through any CareFirst Blue Cross Blue Shield plans are provided mental health benefits through Magellan Behavioral Health. Please refer to the "Living Healthy, Working Well" brochure for important contact information.

In addition, AACPS provides three dental options: CareFirst BCBS Traditional and PPO Dental Plans as well as a HMO/POS Plan available through United Concordia. Vision benefits are available from CareFirst Select Vision, which provides benefits every 12 months. In addition, the BlueChoice and Triple Option plans provide a vision discount program.

Employee premiums for all health benefits are charged on a prorated basis based on hours worked. Employee premiums are deducted from employee's biweekly pay on a pre-tax basis in accordance with the AACPS Section 125 Plan.

Any lifestyle changes affecting healthcare benefits (i.e. marriage, divorce, birth, etc.) must be communicated within 31 days of the event to the Division of Human Resources/Benefits. Documentation is required.

More information is available at www.aacps.org/humanresources/benefits.asp

Leave Benefits

The Board of Education depends on a reliable workforce to accomplish the goals of the school system. Employees are expected to be present at work as scheduled, except when they are using authorized leave. Employees are to obtain proper authorization to be absent from the work site for any reason. When an employee does not report to work, student achievement is affected, morale among co-workers suffers, and the cost of operating AACPS escalates while work productivity declines.

According to Board Policy and the Negotiated Agreements, any sick leave in excess of three consecutive days shall be attested to by a physician. Paid personal illness leave and family illness leave is not an entitlement or an inalienable right, but a benefit, and is best viewed as a type of insurance policy to provide coverage when the employee is unable to work due to their own personal illness or that of a family member. Employees have no right to these benefits unless they are given to them by the employer. Therefore, medical certification must be provided to authenticate the legitimacy and medically documented use of sick leave for personal illness and family illness. The medical certification must be made available as soon as possible to determine whether the leave usage should be authorized or denied. The physician's statement should not be held by the employee until the time of return. The medical certification must relate only to the serious health condition for which the current need for leave exists. It should identify the health care provider and type of medical practice (including pertinent specialization, if any), what the patient is being treated for, the approximate date the serious health condition

commenced, and its probable duration. This note may be faxed directly to a confidential fax machine in the Division of Human Resources at 443.458.0140 (eFax).

If the need for the leave is foreseeable (surgery, birth, etc.), the employee must provide advanced notice and the medical certification prior to the leave. When the approximate timing of the need for leave is not foreseeable, an employee should give notice of the need for leave as soon as practicable under the facts and circumstances of the particular case.

In the event that an employee's personal situation requires them to be absent from work and they are going to incur lost time due to lack of available leave, they must exercise one of the following options:

- **Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) if eligible**
- **Leave of Absence (LOA) if eligible**
- **Resignation**

They may also contact their association representative to determine if they are eligible for the sick leave bank.

When employees have been absent from their workplace due to their own personal illness for a period of two (2) weeks or more, or if they are returning to work with restrictions/limitations, they are required to present a fitness for duty certificate from their treating practitioner/provider prior to their intended date of return. This form must be submitted to the Division of Human Resources at 443.458.0140 (eFax) prior to the employee reporting for duty at their work location. If such certification is not received and approved by Human Resources, they may not return to work. Princi-

Leave Benefits cont.

pals/Supervisors will be notified by Human Resources when an employee is cleared to return to work. No employee should be permitted to return to work until that communication has been received.

Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

AACPS complies with the provisions of the FMLA. In general, FMLA provides an eligible employee the right to take unpaid leave for a period up to 12 work weeks during a 12-month period for the birth and care of a newborn child; for the placement of a child with the employee for foster care or adoption; to care for a spouse, child, or parent with a serious health condition; for the employee's own serious health condition which makes the employee unable to perform the functions of his or her job; for any qualifying emergency arising out of the fact that the employee's spouse, son, or daughter is a covered military member on active duty (or has been notified of an impending call or order to active duty) in support of a contingency operation. In addition, "eligible" employees of a covered employer may take job-protected, unpaid leave, or substitute appropriate paid leave if the employee has earned or accrued it, for up to a total of 26 work weeks in a "single 12-month period," to care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness. AACPS will maintain healthcare benefits for the employee while on FMLA. The employee should contact HR/Benefits to verify their benefits payment status. Once the leave period is concluded, FMLA requires the employee to be reinstated to the same or equivalent position.

Applications are available online and at each work location. FMLA questions should be referred to the Division of Human Resources at 410-222-5090. Healthcare coverage questions should be referred to HR/Benefits at 410-222-5219.

Life Insurance Benefits

AACPS provides group term life insurance and accidental death and dismemberment (AD&D) insurance at no cost to the employee through Cigna Life Insurance Company in amounts provided per negotiated agreements and Board Policy. Employees may elect to purchase additional voluntary life insurance benefits from Cigna during open enrollment or within 31 days of their hire date. Details of these plans are provided in the current Benefits Guide.

Long-Term Care Program

Long-Term Care insurance is available through a group sponsored voluntary plan from Unum. All permanent employees (working 16 or more hours per week) are eligible to enroll. New employees are eligible to enroll in the plan within 31 days of hire with a guaranteed issue coverage (no medical underwriting required) up to certain benefit levels. New employees as well as non-participating employees who do not enroll during the offering period, may enroll at future enrollment periods, but would be subject to medical underwriting. The annual enrollment period for Long Term Care is during fall open enrollment.

Eligible family members including spouses, parents/parents-in-law, grandparents & grandparents in-law, siblings, and adult children are eligible to enroll but are required to complete the Evidence of Insurability (EOI). Employees (including spouse's plan) may have payroll deduction through AACPS. Other family members that are approved would be direct billed by Unum.

All benefit levels include coverage for professional home healthcare, assisted living facilities, and nursing homes and are differentiated by an inflation protection option and non-forfeiture benefits. Facility benefit duration length options includes 3 years, 6 years, or unlimited duration.

Maryland College Savings Plans

The Maryland College Savings Investment Plan (a Section 529 Plan) offers investors a choice of 10 different investment portfolios managed by T. Rowe Price. It may be used for your dependents or yourself via payroll deduction for tuition, room and board, books, and other college expenses at any accredited college in the United States. Up to \$2,500 per account year is tax deductible for Maryland State Withholding purposes. The AACPS plan allows enrollment at any time with a minimum investment of \$25 per pay period.

The Maryland Prepaid College Trust is also available through payroll deduction, however there is only a limited enrollment period during the first quarter of every calendar year. This plan allows you to lock in tomorrow's college costs based on today's prices.

For information, contact the College Savings Plans of Maryland at 1-888-4MD-GRAD.

Other Voluntary Benefits

AACPS provides employees with other benefit options available through payroll deduction for additional life insurance protection (for you and family members), Long Term Care, College Savings, disability income replacement, and a variety of other benefits through several vendors that are outlined in the "Voluntary Benefits Guide." These benefits are available to join at any time. Please see this guide for additional information.

Pay & Banking Information

The Division of Human Resources/Operations ensures employees are properly paid and provides services for employee benefits and leave matters. The HR/Payroll Office processes the bi-weekly payroll function.

Payroll Plans

All 12 month employees are paid over 26 pays, in addition to the following groups of employees:

- **Unit 1** – all 191, 193, 195, 200, and 210 day employee hired after 7/1/2001.
- **Unit 2** – all 200 and 210 day employees regardless of hire date.
- For **Unit 3**, all 181, 185, and 187 day employees have the option to be paid 22 pays.
- **Unit 4** – all 191 day employees hired after 7/1/2011 and all 200 day employees, with the **exception of those at Annapolis High School**, regardless of hire date.
 - For **Unit 4, all 200 day Annapolis High School staff** have the option to be paid over 22 or 26 pays.
- **Unit 5** – all 191 and 200 day employees regardless of hire date.

Direct Deposit Information

AACPS pays employees by direct deposit. Upon completion of the “Authorization for Direct Deposit,” pay is deposited into the employee’s account in a financial institution of the employee’s choice. If any employee wishes to change their banking arrangement, a new “Authorization for Direct Deposit” is required.

Tax Withholding

AACPS withholds taxes in accordance with the employee’s election on the Federal form W-4, and Maryland State Form MW-507. AACPS will also deduct taxes for employees who reside in the States of Pennsylvania and Virginia as well as the District of Columbia. Employees may change their tax withholding at any time by completing the appropriate tax withholding authorization form.

Employees of AACPS are eligible for free checking and other services through the Bank of America and the Anne Arundel County Employees’ Federal Credit Union.

Credit Union

AACPS employees are eligible to join the State Employees’ Credit Union (SECU). Several locations are available throughout Anne Arundel County. Employees may remit funds to SECU via payroll deduction, savings account deposit, or via direct deposit. SECU offers a full breadth of checking and savings products, as well as loan offerings. Loans through SECU may be paid back through payroll deduction. Please contact SECU for more information. See the AACPS Voluntary Benefits Guide for more information on locations or contact the Credit Union at 410-487-7328.

Pay & Banking Information cont.

Savings Account Deductions

AACPS employees may direct a portion of their paycheck to a savings account in any financial institution via direct deposit. It's a convenient way to save and employees are eligible to commence or change their deduction at any time.

U.S. Savings Bond Program

U.S. Savings Bonds may be purchased through payroll deduction. Employees may purchase bonds by opening a TreasuryDirect account at www.treasurydirect.gov. With employee authorization, AACPS transfers a specified amount into the employee's TreasuryDirect account to purchase electronic securities.

United Way Program

AACPS employees may contribute to the United Way Program through payroll deduction. Employees may change their contributions only during the annual United Way Campaign. Pledge cards and information packets will be available at all locations during the annual campaign.

Sick Leave Benefits

Employees receive sick leave benefits as designated by their negotiated agreements or Board policy. Sick leave benefits vary by group. Leave balances reported on your pay stub may not include sick leave taken in the last two weeks.

Sick Leave Bank

Each negotiating unit (TAAAC, AEL, SAAAAC, and AF-SCME) sponsors a sick leave bank. The sick leave bank is maintained to provide additional days for employees who experience a personal health problem which requires more sick leave than they have accumulated. The bank is maintained through member donation of sick leave days. Applications for a sick-leave bank grant are submitted directly to the negotiating unit, where a committee reviews and grants requests. Leave is not accrued while an employee is on sick leave bank. For information, contact your appropriate negotiating unit.

Annual Leave Benefits

Employees have vacation benefits as designated by their negotiated agreements. Annual leave benefits vary by group. Please refer to your current agreement. Leave balances reported on your pay stubs may be up to or over two weeks behind.

Absence Without Authorized Leave

On February 6, 2008, the Board of Education passed Board Policy GADD and Regulation GADD-RA concerning Absence Without Authorized Leave.

"Absence Without Authorized Leave" occurs when an employee is absent from required duties without following the procedures required in the applicable Negotiated Agreement or Board of Education policies and regulations and/or without authorization for leave without pay by the proper leave approving authority. Abuse of unauthorized leave could result in an unpaid suspension or termination.

Copies of the Policy and Regulation can be viewed and downloaded from the Anne Arundel County Public Schools' web site.

Retirement Benefits

All permanent employees of AACPS are required to enroll in The Maryland State Retirement Plan. Employees contribute a percent of their salary into the Plan based on state law. Effective July 1, 2011, the rate is 7%. Based on the employee's position, AACPS or the state of Maryland makes additional contributions on the employee's behalf. Annual statements are provided by the MSRA to participants in the Retirement Plan. Further information is available for participants at www.sra.state.md.us.

The decision to retire is certainly one of the most important decisions an employee will make. In an effort to provide as much assistance as possible to employees at this important time in their lives, AACPS provides a Pre-Retirement Program. In conjunction with the Anne Arundel County Retired School Personnel Association, AACPS offers a program each spring and fall covering a variety of retirement topics such as Maryland State Retirement benefits review, financial planning, wills & estates, healthcare benefits, and Social Security and Medicare. AACPS recommends employees attend these programs well in advance of their planned retirement date to allow time for proper planning. Information about the program topics and enrollment information are sent out to all locations, usually two months in advance of the program dates.

The services of the Retirement Office of Human Resources are available to employees as they prepare to enter the phase of retirement. Retirement Coordinators from the AACPS Retirement Office serve as the liaison between employees and the Maryland State Retirement Agency (MSRA). Employees should contact the HR Office of Retirement at 410-222-5224 or 1-800-909-4882 with questions.

To obtain a complete picture of various retirement options, employees should submit the Maryland State Retirement Agency (MSRA) "Application For Estimate of Service Retirement Allowance" (Form 9). You may obtain this form from the AACPS Retirement Office or the MSRA. Complete the form and return it to the MSRA for details on your benefit eligibility and benefit amounts.

This request should be submitted well in advance of your anticipated retirement date – at least one year in advance – and no later than six months in advance, due to the time it takes to receive the estimate.

The MSRA provides an annual statement to enrollees of projected future benefits. If you have questions, you may contact them at 1-800-492-5909 or 410-625-5555. Personal consultation is available through the MSRA's Regional Counseling Program. Local sessions are held regularly at various county buildings throughout Maryland. Members who wish to schedule an appointment may call 410-625-5555 or 1-800-492-5909.

Supplemental Retirement Plans – 403(b), 457(b) Deferred Compensation Plans

AACPS permanent and temporary employees are eligible to participate in a 403(b), and 457(b) program (or in any such combination) immediately from date of hire or thereafter at any time during their employment. These plans provide an excellent way to fund and supplement your retirement savings. These benefits, in addition to your Maryland State Retirement System benefit, and Social Security Benefits, can assist you in securing your retirement income.

These programs encourage you to save regularly on a tax deferred basis (in accordance with the annual IRS limits) which reduces your taxable income. AACPS offers you a choice of investment providers who provide qualitative investment options and services. The AACPS Deferred Compensation Plan permits salary deferrals according to IRS limits, including a higher maximum for those over age 50, and the catch up provisions for those with more than 15 years employment with AACPS.

For more information, including a list of investment providers, go to the Human Resources section of the employee intranet.

Workers' Compensation

Employees who experience an injury on the job must report the injury to their supervisor or school secretary as soon as possible so that a First Report of Injury may be completed. Information relating to workers' compensation forms and procedures can be obtained from your Supervisor, School Secretary, or the Insurance and Safety Management Office. All forms and procedures are also located on the Employee Intranet.

All employees injured in an occupational accident may be entitled to workers' compensation benefits. Benefits include payment of medical bills and wage restoration (partial). Claims are administered by the Anne Arundel County Risk Management Division (410-222-7630). Employees, upon approval, are entitled to wage continuation benefits for up to sixty (60) lost duty days. Any and all time lost from work must be authorized by a doctor.

Questions regarding forms or procedures should be directed to the Insurance and Safety Management Office at 410-222-5223.

Be Courteous

School Board Policy 100 reaffirms the Board’s desire to “encourage free and open expression of concern by citizens, staff, and students; to conduct its affairs under public scrutiny; to base its decisions on the discovered needs of the entire system rather than narrow self-interest, and to comport itself with dignity and fairness in all its business.”

This excerpt from Board policy reminds all school system employees of their responsibilities to the public and to the students that they serve. Appropriate and professional dress sends a positive message to students, parents, and members of the community. Educators should remember that they are role models for students and representatives of the public school system.

Proper and respectful language should be used in the workplace at all times, and everyday conduct should convey messages of respect, honesty, courtesy, kindness, and consideration. Likewise, employee behavior should reflect a commitment to the Board’s adopted credo for human relations which calls for individuals to “speak to each other, listen to each other, hear each other, value each other’s right to form opinions, and respect each other regardless of disability or socioeconomic background.”

Be Health Conscious in the Workplace

To avoid serious health problems in the work environment, all employees are to be especially careful when dealing with blood and other body fluids. You can be exposed to the Hepatitis B Virus (HBV), or the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) if you have direct contact with infected blood or other body fluids in one or more of the following ways:

- Being stuck with infected needles or other sharp devices
- Having infected blood or other body fluids splashed
 - in the mouth, eyes, or nose
 - onto skin that is cut, scratched, or has sores, rashes, or other skin conditions
- Being bitten (saliva) by a human carrying infectious disease

In an emergency, when you cannot identify body fluids or tell whether they contain blood, treat all body fluids as potentially infectious.

It is especially important to use latex or vinyl gloves for any task involving exposure to blood and other body fluids. Be sure they have no holes, cracks or tears.

Follow Correct Work Practices

Precautionary measures

- Cover all cuts and scratches on your skin before going to work.

Handwashing

- Handwashing is the best overall protection against most communicable diseases.

- Wash your hands and other skin surfaces thoroughly with soap and running water immediately after contact with blood or other body fluids.
- When running water is not available, waterless hand-wash substitute should be used.

Cleaning up blood spills

- Always wear gloves. Wear eye and face protection if splashes could occur.
- Soak up spills with disposable towels. Saturate with a CDC approved germ killer (available at all schools). Let soak for 10 minutes.
- Wipe area with clean towels and let air-dry.
- Place all infected items for disposal in a disposable trash can liner. Remove gloves last and wash hands.

Cleaning your clothes

- Wear gloves; handle soiled items as little as possible.
- Carry clothing in bags or in other containers that do not leak.
- Place all items in a second bag if the first bag gets torn or has blood or other body fluids on it.
- Wash and dry uniforms according to directions on the label.

Equipment disposal

- Dispose of protective equipment and/or disinfect immediately after use, following universal precautions.
- Use an area specifically set aside for cleaning and disinfecting emergency equipment at your workplace.

Be Punctual/Sign In & Sign Out

Arriving on time for your assigned duties is important to your colleagues, the parents, the students, and the community. The school system has an obligation to provide appropriate supervision for health and safety reasons. Being at your assigned duty location is essential to ensure the safety of all affected persons. Staying at your duty station until the assigned ending time is also essential.

Exceptional situations that arise may be resolved by consulting the immediate supervisor.

All employees are expected to report to their assigned work location at the appropriate reporting time and to leave their assigned location at the appropriate ending time. Since several different groups of people are represented on the various time sheets, employees should be careful to indicate their arrival/departure in the correct spaces. Each employee must sign the time sheet for himself/herself.

Exceptional situations that cause a change to the regular arrival/dismissal of employees shall be handled by the immediate supervisor.

Keep Us Up-to-Date

For the school system to serve the needs of parents, students, and others, it is essential that we communicate effectively as employees. Pertinent information should be shared with fellow employees so that we may all work together more efficiently and effectively.

If you need to make corrections to your personal information, (e.g. address, name change, or phone number), you must complete a Change of Personnel Records from which is available on www.aacps.org/HR/Employment/Forms and send it to the Division of Human Resources.

Respect Confidential Information

As employees of the school system, it is imperative that you familiarize yourself with your privacy rights and the privacy rights of students.

The privacy of student education records is safeguarded by the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), which prohibits the release of personally identifiable information without the written consent of the parent or eligible student. Access to student education records by persons other than the student and parents is granted only for legitimate and recognized educational purposes. Schools are required to keep a list of every person obtaining information from a student's cumulative education record other than those specified in Administrative Regulation 907 (Student Records) of the Anne Arundel County Board of Education Policies and Regulations.

The Division of Human Resources is responsible for keeping a current folder on each school system employee. The folder contains a record of all pertinent pre-employment information, including the application, references, verification of previous employment and education, a record of any change in status, position, or salary of the employee, evaluations and ratings, and other information required by law or Board policy. All employees or designees authorized by employees, have the right to review items in their personnel file, except confidential references pertaining to original employment or promotion. Administrative and supervisory personnel and the clerical staff of the office where the files are located are the only personnel allowed access to personnel files.

Restrict Personal Phone Calls & Personal Computer Use

During the duty day, all employees should restrict the use of school system telephones, as well as personal cell phones, and computers for personal use to situations that are either emergencies or cannot be postponed until the close of business. Employees are not to engage in activity pertaining to other jobs or businesses. Supervisors are directed to observe phone call patterns and computer use and to take appropriate corrective action should any employee abuse the privilege of using school system telephone equipment or computers. See also [Employee Handbook: Employee Ethics: Responsible Use of Computers & Electronic Communication Tools & System](#)

Safety

Typically, occupational injuries occur as a result of an unsafe act and/or an unsafe condition and can be avoided by diligent attention to safe work practices. Safety has been and will continue to be every employee's responsibility. It is the policy of Anne Arundel County Public Schools to present a safe environment for students, visitors, and employees. The commitment to safety has been reinforced by the addition to the staff of a dedicated safety professional who may be contacted in the Insurance & Safety Management Office.

School Security

The wearing of identification badges is required for **all** employees while in **any** AACPS facility. Badges are to be worn in a manner that is readily visible and not kept in pockets, desks, purses, cars, etc. If a staff member reports to work without an identification badge, they are to obtain a temporary badge, as soon as possible, from V Soft in the main office to be worn until their permanent badge is available. Anyone not wearing a badge (employee or V Soft) should be questioned by staff as to their purpose in the building and referred to the main office to be registered.

All employees have a responsibility to ensure that they follow and enforce security directives, policies, and regulations. It is every employee's responsibility to report security violations or security hazards/risks immediately. In today's heightened state of potential terrorism and security concerns, the following security guidance must be followed while working at your school or work location:

- Report suspicious activity and unauthorized visitors to school administrators or the building manager immediately.
- Report criminal activity to school administrators immediately and/or report violent or dangerous criminal activity to police immediately.
- Do not use or permit students to use unauthorized entrances and exits. Do not prop open doors or circumvent door locks to gain access to facilities or rooms that are locked.
- Do not use or permit students to use fire exits or alarmed doors without specific permission from the principal or the building manager except in the event of an emergency.

- Do not leave laptops computers or other high value equipment that can be easily taken in unsecured areas.
 - Avoid bringing high value personal items to work. Do not leave purses or wallets unattended. AACPS does not take responsibility for personal items stolen.
 - Lock your automobile and do not permit others access to your personal vehicle. Keep valuables out of sight.
 - Park only in designated areas.
 - Do not loan building or room keys to anyone without permission of the principal or the building manager.
 - Properly secure and account for funds left in your charge. Employees who do not adequately manage or secure funds will be held financially responsible.
 - Do not share your account and password with others
- If you have specific security questions, please contact the Office of School Security at 410-222-5083.

Work Quality

Citizens, taxpayers, parents, and students of Anne Arundel County have the right to expect the greatest effort and highest quality work of each employee of the Anne Arundel County Public School System. Our goal must be excellence in all work performed.

Quick Reference Phone Numbers

Accommodations	410-222-5286	Human Relations/Equity Programs	410-222-5318
Accounting	410-222-5230	Human Resources	410-222-5061
Advanced Studies & Programs	410-222-5365	Certified Personnel	410-222-5061
Arlington Echo Outdoor Ed Program	410-222-3822	Classified	410-222-5070
Art Office	410-222-5450	Professional Support	410-222-5070
Athletics	410-222-5463	Substitute Office	410-222-5068
Auditing	410-222-5185	Humanities & Arts	410-222-5413
Benefits (active)	410-222-5221	Information/Lobby	410-222-5000
Benefits (retirement)	410-222-5224	Instructional Equipment Repair	410-222-3840
Board of Education Members	410-222-5311	Instructional Programs (K-12)	410-222-5401
Budget Information	410-222-5200	Instructional Technology @ Carver	410-222-1693
Business Partnerships	410-222-5370	Interscholastic Athletics	410-222-5460
Cafeteria Information at Riva	410-222-5050	Investigations	410-222-5286
Child Find Diagnostics		Kindergarten/PreK	410-222-5441
North Office	410-766-6662	Leave/Disability Management	410-222-5090
South Office	410-956-0741	Library Media Services	410-222-1020
West Office	410-551-6340	Logistics	410-360-5234
Community-based Services	410-222-0922	Mailroom	410-222-5103
Command Center (School Emergencies)	410-222-5022	Maintenance	410-255-2535
Continuing Education	410-222-5383	Math Office	410-222-5464
Dance Education	410-222-5484	Music Office	410-222-5465
Design & Print Services	410-222-5100	Occupational & Physical Therapy	410-222-2900
Development Office (Grants Office)	410-222-5370	Office Services	410-222-5050
EAP (Business Health Services)	800-327-2251	Operations	410-360-0138
Employee Benefits	410-222-5221	Payroll	410-222-5210
Equipment Repair	410-222-3840	Physical Education	410-222-5460
ESOL	410-222-5416	Planning and Construction	410-439-5658
Family Resource Center	410-222-6429	Pre-K to Kindergarten	410-222-5441
File Room/Employee Records	410-222-5098	Property Control	410-923-5030
Fingerprinting	410-222-5045	Psychology	410-222-5321
Food & Nutrition Services	410-222-5900	Public Information Office	410-222-5312
Gifted/Talented/Advanced	410-222-5430	Purchasing	410-222-5160
Health Education	410-222-5462	Reading Office	410-222-5455
Health Issues/Immunizations	410-222-6838	Retirement Office	410-222-5224
Help Desk	410-222-5135	Safe & Drug Free Schools Project	410-222-3850
Home School	410-222-5457	School Attendance Boundaries	410-439-5674

Quick Reference Phone Numbers

School Performance - Regional Offices

Magothy River MS	410-518-6473
Annapolis MS	410-626-9748
Corkran MS	410-766-6592
School Security	410-222-5083
Science Office	410-222-5451
Science & Technologies	410-222-5490
Social Studies Office	410-222-5440
Special Education	410-222-5410
Staff Attorney	410-222-5306
Staff Development @ Carver	410-721-8300
Instructional Technology @ Carver	410-222-1693
Standardized Testing	410-222-5147
Student Records	410-222-3869

Student Services	410-222-5320
Student Services @ Millersville	410-923-0829
Substitute Office	410-222-5068
Substitute System Phone	410-571-8615
Superintendent's Office	410-222-5304
Technology	410-222-5330
Third Party Billing	410-222-5387
TIENET Office	410-354-0715
Transportation	410-222-2910
Volunteers	410-222-5414
Workers' Compensation	410-222-5223
World & Classical Languages	410-222-5424

Anne Arundel County Public Schools

Division of Human Resources

2644 Riva Road

Annapolis, MD 21401

Anne Arundel County Public Schools prohibits discrimination in matters affecting employment or in providing access to programs on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, sexual orientation, or disability unrelated in nature and extent so as to reasonably preclude performance. For more information, contact The Office of Investigations, Anne Arundel County Public Schools, 2644 Riva Road, Annapolis, Maryland 21401, (410) 222-5286; TDD (410) 222-5500. www.aacps.org