



**WALTON COUNTY
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

2024-2025 SY

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF WALTON COUNTY, FLORIDA

A. RUSSELL HUGHES, SUPERINTENDENT

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

Tammy Smith, Chairperson

Jason Catalano, Vice-Chairperson

William Eddins, Jr.,

Kim Kirby

Jeri Michie

SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS:

School Board Meetings are held on the first and third Tuesday of each month at the Walton County School Board Office, 145 Park Street, DeFuniak Springs, Florida and South Walton High School, 645 Greenway Trail, Santa Rosa Beach, Florida, respectively.

PRESENTATIONS:

Students, staff, or other affected citizens may request to present information to the School Board during an open meeting. Please call the School Board Office at 850-892-1100 for additional information.

DISCLAIMER:

This handbook is intended as a source of information for policies and general information and an overview of benefits offered by the Walton County School Board and should assist you during your employment. It is not a contract and is not intended to be. The policies and benefits described herein are not intended to be conditions of employment.

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MISSION STATEMENT OF THE WALTON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Preparing the whole child for a life of success.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

Goal One: Highest Student Achievement

Increase achievement for each student by ensuring access to rigorous programs, addressing diverse educational needs, and providing access to technology and digital curriculum.

Goal Two: Standards-Based Curriculum and Instruction

Implement a comprehensive curriculum driven by Florida Standards and other standards established by the Florida Department of Education and implemented through research-based instructional best practices.

Goal Three: Engaged, Informed and Empowered Stakeholders

Communicate with all stakeholders through a multi-tiered system to inform and to promote collaboration, family involvement and community partnership.

Goal Four: Quality, Equitable, Efficient Services

Maintain high levels of effectiveness, efficiency, and equity in our operations to support student achievement.

Goal Five: Safe and Secure Schools

Walton County School Board, Superintendent, Administrators and Staff are committed to maintaining safe and secure schools to enhance the learning environment for students and staff.



WALTON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

2024-2025 School Calendar

August 2-9, 2024	Pre-Planning Days
August 8, 2024	Instructional, Clinic, and Bilingual Aides Return
August 12, 2024	Classes Begin for Students
August 30, 2024	Early Release Day for Students/Professional Development for Staff
September 2, 2024	Labor Day (all personnel out)
October 11, 2024	Early Release Day for Students/Professional Development for Staff
End of 1 st Nine Weeks (44 days)	
October 14, 2024	Teacher Work Day (students out)
November 11, 2024	Veterans' Day (all personnel out)
November 25-29, 2024	Thanksgiving Holidays (all personnel out)
December 20, 2024	End of 2 nd Nine Weeks (43 days)
	End of 1 st Semester (87 days)
December 23, 2024-January 3, 2025	Christmas & New Year's Holidays (all personnel out)
January 6, 2025	Teacher Work Day (students out)
January 7, 2025	Professional Development Day for Teachers (students out)
January 8, 2025	Students Return
January 20, 2025	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (all personnel out)
February 17, 2025	Presidents' Day (all personnel out)
March 13, 2025	Early Release Day for Students/Professional Development for Staff
End of 3 rd Nine Weeks (45 days)	
March 14, 2025	Teacher Work Day (students out)
March 17-21, 2025	Spring Break (all personnel out)
April 18, 2025	No School Day (all personnel out)
May 26, 2025	Memorial Day (all personnel out)
May 30, 2025	Last Day for Students
	End of 4 th Nine Weeks (48 days)
	End of 2 nd Semester (93 days)

Graduation Dates

May 15, 2025	Magnet Innovation Center (7PM)
May 16, 2025	South Walton High School (7PM)
May 19, 2025	Walton High School (7PM)
May 22, 2025	In10sity School of Excellence (4PM)
	Paxton High School (7PM)
May 23, 2025	Freeport High School (7PM)

PRINCIPLES OF CONDUCT FOR WCSB PERSONNEL

The School Board and Superintendent hold the highest expectations for the conduct of all employees of the Walton County School Board. It is expected all employees will be of good moral character and demonstrate conduct as an employee that is at all times appropriate and consistent with the high standards the School Board and community expect. Teachers are expected to dress in a manner befitting the teaching profession. All uses of tobacco products in any form are prohibited in any District-owned facility except in a place designated by the Board, which must be out of the view of the public and students. According to Florida Statutes the use of profane or abusive language to, or in the presence of, students by School Board employees is prohibited. Any employee who violates this Rule shall be subject to disciplinary action. It is expected all employees will be competent and capable in the performance of assigned duties, functions, and responsibilities, demonstrating quality and pride in their efforts, and serve as an appropriate role model for students, while supporting the School Board Mission and Goals for the District.

Any employee arrested for or charged with a felony, abuse of a child, or the sale, distribution, and/or possession of a controlled substance shall notify the Superintendent within 48 hours of the arrest. In addition, the employee shall self-report any conviction, finding of guilt, withholding of adjudication, commitment to a pretrial diversion program, or entering of a plea of guilty or Nolo Contendere for any criminal offense other than a minor traffic violation within 48 hours after the final judgment. Within 5 calendar days from receipt of notification from an employee or a law enforcement agency that an employee has been arrested, the Superintendent shall notify each member of the School Board of such arrest and shall provide such further information as may be available. Within a reasonable time thereafter, the Superintendent shall take such action as may be appropriate under the circumstances, including, but not limited to, transfer, suspension, or initiation of dismissal proceedings of such employee in order to protect the health, safety and welfare of students, other employees and members of the public. In addition, the Superintendent shall, on behalf of the School District, file such information with the Florida Department of Education within 30 calendar days following notification from any law enforcement agency or other reliable source.

PRINCIPLES OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT FOR THE EDUCATION PROFESSION IN FLORIDA

Rule 6A-10.081, Florida Administrative Code, Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida.

(1) Florida educators shall be guided by the following ethical principles:

(a) The educator values the worth and dignity of every person, the pursuit of truth, devotion to excellence, acquisition of knowledge, and the nurture of democratic citizenship. Essential to the achievement of these standards are the freedom to learn and to teach and the guarantee of equal opportunity for all.

(b) The educator's primary professional concern will always be for the student and for the development of the student's potential. The educator will therefore strive for professional growth and will seek to exercise the best professional judgment and integrity.

(c) Aware of the importance of maintaining the respect and confidence of one's colleagues, of students, of parents, and of other members of the community, the educator strives to achieve and sustain the highest degree of ethical conduct.

(2) Florida educators shall comply with the following disciplinary principles. Violation of any of these principles shall subject the individual to revocation or suspension of the individual educator's certificate, or the other penalties as provided by law.

(a) Obligation to the student requires that the individual:

1. Shall make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to learning and/or to the student's mental and/or physical health and/or safety.

2. Shall not unreasonably restrain a student from independent action in pursuit of learning.

3. Shall not unreasonably deny a student access to diverse points of view.

4. Shall not intentionally suppress or distort subject matter relevant to a student's academic program.

5. Shall not intentionally expose a student to unnecessary embarrassment or disparagement.

6. Shall not intentionally provide classroom instruction to students in prekindergarten through grade 8 on sexual orientation or gender identity, except when required by Sections 1003.42(2)(n)3. and 1003.46, F.S.

7. Shall not intentionally provide classroom instruction to students in grades 9 through 12 on sexual orientation or gender identity unless such instruction is required by state academic standards as adopted in Rule 6A-1.09401, F.A.C., or is part of a reproductive health course or health lesson for which a student's parent has the option to have his or her student not attend.

8. Shall not intentionally violate or deny a student's legal rights.

9. Shall not discourage or prohibit parental notification of and involvement in critical decisions affecting a student's mental, emotional, or physical health or well-being unless the individual reasonably believes that disclosure would result in abuse, abandonment, or neglect as defined in Section 39.01, F.S.

10. Shall not harass or discriminate against any student on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, marital status, handicapping condition, sexual orientation, or social and family background and shall make reasonable effort to assure that each student is protected from harassment or discrimination. Discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, or sex includes subjecting any student to training or instruction that espouses, promotes, advances, inculcates, or compels such student to believe any of the concepts listed in Section 1000.05(4)(a), F.S.

11. Shall not exploit a relationship with a student for personal gain or advantage.

12. Shall keep in confidence personally identifiable information obtained in the course of professional service unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law.

13. Shall not violate s. 553.865(9)(b), F.S., which relates to entering restrooms and changing facilities designated for the opposite sex on the premises of an educational institution.

14. Shall not violate s. 1000.071, F.S., which relates to the use of personal titles and pronouns in educational institutions.

(b) Obligation to the public requires that the individual:

1. Shall take reasonable precautions to distinguish between personal views and those of any educational institution or organization with which the individual is affiliated.

2. Shall not intentionally distort or misrepresent facts concerning an educational matter in direct or indirect public expression.

3. Shall not use institutional privileges for personal gain or advantage.

4. Shall accept no gratuity, gift, or favor that might influence professional judgment.

5. Shall offer no gratuity, gift, or favor to obtain special advantages.

(c) Obligation to the profession of education requires that the individual:

1. Shall maintain honesty in all professional dealings.

2. Shall not on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, marital status, handicapping condition if otherwise qualified, or social and family background deny to a colleague professional benefits or advantages or participation in any professional organization.

3. Shall not interfere with a colleague's exercise of political or civil rights and responsibilities.

4. Shall not engage in harassment or discriminatory conduct which unreasonably interferes with an individual's performance of professional or work responsibilities or with the orderly processes of education or which creates a hostile, intimidating, abusive, offensive, or oppressive environment; and, further, shall make reasonable effort to assure that each individual is protected from such harassment or discrimination.

5. Shall not make malicious or intentionally false statements about a colleague.

6. Shall not use coercive means or promise special treatment to influence professional judgments of colleagues.

7. Shall not misrepresent one's own professional qualifications.

8. Shall not submit fraudulent information on any document in connection with professional activities.

9. Shall not make any fraudulent statement or fail to disclose a material fact in one's own or another's application for a professional position.

10. Shall not withhold information regarding a position from an applicant or misrepresent an assignment or conditions of employment.

11. Shall provide upon the request of the certificated individual a written statement of specific reason for recommendations that lead to the denial of increments, significant changes in employment, or termination of employment.

12. Shall not assist entry into or continuance in the profession of any person known to be unqualified in accordance with these Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida and other applicable Florida Statutes and State Board of Education Rules.

13. Shall self-report within forty-eight (48) hours to appropriate authorities (as determined by district) any arrests/charges involving the abuse of a child or the sale

and/or possession of a controlled substance. Such notice shall not be considered an admission of guilt, nor shall such notice be admissible for any purpose in any proceeding, civil or criminal, administrative or judicial, investigatory or adjudicatory. In addition, shall self-report any conviction, finding of guilt, withholding of adjudication, commitment to a pretrial diversion program, or entering of a plea of guilty or Nolo Contendere for any criminal offense other than a minor traffic violation within forty-eight (48) hours after the final judgment. When handling sealed and expunged records disclosed under this rule, school districts shall comply with the confidentiality provisions of Sections 943.0585(4)(c) and 943.059(4)(c), F.S.

14. Shall report to appropriate authorities any known allegation of a violation of the Florida School Code or State Board of Education Rules as defined in Section 1012.795(1), F.S.

15. Shall seek no reprisal against any individual who has reported any allegation of a violation of the Florida School Code or State Board of Education Rules as defined in Section 1012.795(1), F.S.

16. Shall comply with the conditions of an order of the Education Practices Commission imposing probation, imposing a fine, or restricting the authorized scope of practice.

17. Shall, as the supervising administrator, cooperate with the Education Practices Commission in monitoring the probation of a subordinate.

Rulemaking Authority 1001.02, 1012.795(1)(j) FS. Law Implemented 1012.795 FS. History—New 7-6-82, Amended 12-20-83, Formerly 6B-1.06, Amended 8-10-92, 12-29-98, Formerly 6B-1.006, Amended 3-23-16, 11-22-22, 2-21-23, 5-23-23, 8-22-23.

TEACHER RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Within the framework of the Code of Student Conduct, teachers and other instructional personnel shall have the authority to undertake any of the following actions in managing student behavior and ensuring the safety of all students in their classes and school:

- Establish classroom rules of conduct and implement consequences designed to change behavior for infractions of classroom rules.
- Have violent, abusive, uncontrollable, or disruptive students temporarily removed from the classroom for behavior management intervention.
- Assist in enforcing school rules on school property, on school-sponsored transportation, and during school-sponsored activities.
- Press charges if a crime has been committed against teacher or other instructional personnel on school property, on school-sponsored transportation, or during school-sponsored activities.
- Use reasonable force, according to standards recommended by the Education Standards Commission and the Education Practices Commission and adopted by the State Board of Education, to protect himself or herself or others from injury.

Teachers and other instructional personnel have the responsibility to:

- Set and enforce reasonable classroom rules that treat all students equitably.
- Maintain a positive and effective learning environment that maximizes learning and minimizes disruption.
- Work with parents and other school personnel to solve discipline problems in their classrooms.

A teacher may send a student to the principal's office to maintain effective discipline in the classroom. The principal shall respond by employing appropriate discipline management techniques consistent with the Student Code of Conduct.

Discretionary Removal from Classroom:

- A teacher may remove from class a student:
 - who has been documented by the teacher to repeatedly interfere with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students in the class or with the ability of the student's classmates to learn.

- whose behavior the teacher determines is so unruly, disruptive, or abusive that it seriously interferes with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students in the class or with the ability of the student's classmates to learn.
- If a teacher removes a student from class under this subsection, the principal may place the student in another appropriate classroom, in in-school suspension, or in an alternative education program as provided by law; or the principal may recommend the student for out-of-school suspension or expulsion, as appropriate. The student may be prohibited from attending or participating in school-sponsored or school-related activities. The principal may not return the student to the teacher's class without the teacher's consent unless the placement review committee determines that such placement is the best or only available alternative. The teacher and the placement review committee must render decisions within five (5) working days of the removal of the student from the classroom. *(For ESE Students, a change of placement requires a manifestation meeting F.S. 1003.32,)*

PERSONNEL SERVICES

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Walton County School District job descriptions may be viewed online at <https://www.walton.k12.fl.us/documents/departments/human-resources/job-descriptions/487685>.

EMPLOYEE DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

If you change your name, address, or phone number, you must complete a demographic form and submit it to the Human Resources Department. Demographic forms may be located on the WCSD website at <https://www.walton.k12.fl.us/documents/departments/human-resources/human-resources-forms/general-forms/487731> or complete the form in the online records management system. Name changes must include legal documentation verifying the change such as a revised social security card or court documents.

When you provide Human Resources with this information, all records, including payroll and insurance, will be updated.

EMPLOYMENT INSTRUCTIONS FOR NEW EMPLOYEES

Instructional Appointments

- Promptly complete/return all forms requested in the online records management system. Failure to meet established deadlines may result in corrective action.
- Send an OFFICIAL transcript(s) indicating your degree to the District Human Resources Department.
- The pay process can begin only when a nomination for appointment and all required forms are completed and returned to Human Resources.
- The employee is responsible for verification of previous service using the form contained in the online records management system.
 - Only “contracted services” will be accepted. (Credit for substitute teaching on a daily or permanent basis that is not contracted will not be accepted.)
 - The minimum time which may be recognized as a year of service for contractual purposes shall be full time actual service rendered under contract for more than one-half ($\frac{1}{2}$) of the number of days or more than one-half ($\frac{1}{2}$) the number of total hours required for the normal

contractual period of service for the position held. In determining such service, sick leave and holidays for which the employee received compensation shall be counted, but all other types of leave and holidays shall be excluded.

- Teaching or administrative experience in any state or regionally accredited public school (K-12), junior or community college, university or government sponsored school will be accepted (graduate assistance experience will not be accepted). Certified teachers possessing a four-year degree with verified teaching experience at private schools or institutions that are regionally accredited gain experience.

New Employee Forms

A new employee must complete the following forms before a paycheck can be issued:

- Employee Demographics Form
- Loyalty Oath
- W-4 Form
- I-9 Form
- Florida Retirement – New Employment Certificate Form
- Mandatory Reporting Certification
- Statement of Eligibility or possession of a Florida Educator's Certificate (Administrative and Instructional personnel only)
- As a condition of employment, all new employees are required to complete and clear pre-employment screenings prior to their first day of employment.
- A valid driver's license and social security card are necessary for employment verification.

MANDATORY REPORTING OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Walton County School District employees are required to complete training for reporting child abuse and neglect. New personnel or those who do not have a certificate of completion for the training, must take the online training prior to their first day of employment. The web link to the Florida Department of Children and Families training is: <http://www3.fl-dcf.org/RCAAN/>. Once you have completed the training, you will receive a Certificate of Completion. If you are a current employee, you will need to

send a copy of your Certificate of Completion to your supervisor. If you are a new hire, you will need to upload the Certificate of Completion into the Records Onboarding System.

EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

The Walton County School Board selects employees based on merit, training, and experience. Equal opportunities for employment, training, compensation, promotion, and other conditions of employment are provided without regard to marital status, race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, handicap, perceived disability or record of disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act. Veterans are provided employment rights in accordance with Public Law 93-508 (Federal), Florida Statutes and Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The District complies with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination in employment. Walton County School Board does not discriminate based on disability in admission to its programs, services, or activities, in access to them, in treatment of individuals with disabilities, or in any aspect of their operations. The Walton County School Board also does not discriminate based on disability in its hiring or employment practices. This notice is provided as required by Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Questions, complaints, or requests for additional information regarding the ADA and Section 504 may be forwarded to the Director of Human Resources.

LEAVES OF ABSENCE

For detailed information regarding time off procedures and leave accrual, the following documents are located at <https://www.walton.k12.fl.us/documents/departments/human-resources/leave/486532>.

- Time Off Procedure Manual
- How to Request Leave
- How to Approve Leave

Teacher Absences

In case of sickness or emergency, a teacher should follow the procedures outlined in the teacher handbook at his/her site for requesting leave and securing a substitute teacher. The teacher must leave adequate lesson plans, a schedule, and all materials needed for use by the substitute and the class during the absence.

Sick Leave

Staff members employed on a full-time basis shall be entitled to four (4) days of sick leave, or no less than that provided by Florida Statutes, in the first month of each contract year. Thereafter, all full-time School Board employees shall accrue one (1) day of sick leave credit for each month of employment which shall be credited each month.

- Sick leave shall not be used prior to the time it is earned by the staff member.
- No staff member shall earn more than one (1) day of sick leave for each month of employment during the school year or school fiscal year. Such leave is cumulative from year to year without a limit on the number of days that may be accrued.
- Sick leave shall be taken only when the employee is unable to perform his/her duties because of personal illness, temporary physical disability, or illness or the death of his/her father, mother, brother, sister, husband, wife, child, or other close relative or household member.
- Any leave charged to sick leave shall be with full compensation.
- Up to six (6) days of sick leave per year may be used for personal use other than sickness.
- New employees may transfer sick leave earned from another Florida school district or state educational agency at the rate of one (1) day per month of employment with Walton County Schools.
- A claim for sick leave shall be submitted online in Skyward within five (5) working days upon return of the employee to duty.
- Any School Board employee who has used all accrued sick leave, but who is otherwise entitled to sick leave shall be granted sick leave without pay. The claim for sick leave shall clearly state the leave is without compensation. For extended sick leave in excess of ten (10) consecutive days, the employee shall submit an application for extended sick leave and attach a statement from a physician licensed by the State of Florida to certify such leave is essential and to indicate the probable duration of the illness and number of leave days needed.
- An employee may authorize his or her spouse, child, parent, or sibling who is also a school district employee to use sick leave accrued to the authorizing employee. The following restrictions apply: (1) the recipient may not use the donated leave until all of his or her sick leave has been depleted. (2) donated sick leave shall have no terminal pay value as provided in School Board policy.
- An employee may request use of Donated Sick Leave. Donated Sick Leave may be authorized for use if all eligible criteria have been met and donated leave has been voluntarily contributed.
- The following documents may be found on the Human Resources page on the Walton County School District website (www.walton.k12.fl.us).
 - WCSD Procedures for Use of Sick Leave by Family Member or Employee

- Request to Use Donated Sick Leave Days – Individual
- Request to Use Donated Sick Leave Days – Caregiver
- Request to Donate Sick Leave Hours

NOTE: If an employee terminates employment and has not accrued the four (4) sick days available, the School Board will withhold the average daily amount for the sick days utilized but unearned by the employee from the final check.

Regular (non-OPS) part-time employees earn sick leave proportionate to the time worked. A portion of your sick leave may be used for personal or emergency reasons. Refer to the applicable negotiated contract or School Board policies for specific guidelines regarding personal and emergency leave. There are some agencies which allow the transfer of sick leave to and from Walton County Schools. These agencies are usually other Florida School Districts, Universities, or State of Florida Agencies. It is an employee's responsibility to request the transfer of leave through the Payroll Department within 30 days of hire date. The length of time institutions retain leave records may be limited. Leave transferred into Walton County School Board from other agencies is credited on a pro-rated basis. One day of leave earned will gain one day of leave credited. The value of sick leave time can be calculated by multiplying the hourly rate of pay times the accrued sick leave. There is no cap on the number of sick leave days which can be accrued. Employees may elect to sell accumulated unused sick leave annually for 80% of its value, based upon the employee's daily rate of pay. For further information regarding sick leave, contact your supervisor, or refer to your applicable negotiated contract.

Terminal Pay for Sick Leave

During and after the thirteenth (13th) year of service to Walton County Schools, the Board, through policy and applicable negotiated contracts, will pay you for 100% of your unused sick leave when you retire. This does not apply to resignations or non-renewal of contracts. If your service is terminated by death, your beneficiary would receive this benefit. Prior to 13 years of Walton County School's service, the percentage of Terminal Pay for Sick Leave you receive is based upon your years of service with the District.

How to Determine Annual Leave Accrual for Twelve-Month Employees:

Employees with less than five (5) years continuous service in Walton County Schools will earn the equivalent of one (1) day of annual leave per month. Employees with five (5) to ten (10) years of continuous service will earn annual leave at the equivalent rate of one and one quarter (1 1/4) days per month or fifteen (15) working days per year. Employees with ten (10) years or more of continuous service will accrue leave hours at the equivalent rate of one and one-half (1 1/2) days per month or eighteen (18) working days per year. Annual leave may be accumulated to a total number of days as specified by the appropriate bargaining agreement. Upon termination, an employee may be compensated for accrued, unused annual leave.

NOTE: When an employee transfers from a position earning annual leave benefits to a position which is not entitled to vacation, or annual leave benefits, the employee shall be entitled to use accrued annual time. Leave records are audited each year and balances are given to employees. Should you observe a variance, please immediately contact your administrator. Leave adjustments are time limited; therefore, please act quickly if adjustments are necessary.

Family and Medical Leave Act

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) gives eligible employees the right to take unpaid leave for up to 12 weeks within a 12-month period due to certain family and medical events. Employees who have been employed for a total of 12 months and have worked at least 1250 hours during a 12-month period preceding the leave are eligible for family and medical leave. Circumstances qualifying for leave include the birth, adoption, or foster care of a child and to care for such child; to care for the employee's spouse, child or parent with a serious health condition; because of an employee's serious health condition making the employee unable to perform one or more of the essential functions of the employee's job.

Unpaid Leave

The Board allows, with the recommendation and approval of the Principal and the Superintendent, unpaid leave for various nonwork-related reasons. Unpaid leaves may be granted for reasons such as parental leave, educational leave, and time to care for an ill parent or child or personal health reason. Unpaid leave must have prior approval. **When on approved unpaid leave, insurance benefits with Walton County Schools may be continued by the employee paying the entire premium (employee portion plus the Board contribution).** Contact the Insurance and Benefits Specialist in the Human Resources Department to assure the necessary steps have been taken to continue benefits. **If the premium is not paid during the term of the leave, benefits will be terminated for non-payment.** Further information regarding payment of benefits when on leave may also be obtained in the Benefits Notification. Employees on leave status are entitled to the same annual enrollment opportunities as active employees.

How to Request Leave

Leave requests must be entered in Skyward through Employee Access (EA). EA can be accessed from the Walton County School District homepage. www.walton.k12.fl.us.

- From the WCSD homepage, select "Staff" and click "Skyward".
- On the Skyward Login screen, enter your WCSD network username and password. The Employee Access window will open.
- Select "Time Off".
- Select "My Requests" from the "Time Off" sub-menu. The "My Time Off Requests" window will open.
- Click the "Add" button. The "Add" screen will open.

- Select the Time Off code for the type of leave you are requesting. If the type of leave you are requesting is not listed, contact your bookkeeper for assistance.
- Select the reason code.
- Enter a description of the leave request.
- If a substitute is needed, check the “Sub Needed” box.
- Click the “Save” button.
- If the “Sub Needed” box was checked, you will be directed to Frontline Absence Management to complete the substitute request.
- If supporting documentation is required, you must go back to the leave request submitted to attach the supporting documentation.
 - From the “My Time Off Requests” screen, select the transaction to which you need to attach documents.
 - Click the “Attach” button. The “Attachments” screen will open.
 - Click the “Add File” button to attach a file. The “Time Off Transactions Attachments” screen will open.
 - Click the “Browse” button to select a file to upload.
 - Select the file and click the “Open” button to attach the selected file.
- Secure the approval from your principal **BEFORE** leave is taken unless your absence is unforeseen.
- Other Leave Information: There are provisions for leave regarding maternity, illness-in-the-line-of-duty, personal and emergency leave, military leave, and long-term leave without pay. More information about these types of leave is available from your supervisor, in collective bargaining agreements, and in School Board Policy.
- For more detailed information, please refer to the “How to Request Leave” guide located at <https://www.walton.k12.fl.us/documents/departments/human-resources/leave/486532>. The “Time Off Procedure Manual” is also available at this site and is a useful reference for time off and leave accrual information.

Jury Duty

Leave may be authorized to cover absences caused by jury duty or court attendance (not involving your personal litigation). Courts provide a nominal fee for service on a jury. If an employee has accumulated unused leave, upon being selected as a juror, the employee may choose to use the unused leave and thus exchange the compensation received for jury duty for full compensation from the district according to the salary schedule. If this is the case, the employee must submit all compensation for jury duty to the payroll department. The employee will be allowed to keep reimbursement for travel expense.

Temporary Duty Elsewhere (TDE)

Employees may be assigned to be temporarily absent from their regular duties and place of employment when officially assigned short-term duties outside the district or outside the regular work location. Temporary Duty shall be considered equal to the

regular duties of the employee and shall not be classified or considered as being on leave. Every effort should be made to minimize disruptions of regular duties for all employees. Temporary Duty Elsewhere for non-student supervisory related activities shall be limited to only those that directly benefit the overall school/department program. Attendance at meetings and conferences beneficial to the District and approved by your supervisor will be covered as a temporary duty assignment. Request for Temporary Duty Elsewhere shall be submitted online in Skyward Employee Access Time Off. Supporting documents must be attached to the leave request. The employee's principal or department director will be an initial approver. The final approver will be the Superintendent or designee.

Approval of Leave

The following types of leave require the School Board's approval

- Parental leave
- Military leave in excess of 17 days
- Personal leave in excess of 6 days
- Illness in line of duty
- Leave to seek political office
- Extended sick leave in excess of 10 consecutive days
- Family and Medical leave, and
- Professional leave in excess of 10 consecutive days.

The Superintendent or designee is authorized to grant the following types of leave or duty assignment:

- Sick leave
- Personal leave not to exceed 6 consecutive days
- Annual leave
- Professional leave not to exceed 10 consecutive days
- Jury duty assignment
- Military leave not to exceed 17 days
- Witness duty absence, and
- Temporary Duty Elsewhere.

NOTE: The principal or the appropriate administrative supervisor is authorized to grant up to three (3) hours of cumulative, incremental leave to any employee under his/her supervision when an emergency exists, or a good justifiable reason is provided. Such leave shall not exceed a period of 3 hours. At such time that cumulative incremental leave equals three (3) or more hours, another appropriate form of leave will be charged, and all leave will be charged by the end of the fiscal year.

Absence Without Leave

A School Board employee who is willfully absent without leave shall forfeit compensation for the time of such absence and his/her contract shall be subject to termination by the School Board. Any dismissal proceedings for administrative or instructional employees shall be pursuant to Florida Statutes.

Compensatory Time for Employees

- Compensatory time shall be granted for volunteer duty, assigned duty, or for other activities **pre-approved** by the principal/supervisor. All comp time earned and comp time used requests must be submitted online in Skyward through Employee Access Time Off. Detailed instructions are provided in the “How to Request Leave” guide located on the Walton County School District website at <https://www.walton.k12.fl.us/documents/departments/human-resources/leave/486532>.
- Compensatory time shall be earned and used in quarter hour increments. Instructional employees may maintain a maximum balance of 60 hours of compensatory time. Non-Instructional employees may maintain a maximum balance of 240 hours of compensatory time.

The following is a list of activities that may be used by personnel to earn comp-time:

- PTA-PTO meetings
- Parent conferences after school hours
- Athletic and extracurricular activities
- Inservice activities – if no points are awarded
- Open House, if not designated as one of the two activities that principals may require
- Meetings required after school hours
- Overnight meetings – up to 8 hours per day
- Other administrative assignments made by the principal/supervisor beyond the school day

RESIGNATION

Any School Board employee who wishes to resign shall submit his/her resignation in writing addressed to the School Board. The letter of resignation shall state the reasons for the resignation and the desired effective date. The effective date of the resignation shall be the first day on which the employee is not paid. The resignation of any School Board employee shall be sent to and countersigned by the person’s administrative supervisor who shall forward the resignation to Human Resources for presentation to the School Board. No resignation shall become effective until accepted by the School Board; provided, however, the Superintendent is authorized to accept resignations on the School Board’s behalf when resignations are received during a period between School Board meetings and a replacement for the vacated position is available to begin employment before the School Board can take official action or a contract can be signed. The resignation of a School Board employee may be accepted during the contractual period of service provided an acceptable reason is given and a qualified and satisfactory replacement is available.

RETIREMENT

When you retire, you **must** elect to retain the benefits you are enrolled in at the time of your retirement. You may decrease benefits at retirement, but you may not increase them. Except for group term life insurance, your annual benefits premiums as a retiree remain the same as when you were employed. However, you will receive no Board contribution toward the benefits. The Walton County School Board's health care providers require if you are Medicare eligible, you need to obtain both Medicare Parts A and B. The Human Resources Department can assist you in this process.

The Florida Retirement System (FRS) has two retirement plans: The FRS Pension Plan and The Investment Plan. The FRS is an employee-contributory system. This means your employer, the Walton County School Board, and the employees make the total contribution. If you began contributing to Florida Retirement prior to July 1, 2011, you are vested under the FRS after you have completed six (6) years of creditable service for the Pension Plan and one (1) year of service in the Investment Plan. Vesting refers to your earned right to receive a retirement benefit when you reach normal or early retirement age, even though you may have terminated before that age. Normal retirement is 62 years of age OR 30 years of service. If you retire prior to age 62 and have less than 30 years of service, FRS decreases your benefit 5% for each year you are short of age 62. If you are preparing to retire, certain steps should be taken to ensure there will be no loss of benefits to you.

If you began contributing to Florida Retirement after July 1, 2011, the employee is vested after eight (8) years creditable service for the Pension Plan and one (1) year of service in the Investment Plan. Normal retirement is age 65 or 33 years of service. The following is a description of steps you may wish to follow:

Plan Ahead

A School Board employee who plans to retire shall concurrently submit his/her resignation to the School Board and his/her application to the retirement system for retirement benefits. Employees are encouraged to submit the resignation and application form at least ninety (90) days in advance of the retirement date to ensure the retirement check is issued the month following the last month of service with the School Board.

Decide when you intend to terminate employment. To be eligible for a retirement benefit, you must terminate all relationships with ALL FRS employers. Check with the Human Resources Department before you perform any work or volunteer service for any FRS employer during your first year of retirement.

An employee who is eligible for terminal sick and annual leave pay shall participate in a Board-approved special pay plan subject to a minimum contribution level established by the Board.

Applying for Retirement Benefits

Three to six months before your termination date, make an appointment with the Human Resources Department to complete an application for retirement and receive information on benefit options.

Deferred Retirement Option Program (DROP)

DROP is available to members who have reached their normal retirement date – 30 years of service or age 62 with a minimum of 6 years of service or 33 years of service or age 65 with 8 years of service (dependent upon the year hired). This program allows you to effectively retire without terminating your employment. While participating in the program for a maximum of 60 months, your monthly retirement benefits accumulate in the FRS Trust Fund, earning tax-deferred interest, while you continue to work and earn a salary (but no additional retirement service credit). The DROP enrollment has now been extended up to 96 months (8 years) for teachers only and can be extended 12 months annually with the approval of the superintendent and school board.

Questions concerning retirement or DROP should be directed to the Human Resources Department and can best be handled on an individual basis.

Re-enrollment after Retirement

Effective July 1, 2017, Senate Bill 7022 provides for renewed membership in the Investment Plan for reemployed retirees of the Investment Plan, the Senior Management Service Optional Annuity Program (SMSOAP), the State University System Optional Retirement Program (SUSORP), and the State Community College System Optional Retirement Program (SCCSORP). Reemployed retirees whose positions are covered by the SUSORP or the SCCSORP will be enrolled in those plans. The bill does not provide Pension Plan renewed membership. Renewed members will pay the 3% employee contribution rate.

REASSIGNMENTS AND TRANSFERS

In the event an involuntary transfer to another cost center must occur, the employee shall be notified of the decision as soon as possible. For more detailed information, please refer to your Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Transfers

Employees may request transfers based on advertised vacancies. For specific information regarding employee transfers, please refer to your respective Collective Bargaining Agreement.

SUSPENSION AND DISMISSAL OF STAFF

Under certain conditions, a principal may recommend to the Superintendent the suspension or dismissal of an employee. The grounds and procedures for immediate suspension or dismissal are outlined in detail in your respective Collective Bargaining Agreement.

An instructional staff member may be suspended from duty by the Superintendent or School Board. The Superintendent may suspend an instructional staff member with pay during an emergency for a period extending to and including the next School Board meeting. The School Board shall be notified immediately by the Superintendent of all such suspensions. Instructional staff members may only be dismissed by School Board Action and pursuant to Florida Statutes. Suspension or dismissal during the term of a contract of an instructional staff member holding a continuing contract shall be as based upon:

- Immorality
- Misconduct in office
- Incompetence
- Gross insubordination
- Willful neglect of duty
- Drunkenness, or
- Conviction of any crime involving moral turpitude.

For instructional employees holding professional service contracts, suspension or dismissal shall be based on just cause, which shall include, but not be limited to:

- Misconduct in office
- Incompetence
- Gross insubordination
- Willful neglect of duty, or
- Conviction of a crime involving moral turpitude.

For an instructional employee holding an annual contract, suspension or dismissal shall be based on just cause, which shall include, but not be limited to:

- Misconduct in office
- Incompetence
- Gross insubordination
- Willful neglect of duty, or
- Conviction of a crime involving moral turpitude.

Instructional personnel shall be entitled to due process with respect to his/her employment status. Procedures set forth in the School Board Rule entitled "Dismissal for Cause" shall be followed when reports are received regarding the alleged misconduct of an instructional staff member.

Employees on a probationary contract may be dismissed without cause during the first year of employment. The employee may also resign within the first year without being in breach of contract.

HEALTH CARE BENEFITS AND ENROLLMENT

Eligibility

To be eligible for participation in WCSB insurance benefits, you must be working at least 20 hours per week in a regularly established position. To be eligible to receive a Board contribution toward your health insurance, you must receive salary for at least eleven (11) days during the calendar month. This requirement applies when you begin work, when you go on leave, or return from leave without pay, or if you terminate employment. Employees meeting this requirement, but whose pay is not sufficient to meet the salary reductions, may elect to pay his/her portion of the premium by personal check or money order.

An employee may elect, at his/her own expense, to cover his/her eligible dependents.

Eligible dependents are defined as:

- Your lawful spouse
- Your child(ren) who meet all of the following conditions:
 - is a natural child, stepchild, legally adopted child, child of a dependent child for up to 18 months, or a child who has been placed under legal guardianship of the regular employee;
 - is in the custody of and financially dependent upon the regular employee. This requirement is waived if the regular employee is required to provide coverage due to court order or divorce decree for a child not in his custody or not wholly dependent on him;
 - is no older than thirty (30) years of age (check provider contract for definition).

Family Status Changes

Changes in coverage(s) may be requested only during the enrollment period UNLESS you experience a documented family status change. The request for such a change must be directly related to the change in family status and the benefits you selected.

Listed below are some examples of a family status change:

- employee's marriage
- employee's divorce
- death of the employee's spouse or a dependent
- birth/adoption of a child of the employee
- termination/commencement of employment by the employee's spouse
- the employee or employee's spouse switching from part-time to full-time employment, or from full-time to part-time employment
- the employee or employee's spouse taking an unpaid leave of absence
- significant changes in the health coverage of the employee's spouse attributable to the spouse's employment.

NOTE: You must notify the Human Resources Department and complete appropriate paperwork within 30 days of the occurrence of any family status change, or if your health plan drops a dependent.

Benefits at Retirement

You may elect to retain the medical and optional term life benefits you are enrolled in at the time of your retirement. You may decrease your benefits at retirement, but you may not increase them. You receive **no** Board contribution toward your benefits. If you elect to continue your health coverage and life coverage, your health insurance premium will be payroll deducted from your monthly State Retirement check and the life insurance premium will be billed to you by the insurance provider.

CONSOLIDATED OMNIBUS BUDGET RECONCILIATION ACT (COBRA)

A Federal law, commonly called “COBRA,” allows insured employees and their dependents to continue health coverage under several circumstances when it would normally be lost. The following are the basis for COBRA continuation coverage:

If an employee terminates his/her School Board employment, the employee and/or insured dependents may continue his/her health coverage for up to eighteen months.

If an employee with dependent coverage should die, covered dependents may continue their health coverage for up to thirty-six months.

If an employee and his/her spouse are divorced, and the spouse and/or other dependents were covered as dependents on the employee’s health insurance, the divorced spouse and/or other dependents may continue health coverage for up to thirty-six months.

If a person is totally disabled for social security purposes during the time of employment, that person is entitled to up to twenty-nine months of continued health coverage. Premiums for the above coverage are paid by the person using the continuation.

If you desire to exercise one of the options listed above, it is your obligation to notify Human Resources Services of the circumstances and of your desire to exercise your COBRA rights. Upon completion of the appropriate applications, you will be given coupons to aid in making premium payments. **Paying premiums on time is your responsibility.** The Walton County School Board will not bill you for COBRA payments.

HEALTH INSURANCE PORTABILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 1996 (HIPAA)

Recent changes in Federal law may affect your health coverage if you are enrolled or become eligible to enroll in health coverage that excludes coverage for pre-existing medical conditions. Upon termination of employment, you will be provided with a notice of your right to documentation of health coverage. If you need this documentation, contact the Insurance and Benefits Specialist in the Human Resources Office for a Certificate of Health Coverage.

FLEXIBLE BENEFITS/CAFETERIA PLAN

The Walton County School District Benefits Flex Plan is created under Section 125 of the Internal Revenue Act. It allows you to use pre-tax dollars to pay for the benefits listed below. Under this law, employee benefits costs are considered to be pre-tax salary reduction contributions and are not subject to federal taxes or social security deductions.

Employee costs for benefits in the following areas are included as non-taxable income when an employee participates in the Walton County School District Benefits Flex Plan:

- Dental
- Vision
- Cancer and Intensive Care
- Medical Reimbursement
- Dependent Care Reimbursement
- Optional Life Insurance
- Health Care

The School Board determines a maximum allowable dollar amount which you may designate for benefits in your plan each year. You should give careful consideration to the dollars you elect to use in your plan. **Dollars you designate to your Flex Plan and do not use during the year are forfeited.** At the beginning of each school year, you are given an opportunity to begin participation in the Walton County School District Benefits Flex Plan for the plan year. A plan year is October 1 through September 30. **When you make a decision at the beginning of the school year, you are making a commitment for the entire plan year.** New employees may elect to participate in the Walton County School District Benefits Flex Plan during the first 30 days of employment. If you do not elect to participate at that time, your next opportunity is the beginning of the following school year. Benefits become effective the first of the month following your first payroll deduction.

SALARY

Calculation of Salary

The amount of compensation due for each pay period shall be determined by dividing the annual rate (as established in the School Board Salary Schedule) by the number of pay dates scheduled within the work year. Such amount shall represent the entitlement of the employee at the end of each pay period, provided the employee has been on duty or on eligible paid leave during each workday in the pay period.

In the event an employee should terminate during the contract year or take a leave of absence prior to and including up to the completion of his/her contract, the employee will be paid by multiplying the daily rate of pay as determined by the sum of the actual number of days for which the employee was on duty or on eligible paid leave.

In the event an employee should begin employment later than the first day required for the particular position, the first month's salary will be pro-rated. The remaining eleven (11) checks for the year will be of equal amounts reflecting the contract.

In the event the employee has not been on duty or on paid leave for one (1) or more days or fraction thereof in the pay period, the compensation for that pay period shall be reduced for each day not worked, on the basis of a daily rate determined by dividing the annual rate of pay by the sum of the number of actual work days and paid holidays during the work year.

Every effort will be made to ensure all employee deductions are properly deducted from the paycheck. Human errors do occur despite our best efforts. Employees are responsible for examining their checks and reporting any errors to the Payroll Department. Errors must be adjusted from the employee's pay. The District, by statute, cannot hold the employee harmless. Payroll dates are published each year along with processing cutoff dates. Instructional employees receive 12 paychecks and are paid on the last workday of each month unless indicated otherwise.

Direct Deposit of Paychecks

Direct deposit is a simple, convenient, and safe way made available to you by the Board to deposit your paycheck automatically into your preferred bank. All employees are encouraged to enroll in direct deposit. The Direct Deposit Authorization Form is to be completed and provided to the Payroll Department for processing.

MISCELLANEOUS PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS

The following is a list of Walton County Public Schools deductions offered:

- Insurance
- Professional Dues
- Credit Union
- Tax-Sheltered Annuities
- Child Support
- IRS Tax Levies
- Withholding Tax Deduction
- Combined Charities

NOTE: The Payroll Department will not be able to advise employees regarding the appropriate amount of income tax to be deducted. This type of advice should be obtained from a Certified Public Accountant.

SOCIAL SECURITY (FICA)

In addition to membership in the Florida Retirement System, the Social Security Administration (SSA) also provides retirement benefits. The School Board matches deductions for Social Security. It is simple to get a personalized benefit estimate from the SSA. You may call the toll-free number, 1-800-234-5SSA (1- 800-234-5772), and ask for a Request for Earnings and Benefits Estimate Statement.

STOP PAYMENT PROCEDURES FOR PAYROLL CHECKS

To place a stop payment on a payroll check, a Stop Payment Authorization Form must be signed by the payee listed on the paycheck. The following procedures have been established:

- If the paycheck was mailed to the employee and has never been received by the employee, the employee must wait ten (10) working days from the date the check was mailed before going to the Payroll Department to sign the Stop Payment Authorization Forms
- If the employee received the paycheck and the employee believes it has been lost, the employee must wait five (5) working days from the check issuance date before going to the Payroll Department to sign the Stop Payment Authorization Form.
- If the paycheck was received by the employee, but subsequently stolen, the employee should go directly to the Payroll Office to sign the Stop Payment Authorization Form. If you have requested a stop payment and then find or receive your original check, do not cash the original check. You must wait for your newly issued check. There is a \$20 stop fee for all reissued checks.
- If the employee has not received a travel reimbursement check within 10 days from the date of issuance, he/she may request a new check to be issued by completing a Check Reissue Form from the Finance Department.

- If the employee has not received a Dependent Care or Medical Reimbursement check within 10 days from the date of issuance, he/she may request a new check to be issued by completing a Check Reissue Form.

UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION

An employee who is laid off or terminated through no personal fault may be entitled to Unemployment Compensation benefits under Florida Law. If you are laid off or terminated, contact the nearest Office of Workforce Innovation to determine your eligibility.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Florida Statutes require Walton County Schools to provide workers' compensation to all employees who suffer work-related injuries or illnesses. An employee who is injured on the job shall report to his/her immediate supervisor as soon as possible following the accident. The supervisor must notify the Human Resources Department as soon as possible after the injury. All injuries must be reported to your principal no later than the next working day. In case of a life threatening or major emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest hospital, then contact your supervisor as soon as possible. For other injuries, report them to your supervisor and the Human Resources Department prior to seeking medical treatment. At no time should you go to your own doctor.

PERSONNEL RECORDS

Personnel/employment records are processed and maintained in the Human Resources Department. Portions of your personnel file are public records and as such are available for public inspection. It is the responsibility of the employee to notify the Human Resources Department, in writing, of any changes in name, address, marital status, or changes in number of dependents. Please notify the Human Resources Department and the Florida Retirement System (FRS) regarding any changes of beneficiary for life insurance purposes and/or changes in the number of dependents.

Your Personnel File

This file includes your employment application, personnel/payroll changes (appointments, promotions, transfers, etc.), performance evaluations, leave records, and information relative to your employment. Please call and schedule an appointment with the Human Resources Department if you wish to review your personnel file. Copies of items in your personnel file will be made for you at a cost per page.

COMPLAINTS RELATING TO EMPLOYEES

The School Board invites constructive criticism from parents and citizens of the District

- Any written complaint alleging misconduct of a School Board employee shall initially be referred to and investigated by the employee's immediate supervisor. A notice will be provided to the employee of such investigation.
- Any complaint alleging serious charges against a School Board employee shall be in writing and shall bear the signature of the person filing the complaint. The written complaint shall be filed with the employee's immediate supervisor who shall investigate the matter. A notice will be provided to the employee of such investigation.
- The Superintendent shall be notified if the initial investigation shows a cause to believe the employee may be guilty of misconduct, which may result in suspension or dismissal. The Superintendent shall report the results of the investigation to the School Board when disciplinary action is recommended for the School Board employee. The Superintendent's report shall include recommendations for disciplinary action.
- The complaint and investigative material shall be excluded from public disclosure until the investigation is complete or inactive.

The principal shall inform parents that student-teacher problems shall first be submitted to the teacher if the problem does not involve a serious charge. Serious charges may then be submitted successively to the following: Principal, Superintendent, and School Board.

STUDENTS / INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

ACCIDENTS

Any time a student becomes seriously injured, the supervising teacher will accompany the student to the clinic for first aid or send for assistance. If the child cannot be moved, the office will be notified immediately. The parent will be notified immediately of any serious injury. The teacher must fill out an accident report the same day it occurs.

ATTENDANCE AND PUPIL ACCOUNTING PROCEDURES

Pupil Accounting

The Guidance Office will handle registration of all students. Each new student's schedule must verify he/she is in the correct class.

Daily Attendance

All teachers must check attendance of every class and document appropriately. Teachers must take careful attendance every day. Absences should be reported accurately and correctly to ensure our data management system properly reflects student attendance.

Withdrawing Students

Teachers, if informed of pending student withdrawal, should notify Guidance. As soon as possible, the student should pick up a Withdrawal Form in Guidance and present it to each teacher who is to complete information as directed. Consult the Guidance Department at the school site to follow School Board procedures for withdrawal.

CUMULATIVE FOLDERS

Access to records of students by school staff must be severely restricted. Only those staff assigned a job duty requiring continuing access should be authorized for inquiry access. Access requires the principal's authorization and signature and must be renewed annually. Each employee working with, or having access to, confidential records, should be informed and acknowledge that most personally identifiable student information is confidential and only those having direct, legitimate educational interest in that student may view, access, or otherwise make use of such information

Cumulative folders may not leave the building. ONLY items listed on the Cumulative Folder Check list may be placed in the folder according to the order indicated. On any inserted materials, please utilize the student's full name; if he/she has two given names, use both. To protect the student's and parent's rights all information is CONFIDENTIAL.

Parents legally have the right to review their child's cumulative folder however; the folder may not be removed from the office. The parent will need to sign an access card prior to reviewing the contents of the folder. (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act in Appendix).

CRITICISM OF CLASSROOM MATERIALS

Board Policy provides procedures and guidelines to follow in the event classroom materials are challenged. Citizens may register their concerns with the principal of the school where the material is being challenged. The concern will be addressed first at the school level, and if necessary, followed by a district level appeal. If these avenues of appeal do not satisfy the complainant, the School Board shall review the matter. Consult Board Policy for additional clarification of this issue.

Videotapes may NOT be used unless they are specifically related to the current course or curriculum being taught. Videotapes for motivation, reward or entertainment are prohibited. All non-district adopted materials used in the instruction of students must first be previewed and evaluated pursuant to Board Policy.

CURRICULUM

Curriculum will be planned and determined by the Accreditation Standards of Cognia (formerly known as AdvancED), the State Board Rules, the Florida Standards and the Walton County School Board requirements.

GRADING

The following grading system shall be used for students in K-12:

For students in grades K-12, numerical grades are assigned that can be used to calculate nine weeks, semester, and yearly averages. A student's daily average each nine weeks will be based upon a minimum of six (6) standards-based graded assignments.

ACADEMIC

A	90-100	Outstanding Progress
B	80-89	Above Average Progress
C	70-79	Average Progress
D	60-69	Lowest Acceptable Progress
F	0-59	Failure
I		Incomplete

Refer to the Student Progression Plan for more information on the grading system and student attendance policies and procedures.

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES

- Each teacher is responsible for guiding pupils in good health habits, personal care, grooming, lunchroom, and restroom habits including proper hand washing techniques.
- Any child with a contagious disease cannot be allowed to remain at school. If you suspect a child of having a contagious disease, please send him/her to the clinic so parents may be contacted.
- If a child shows evidence of malnutrition, undernourishment, or if abuse or neglect is suspected and/or reported, the principal, assistant principal and/or guidance counselors should be notified immediately. Follow the mandatory reporting guidelines detailed in this handbook.
- Teachers are asked to screen requests for trips to the clinic.
- Teachers are responsible for filling out an accident report when necessary.
- All students' medication must be stored and administered in the clinic. Before medication can be administered, a medication permission form must be signed by the parent/guardian of the student. Medication of any type should be brought to the school by the parent in its original container with the prescribed dosage clearly marked for that student. No student shall self-medicate or dispense medication to another student.
- Anytime a teacher becomes aware of a student's possession of medication, the office must be notified immediately, and the medication must be taken to the office for safekeeping. Violation of the district medication policy may result in disciplinary actions.

HOLIDAY OBSERVANCE

A student's religious beliefs should be honored by excusing him/her without penalty upon parent's request from school attendance on religious holidays. Assemblies and classroom programs involving an explanation of religious holidays, including but not limited to, Sabbath, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, All Saints Day, Kwanzaa, Christmas, St. Patrick's Day, Passover, Easter, and Good Friday are permissible provided programs are designed to explain and illustrate the history and significance of such holidays and do not serve to endorse the religious dogma of such holidays.

HOMEWORK

Homework is the time students spend outside the classroom to practice, reinforce, and apply newly acquired skills and knowledge, and to learn necessary skills of independent study. Homework provides additional practice, increasing the amount of time students are actively engaged in learning and extending time on task. It is an effective way to increase student personal responsibility and individual accountability while leading to increased communication between parents and the school. Homework encourages parent awareness of student learning. Homework should be assigned when it is an appropriate, integral part of reinforcement for learning.

When included as part of the grade computations in grades 6-12, homework shall count no more than 10% of the final nine weeks average. Homework shall not be computed as part of the final nine weeks average for students in grades K-5 with one exception applying to grade 5 in combination school settings. In schools with a PreK-12 or 5-8 grade configuration, homework will be counted for no more than 10% for grade 5.

General Guidelines:

- Meet the needs of the individual student
- Assigned after the concept has been thoroughly explained.
- Result in learning and not busywork or a repetition of what the student already knows
- Reasonable in length of time for completion of the assignment
- Assigned with sufficient time for a student to obtain any resource that is needed or required
- NOT be assigned as a disciplinary measure

LESSON PLANS

Lesson plans should follow school policy and:

- Include objectives, materials, activities, and evaluation for all subject areas. Page numbers and book titles alone are not acceptable. Unit plans are acceptable but activities and materials for each day must be available for each subject area.
- Include provisions for English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), and Exceptional Student Education (ESE), as appropriate.
- Document the Florida BEST Standards.
- Reflect your school's bell schedule to meet FTE audit requirements.
- Indicate what your aide/volunteer is to do.
- Be clear enough for a substitute to follow. Substitutes should be able to easily find your plans, schedules, and emergency information. Provide a packet of information, procedures, and plans for a substitute teacher on your desk.

NAME(S) OF STUDENTS RELEASED TO REPORTERS

The release of student's name to the news media may not occur without the specific written permission of the student's parents or guardian. Please inform the office if you are contacted by the press. This is not an attempt to censor your comments, but just for information. Reporters often do not contact the office before contacting you.

NOTES FROM PARENTS

It is suggested that you keep a file of all significant notes a parent sends to you. Be certain to add a date if one is not included.

PARENT – TEACHER CONFERENCES

Communicate with parents through conferences and other means to discuss student progress and to interpret the school programs. Parents should be contacted any time there is a sudden change in a student's academic grades or behavior or if the student is in danger of failing for the 9 weeks.

If a parent contacts you for a conference, please make every effort to schedule a meeting as soon as possible. When a conference time is scheduled, have the student's education record, grades, and copies of class work available. Please keep some of each student's work on file in the classroom and any written documentation addressing the meeting objectives and outcomes. Begin each conference on a positive note. Conferences should be scheduled during regular work hours whenever possible and if a conference needs to be scheduled after-hours to accommodate a parent's schedule or request, such conference must occur on school premises, during the week, and with notification to the principal. There should be no late night or weekend conferences on school premises when other personnel are not present.

STUDENT PROGRESSION PLAN (SPP)

The SPP's purpose is to provide school personnel, parents/guardians, students and other interested citizens the administrative procedures necessary to implement state legislative and local student progression requirements. Any procedure or policy contained in this plan may be waived upon approval of the Walton County School Board provided such waiver does not conflict with state or federal regulations or laws. The Walton County School District Student Progression Plan may be found the district website at www.walton.k12.fl.us by selecting Staff – Instructional – Student Progression Plan.

SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS

Never leave students unattended. Even when children are outside the classroom, they should be *actively* supervised. In elementary grades, if students are moving to an area in which another teacher will be responsible for supervision, **always** make verbal and eye contact with the teacher receiving your students/class. Be aware of the school policy on student supervision at your individual school site. Personnel in grades 6-12, must monitor students in the hallways or walkways as they transition from one class to another.

SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

Florida Statute requires the mandatory reporting of child abuse by all School Board employees. The person who suspects child abuse is responsible for reporting the matter to the child abuse hotline, even if the case is discussed with other employees such as the principal. In addition, employees are responsible for immediately reporting any suspicion directly to the principal or assistant principal.

To report suspected child abuse, neglect or abandonment, call the Florida Child Abuse Hotline at 800-96ABUSE (800-962-2873) or go to <http://www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/abuse-hotline/report-online.shtml> .

Any employee reporting a case of known or suspected child abuse or neglect must, at the time the report is made, request that the Department of Children and Family Services notify the employee whether a child protective investigation occurred as a result of the report and request a written summary of the outcome of the investigation as permitted by Section 39.202(5), *Florida Statutes*. The reporting employee must also prepare and file a District County Schools Child Abuse Incident Referral Report with the principal; blank forms are to be maintained in the office of each school site.

SUSPECTED DRUG ABUSE

All school personnel must report to the principal any suspected unlawful use, possession, or sale of controlled substances, counterfeit controlled substances, alcoholic beverages, or model glue by a student.

SUSPECTED POTENTIAL SUICIDE RISK

Refer the student immediately to the school counselor. Walk the student to the counselor or have another student go after a counselor. Notify the counselor and your building administrator of the student you suspect may be considering suicide. Contact the student's parent if a counselor or administrator is not immediately available. Do not leave the student unattended. If you receive information after school hours about a potential suicide risk, contact your building administrator, the student's parents, and the school guidance counselor immediately.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

ENGLISH SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES (ESOL)

This program ensures all non-English speaking students receive a comprehensible education. A federal consent decree mandates all teachers who are assigned an ESOL student must earn ESOL in-service points within given timelines in order to remain in compliance with the decree. In-service is provided on-line.

The English Language Learner Committee at your school will develop an ELL Plan to ensure the student is provided strategies and accommodations. A copy of this plan should be maintained to reference strategies determined to best meet the ESOL students' needs.

EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EDUCATION (ESE)

Walton District Schools provides specially designed instruction and related services to eligible students with disabilities, three (3) through five (5) years of age, pursuant to *Policies and Procedures for the Provision of Specially Designed Instruction and Related Services for Exceptional Students* and in conformity with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or Service Plan (SP) that meets the requirements of the Code of Federal Regulations and Florida Statutes and State Board of Education Rules.

Walton District Schools provides specially designed instruction and related services to eligible students with disabilities (SWD), age five (5) to twenty-two (22), pursuant to *Policies and Procedures for the Provision of Specially Designed Instruction and Related Services for Exceptional Students* and in conformity with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or Service Plan that meets the requirements of the Code of Federal Regulations and Florida Statutes and State Board of Education Rules. Every effort is made to educate students in the least restrictive environment and in the neighborhood school whenever possible.

Walton District Schools provides specially designed instruction and related services to eligible gifted students pursuant to *Policies and Procedures for the Provision of Specially Designed Instruction and Related Services for Exceptional Students* and in conformity with an Education Plan (EP) that meets the requirements of the Florida Statutes and State Board of Education Rules.

GENERAL INFORMATION

ACCIDENTS AND INJURIES AT WORK

All on-the-job accidents or illnesses must be reported to the supervisor immediately. Notify your building principal for medical authorization and completion of paperwork. (See Worker's Compensation section for further details).

ADVERTISING

School facilities shall not be used for advertising or otherwise promoting the interests of any commercial, political, or other non-school agency or individual organization; nor shall School Board employees or students be employed in such a manner. (Board Policy 9.40)

COMMITTEES

Committee assignments are critical to accomplishing many school activities outside of classroom duties. All personnel should take active responsibility in his/her committee assignments

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DRUG FREE WORKPLACE

No employee shall unlawfully possess, consume or sell alcoholic beverages or manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess, use or be under the influence of, on the job or in the workplace, any narcotic, drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana or any other controlled substance, without a valid prescription. Workplace is defined as the site for the performance of work done in connection with the duties of an employee of the School Board. That term includes any place where the work of the School District is performed, including a school building or other school premises; any school-owned vehicle or any other school-approved vehicle used to transport students to and from school or school activities; or off-school property during any school-sponsored or school-approved activity, event or function, such as a field trip, workshop or athletic event.

Medical marijuana remains a prohibited controlled substance under federal law under the Controlled Substances Act (21 USC §812) and its supporting regulations. The District receives many forms of federal funding which condition receipt of funds on compliance with federal law; therefore, permitting employees to use and be under the influence of marijuana, even medical marijuana, is in violation of federal law and can jeopardize the District's receipt of federal funds. This is true even though the State of

Florida has legalized medical marijuana, subject to certain limitations and exclusions, in the Florida Constitution and Section 381.986, *Florida Statutes*.

EMPLOYMENT VERIFICATION

If you need verification of employment for credit or any other purpose, the Human Resources Department will respond to inquiries about your employment status. For your protection and privacy, we require all employment verifications be in writing. This provides a record of the transactions and your consent to provide documentation.

HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

Under Florida law, you are entitled to know about any hazardous or toxic substance that might be in your workplace. Every precaution is taken to ensure you may perform your duties in a safe environment. The ultimate responsibility for safety lies with you.

Contact your supervisor to arrange a time to review the information and materials at your work site. If a condition exists in your area that might cause harm to you, a student, or a coworker, it must be reported immediately to your principal and/or supervisor.

NETWORK AND INTERNET ACCESS POLICY

The School Board provides computer access and Internet access for its employees. WCSB has adopted an Acceptable Use Policy, which sets guidelines for accessing the network and/or Internet service to ensure users are aware of acceptable and non-acceptable uses of this service. Instructional employees are provided a network account which provides e-mail, access to the Internet and to any WCSB network server. The account is for educational and/or professional purposes. However, staff may use the Internet for personal use **only** if such use is incidental, the employee has received prior supervisor approval, and it occurs during non-duty hours. All employees are required to sign an agreement annually which states he/she has read, understands, and agrees to abide by the provisions of the policy. The school site administrator will keep the signed document on file. Read the policy at www.walton.k12.fl.us.

PERSONAL BUSINESS

School Board employees may not conduct personal business during working hours, except for emergencies or situations approved by the employee's administrative supervisor. School Board equipment or supplies shall not be used to conduct personal business or to engage in any other activity unrelated to the district school system. School Board employees shall not be permitted to care for any child under school age while on duty or permit interference with duties during working hours, except when an emergency arises.

PRIVATE VEHICLE USE

The use of private vehicles to transport students is not recommended. Please consult your school principal before making arrangements for any travel involving transporting students in private vehicles. On the rare occasion when a teacher must transport students in a private vehicle, he/she should be accompanied by another teacher.

POLITICAL ACTIVITIES OF EMPLOYEES

- School Board employees shall be permitted to engage in political campaigns and other endorsements during non-duty hours. They shall not, however, solicit support of any political candidate, partisan or nonpartisan, or support any issue on any referendum matter during regular work hours on School Board property.
- Any employee who offers himself/herself as a candidate for public office shall notify his/her immediate supervisor upon qualifying for election.
- Such candidate shall adhere strictly to Florida Statutes regarding political activity on the part of public officials and employees, including teachers.
- A successful candidate for an office requiring a part-time responsibility shall report immediately to the Superintendent after the election and thereafter when deemed necessary by the Superintendent or School Board to evaluate the compatibility of the dual responsibility.
- A candidate may be granted a leave of absence with loss of full pay for a definite period of time for the purpose of campaigning or for serving public office.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Research clearly indicates teacher quality is the single most important factor in determining student success. Accomplished teachers are able to largely overcome the factors (home life, peer pressure, developmental level, motivation, even disabilities) that make it difficult for students to learn. Continuous and active professional development is vital to a school's success in meeting student performance and governmental accountability expectations.

Professional Development (PD), also known as inservice activities, serves two functions for instructional personnel. It allows you to update content knowledge and pedagogical skills in your assignment area and the inservice points you earn allow you to extend your professional certificate at the end of its five-year validity period. While it is true that earning in-service points for recertification purposes is ultimately the teacher's responsibility, educators have the professional obligation to regularly enroll in, and complete, inservice activities that upgrade skills to help schools better meet school improvement goals, regardless of the number of points already earned or the proximity of your retirement date.

To earn inservice points, a teacher must:

- Attend all sessions of the training activity (either through a face-to-face or an online delivery method)
- Fully participate in any required follow-up sessions or communications
- Provide documentation that the information learned has been applied in the classroom or another job situation.

Inservice points will **not** be awarded to partial completers. Inservice activities are to be selected based upon the following priorities:

- First priority is given to meeting the needs identified in the Deliberate Practice through consultation with the principal and based upon the performance of your students.
- Teachers should participate in PD activities required to meet school improvement goals.
- Activities may be selected according to teacher preference **as long as** they apply to the teacher's job assignment. No in-service activity is to be funded unless there is a data-based justification for its selection.

Each school has a Professional Learning Facilitator (PLF) and a support team that partners with the School Improvement Team (SIT) and SIT Chair to help identify training needs, schedule the inservice activities, monitor faculty participation rates and collect the documentation of classroom application. The PLF also distributes professional development information and trains the faculty as needed, assists teachers with monitoring their recertification status, and helps identify inservice activities to meet their individual needs. The PLF will assist teachers in planning their follow-up activities and documentation steps.

PURCHASE ORDERS (SCHOOL)

County requisition forms for instructional monies for supplies, equipment, etc. are prepared by the bookkeeper. Please give the bookkeeper an itemized list with item number, number purchased, description, price, company address and name of teacher ordering. Requisition forms will be transmitted electronically to the county office. You must obtain a purchase order **BEFORE** a purchase is made; otherwise, you are responsible for payment.

Purchase orders for non-instructional monies (clubs, classes, etc.) from Internal Account as follows:

- **YOU MUST HAVE A PURCHASE ORDER BEFORE A PURCHASE IS MADE. IF YOU DO NOT HAVE A PURCHASE ORDER BEFORE PURCHASE IS MADE YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR PAYMENT.**
- Money must be in account before purchase order can be issued.
- Purchase orders must be itemized (quantity, cost per item, total cost, etc.)
- Purchase orders are signed by sponsor, given a school number by the Bookkeeper, and then approved by the principal. If over \$2500 it must be approved by the Superintendent or designee. Please allow time for District Office approval. At the time of purchase, you should request an itemized original

invoice. You are responsible for bringing the original invoice, (signed) to the bookkeeper for payment.

Note: If a teacher should leave during or at the end of a school year, **all supplies and materials bought with school or district funds for use by teachers or students, must remain in the classroom.**

PURCHASE CARDS (P-CARDS)

P-Cards can be checked out from the bookkeeper (verify monies available). Cards and signed receipts should be returned **promptly** after use.

ANTIFRAUD

Any perceived fraud that is detected or suspected by any department staff member or other person shall be reported immediately to Human Resources for guidance as to whether pursuit of an investigation is warranted. The obligation to report fraud includes instances where an employee knew or should have known that an incident of fraud occurred. Any investigation required shall be conducted without regard to the suspected wrongdoer's length of service, position/title, or relationship. Investigations shall be conducted in a confidential manner. (Board Policy 7.65)

SAFETY AND EVACUATION PROCEDURES

Procedures for safely evacuating buildings are clearly posted at each District facility. Walton County School District Emergency Quick Reference Guides are also located in each classroom. Evacuation drills are performed on a regular basis. Staff members are expected to be aware of all such emergency procedures and to assist in these drills as prescribed in the Emergency Quick Reference Guide and the sites' staff handbooks.

Inspections

Throughout the year, the Fire Department inspects the safety practices at each school site. You are reminded to:

- Keep fire extinguishers clear of all furniture, children, etc.
- Leave a clear aisle to the outside doors (tables and chairs should not be obstructing the pathway).
- Have the evacuation route clearly posted in your room.

The School Board and Superintendent reserve the right to search or examine any Board equipment (desks, file cabinets, etc.) at any time. Vehicles or personal items such as boxes and briefcases that are brought onto School Board property are also subject to examination at the discretion of the Board and Superintendent. Emails and personal files on school property are also subject to inspection.

SAFETY IN PRIVATE SPACES

Employees may not enter a restroom or changing facility designated for the opposite sex on the premises of the educational institution unless:

- Accompanying a person of the opposite sex to assist or chaperone a child under the age of 12, an elderly person as defined in 825.101, F.S., a person with a disability as defined in 760.22, F.S. or a developmental disability as defined in 393.063, F.S.
- For law enforcement or governmental regulatory purposes
- To render emergency medical assistance or to intervene in any other emergency situation where the health or safety of another person is at risk
- For custodial, maintenance or inspection purposes, provided that the restroom or changing facility is not in use
- The appropriate designated restroom or changing facility is out of order or under repair, and the restroom or changing facility designated for the opposite sex contains no person of the opposite sex.

NOTE: 553.865, F.S. defines sex as the classification of a person as either female or male based on the organization of the body of such person for a specific reproductive role, as indicated by the person's sex chromosomes, naturally occurring sex hormones, and internal and external genitalia present at birth.

Employees who willfully enter, for a purpose other than those provided on the previous slide, a restroom or changing facility designated for the opposite sex on the premises of the educational institution and refuse to leave when asked to do so by a member of the Instructional Staff, Administrator, School Resource Deputy or School Safety Guard commits a violation of the Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida and Walton County School Board Policy 6.25 *Professional Ethics*. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken for violations that could include suspension with or without pay or termination. A report of misconduct will be made to the Office of Professional Practices for administrators and instructional personnel.

DISCRIMINATION INCLUDING SEXUAL AND OTHER FORMS OF HARASSMENT

The School Board believes all employees shall be allowed to work and students allowed to learn in an environment free from sexual harassment. All employees of this school district and members of the School Board are expected to conduct themselves at all times so as to provide an atmosphere free from sexual harassment. In support of this philosophy, a School Board Policy on Sexual Harassment (2.70) has been adopted. Employees or applicants who believe they have been discriminated against in any way, (including sexual harassment), or need further guidance and/or assistance with reasonable accommodations should discuss this with their supervisor.

The School Board desires to maintain an academic and work environment in which all employees, volunteers, and students are treated with respect and dignity. A vital element of this atmosphere is the Board's commitment to equal opportunities and the prohibition of discriminatory practices. The Board's prohibition against discriminatory practices includes prohibitions against sexual harassment or any other form of

harassment based upon a person's membership in a protected class and specifically prohibited by applicable state or federal law. The School Board forbids sexual harassment, or any other form of illegal harassment, of any employee, student, volunteer or visitor. The Board will not tolerate sexual harassment, or any other form of illegal harassment, by any of its employees, students, non-employee volunteers or agents.

Prohibited sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, requests for sexual favors and other verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- submission to the conduct is explicitly or implicitly made a term or condition of an individual's employment, academic status, or progress;
- submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for an employment or academic decision affecting that individual;
- the conduct has the purpose or effect of having a negative impact on the individual's academic performance or employment, unreasonably interfering with the individual's education or employment, or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive educational or employment environment;
- submission to or rejection of the conduct by the individual is used as the basis for any decision affecting the individual regarding any term or condition of employment, employment or academic benefits, or services, honors, programs, or activities available at or through the school

Types of conduct which are prohibited in the District and which may constitute sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

- graphic verbal comments about an individual's body or appearance;
- sexual jokes, notes, stories, drawings, pictures or gestures;
- sexual slurs, leering, threats, abusive words, derogatory comments or sexually degrading descriptions;
- unwelcome sexual flirtations or propositions for sexual activity or unwelcome demands for sexual favors, including but not limited to repeated unwelcome requests for dates;
- spreading sexual rumors;
- touching an individual's body or clothes (including one's own) in a sexual way, including, but not limited to, grabbing, brushing against, patting, pinching, bumping, rubbing, kissing and fondling;
- cornering or blocking normal movements;
- displaying sexually suggestive drawings, pictures, written materials, and objects in the educational environment.

Definition of Other Forms of Prohibited Harassment

Illegal harassment on the basis of any other characteristic protected by state or federal law is strictly prohibited. This includes verbal or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of his/her race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability, marital status, citizenship or any other characteristic protected by law and that

- has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work or academic environment;
- has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's work or academic performance; or
- otherwise, adversely affects an individual's employment or academic performance

Examples of prohibited actions, which may constitute harassment include, but are not limited to, the following:

- epithets, slurs or negative stereotyping;
- threatening, intimidating or hostile acts, such as stalking; or
- written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group and that is placed on walls or elsewhere on the school or District office premises or circulated in the workplace or academic environment

Retaliation Prohibited

Any act of retaliation against an individual who files a complaint alleging a violation of the District's antidiscrimination policy and/or sexual or illegal harassment policy or who participates in the investigation of a discrimination complaint is prohibited. Retaliation may include, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment based upon participation in the investigation of, or filing a complaint of, discrimination.

Procedures for Filing Complaint of Discrimination, Sexual Harassment, or Other Form of Illegal Harassment

Any person who believes that he/she has been discriminated against, or placed in a hostile environment based on gender, marital status, sexual orientation, race, national or ethnic origin, religion, age or disability by an employee, volunteer, agent of student of the School District should within sixty (60) days of alleged occurrence file a written or oral complaint. This complaint should set forth a description of the alleged discriminatory actions/harassment, the time frame in which the alleged discrimination occurred, the person or persons involved in the alleged discriminatory actions, and any witnesses or other evidence relevant to the allegations in the complaint.

The complaint should be filed with the School Principal, Site Administrator or supervisor. Complaints filed with the Principal, Site Administrator, or supervisor must be forwarded to the District's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Officer within five (5) days of the filing of the complaint. If the complaint is against the Principal or Site Administrator, the complaint may be filed directly with the EEO Officer.

If the complaint is against the District's EEO Officer, the Superintendent, or other member of the School Board, the complaint may be filed with the School Board Attorney.

TELEPHONE USE

Cellular phone use is not appropriate in the classroom during instructional time. Incoming phone messages to teachers will be placed in the teacher's mailbox or sent to their voice mail, except in the case of an emergency. In the case of an emergency, the teacher will be notified immediately.

TOBACCO USE IN DISTRICT FACILITIES

All uses of tobacco products in any form are prohibited in any District-owned facility except in a place designated by the Board which must be out of the view of the public and students.

WEAPONS OR FIREARMS ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

Florida Statutes support district procedures stating persons shall not possess any firearm, electric weapon, or electric device, destructive or projectile device, or other weapon on the property of any school, any school bus stop, any facility having a school-sponsored activity, a district facility, or any district property.

APPRAISAL SYSTEM

Each member of the staff shall receive an annual evaluation by his/her immediate administrative supervisor. First year employees will receive two (2) evaluations per year. The purpose of the evaluation shall be to improve the services of personnel in all departments. The administrative supervisors and department heads shall use the evaluation form provided by the Superintendent. (Board Policy 6.40). Information related to the Instructional Appraisal System is located on the District website at www.walton.k12.fl.us by clicking on the "Staff" tab, then "Show Resources".

APPENDIX

WALTON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT DIRECTORY

Bay School (0292)
118 Gilmore Street
Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459

Jennifer Nick, Principal
850-622-5050
Fax 850-622-5059

Dune Lakes Elementary (0154)
6565 Hwy 98 East
Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459

Brian Michie, Jr., Principal
Alyssen Betts, TSA
Leslie Lisenbee, TSA
850-622-5012
Fax 850-622-5014

Emerald Coast Middle (0152)
4019 US Hwy 98 East
Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459

Todd Drake, Principal
Nancy Parker, Asst. Principal
Kevin Cipriani, Dean of Students
850-622-5025
Fax 850-622-5027

Emerald Coast Technical College (0301)
761 North 20th Street
DeFuniak Springs, FL 32433

Michael Smithart, Director
850-892-1240
Fax 850-892-1249

Freeport Elementary (0291)
15381 U.S. Hwy 331 South
Freeport, FL 32439

Kristin Lewis, Principal
Laurie Edwards, Asst. Principal
Michael Kiehne, Asst. Principal
850-892-1210
Fax 850-892-1219

Freeport High (0141)
12615 U.S. Hwy 331 South
Freeport, FL 32439

Donna Simmons, Principal
Hillary Williams, TSA
850-892-1200
Fax 850-892-1209

Freeport Learning Center (0200)
360 Kylea Laird Drive
Freeport, FL 32439

Pam Jones, Principal

Freeport Middle (0146)
360 Kylea Laird Drive
Freeport, FL 32439

Nathan Smith, Principal
Sharie Smith, Asst. Principal
850-892-1220
Fax (850)-892-1229

Maude Saunders Elementary (0281)
416 John Baldwin Road
DeFuniak Springs, FL 32433

Cindy Neale, Principal
Stephen Coker, Asst. Principal
850-892-1260
Fax 850-892-1269

Magnet Innovation Center (0282)
133 South Watersound Parkway
Inlet Beach, FL 32461

Kathryn Benson, Principal
850-622-5030

Mossy Head School (0261)
13270 US Hwy 90 W

Leslie Hulion, Principal
Kristen Nelson, TSA

DeFuniak Springs, FL 32435

850-892-1290
Fax 850-892-1299

Paxton School (0101)
21893 U.S. Hwy 331 North
Paxton, FL 32538

Brent Jones, Principal
Brian Morgan, Asst. Principal
Nate Moore, Dean of Students
850-892-1230
Fax 850-892-1239

Seaside Neighborhood School (1110)
10 Smolian Circle/ Box 4653
Seaside, FL 32459

Kim Mixson, Principal
850-231-0396
Fax 850-231-4725

South Walton High (0153)
645 Greenway Trail
Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459

Nina Borthwick, Principal
TBD, Asst. Principal/TSA
850-622-5020
Fax 622-5039

Van R. Butler Elementary (0151)
6694 West Co. Hwy 30-A
Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459

Jimmy Ross, Principal
Allison Harber, Asst. Principal
Hannah Gomillion, Asst. Principal
850-622-5040
Fax 850-622-5048

Walton Academy (Charter School) (1111)
389 Dorsey Avenue
DeFuniak Springs, FL. 32432

Marie Laurino, Principal
850-892-3999
Fax (850) 892-7854

Walton High School (0271)
449 Walton Road
DeFuniak Springs, FL 32433

Brianna Leavins, Principal
Jennifer Burnham, Asst. Principal
850-892-1270
Fax 850-892-1279

Walton Learning Center (DJJ Residential Facility)
286 Gene Hurley Road
DeFuniak Springs, FL 32435

Shekima Fields, Principal
850-520-4656
Fax 850-520-4648

Walton Middle School (0201)
625 Park Avenue
DeFuniak Springs, FL 32435

Jason Campbell, Principal
Scott Hulion, Asst. Principal
Emily Kent, Dean of Students
850-892-1280
Fax 850-892-1289

West DeFuniak Elementary School (0061)
815 Lincoln Avenue
DeFuniak Springs, FL 32435

Darlene Paul, Principal
Hope Allen, TSA
850-892-1250
Fax 850-892-1259

WISE Center / Magnet School (0282)
555 Walton Road
DeFuniak Springs, FL 32435

William Johnson, Principal
850-892-1111
Fax 850-892-1202

District Offices and Administrators:

Main Auto Attendant: 850-892-1100

When dialing from a school, you may dial the 4-digit number listed by each name.

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS OFFICE

Deputy Superintendent	1301	Dr. Jennifer Hawthorne
School Safety Specialist	1807	Charlie Morse
Safety and Security Technician	1354	Jami Brown
Coordinator of Transportation	1644	Dennis Grey
Data Analyst	1111	Josh Harrison
Admin Secretary to Superintendent	1302	Jessica Ferguson
School Board Secretary	1316	Laura Smith

HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE

Director of Human Resources	1309	Candy Bodie
Human Resources Manager	1306	Kaye Black
Human Resources Specialist	1315	Dakota Arnold
Insurance & Benefits Specialist	1353	Sarah Senterfitt
Employment Specialist	1312	Twila Shields

FINANCE/PURCHASING

Chief Financial Officer	1356	Stephanie Hofheinz
Finance Coordinator	1346	Darius Paul
Food & Nutrition Services Program Administrator	1361	Robert Martin
Payroll Manager	1362	Heather Gainey

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Supervisor of Instruction & Curriculum	1521	Crystal Appel
Instructional Support Coordinator	1514	Jaime Mitchell
Instructional Support Coordinator	1515	Chris Brown
Instructional Support Coordinator	1505	Lori Hughes
Instructional Support Coordinator	1410	Myca Chandler
Instructional Support Coordinator	1319	Donna Honish
Instructional Support Coordinator	1825	Stefanie West
Instructional Support Coordinator	1827	Sharon Bartels-Wheelless

INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY CENTER / MIS

Technology Information Officer	1511	Henry Martin
Technology Services Coordinator	1544	Michael Pinnella
Technology Services Coordinator	1547	James Gentry
Senior Systems Manager	1542	Bobby Godwin
Technical Support Services Manager	1543	Rick Rothgeb
Coordinator of MIS	1341	Phillip Byrd
MIS Senior Operator	1342	Kim Lee

FACILITIES & MAINTENANCE

Director of Facilities and Maintenance	1810	Jill Smith
District Planner	1812	Michelle Doggett
Coordinator of Facilities & Operations	1811	Jeff Infinger

FLDOE EDUCATORS' PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY PROGRAM

All "full-time" instructional personnel as specified in FS 1012.01(2), employed by the districts' schoolboards are covered under the Florida Department of Education Educator's Professional Liability Program. The program provides coverage excess of any coverage provided by the school district's insurance program or any other valid insurance coverage.

The insurance carrier is AIX Specialty Insurance Company. Potential claims must be submitted to: **Gallagher Bassett Services**

Phone: 954-378-5300

Mailing Address:

2901 SW 149th Ave., # 200PO Branch 157
Miramar, FL 33027

Please reference:

Florida Department of Education
Educators Professional Liability
Client #006510

Additional information can be found at <http://www.fldoe.org/about-us/liability-insurance.shtml>.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

This is a federal law designed to regulate and secure the confidentiality of student education records. Education records are those directly related to a student, and maintained by an educational agency, or a party acting on behalf of the educational agency. FERPA, as the law is commonly known, gives parents the rights to:

- Inspect and review records,
- Seek to amend those records,
- Have some control over the disclosure of information from education records.

The law distinguishes between two particular types of information:

- Personally identifiable information – student's/parent's names, address of student/family, social security number/student number, list of personal characteristics.
- Directory information: name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, dates of attendance/grade, most recent school attended, e-mail address, photograph, field of study, participation in activities & sports, height, weight of athletes, degrees & awards.

The law is also specific that a legitimate educational interest, necessary to fulfill his or her professional responsibility, must exist in order for a person to view education records.

Parents and eligible students are informed annually of their right to inspect and review records, right to seek amendment of student records believed to be inaccurate or misleading, right to consent to disclosure of identifiable information, unless otherwise provided by law, and the right to file a formal complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning failure to comply with FERPA (1996 requirement).

Annual written notice must include:

- Procedures for exercising the right to inspect and review records
- Procedures for requesting amendment of records
- Definition of specific criteria for determining "legitimate interest"
- Provision by a means that is "reasonably likely" to inform parents and eligible students
- Method to effectively notify parents of ESOL students and parents of students with disabilities

Rights/Limits to Records Access

- Parents/eligible students have a right to inspect and obtain copies within 30 days.
- Parents may designate a representative to have access to records of students with disabilities.

Limits

- If a record contains information on more than one student, the parent can access only information about their child.

- If record contains information about more than one child, it must be redacted accordingly before the parent can obtain access.

Right to Amend

- Parents/eligible students have a right to challenge the content of a record if they believe it is inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of student's right to privacy
- The LEA shall decide whether to amend the record as requested within a reasonable period of time
- If agreement reached, it must be in writing and signed by all parties
- If agreement not reached, parent/eligible student is informed of district's refusal to amend, and of their right to a hearing

Hearing Requirement

- Advance notice of date, time, place
- Conducted by a representative of the LEA as long as this person does not have a direct interest in the outcome
- If LEA decides the information is inaccurate, LEA shall amend the record and inform the parent in writing.
- If information is not found to be inaccurate, the LEA must inform the parent/eligible student of right to place statement in record
- Any resulting statement must be maintained as a part of the record and disclosed any time the contested information is disclosed

When Is Consent Required Prior to Disclosure?

- Consent is required before an educational agency or institution discloses personally identifiable information from the student's educational record.
- Consent/opt out is required prior to administration of student surveys depending on the funding source and purpose of survey.
- Consent must specify the records that may be disclosed, the purpose of disclosure and the party or class of parties to whom the disclosure is made.

Unless....an exception applies.

Exceptions

- Parent or eligible student
- USA Patriot Act of 2001, anti-terrorism act
- Disclosure to other school officials or employees determined to have a "legitimate interest"
- Schools or institutions in which a student seeks/intends to enroll
- Federal/state/local authorities involving an audit
- Financial aid / college loan
- Accrediting organizations
- Directory information
- State/local officials serving student in DJJ system
- Subpoena/judicial order/legal action proceedings involving parent/school district
- Health or safety emergency
- Expulsion hearing

Record Keeping Requirements

Schools/District must maintain an access log for each request for access and disclosure from an education record, maintained as long as the record is maintained, including parties who have requested received information and specifying the “legitimate interest” the parties had in receiving information. When disclosing information from public school education records, the school should inform the receiving party that the information may not be further disclosed, and the party may use the information only for the purposes for which the disclosure was made. This does not apply to disclosure to parent/eligible student, or a receiving party who discloses according to established criteria for disclosure without prior consent (directory information, court order/subpoena, etc.).

Note: If the party to whom the record was released improperly discloses information, that party will be prevented from future disclosure for a period of no less than five years.

Enforcement Procedures

The Family Policy Compliance Office is authorized by U.S. Secretary of Education to investigate, process and review complaints and violations under FERPA. Parents and eligible students may file complaints with the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education within a timely manner, which is considered 180 calendar days.

Following investigation, a written notice of findings is submitted including specific steps the institution must take to comply. Failure to comply may result in the withholding of further payments under any applicable program, an order to compel compliance, and the termination of eligibility to receive funding under any applicable program (including Title I, Transportation, Food Service, ESE, etc.)

ACKNOWLEDGMENT STATEMENT

This handbook is intended as a source of information for policies and general information and as an overview of the benefits offered by Walton County Schools and should assist you during your employment. It is not a contract and is not intended to be. The policies and benefits described in this handbook are not intended to be conditions of employment. In the event that a conflict arises between the language contained in this handbook and the following documents, the following documents shall prevail:

The Collective Bargaining Agreement, Group Insurance (group insurance coverage shall be governed by the master contract in effect at the time the issue occurs); Individual Insurance (Individual insurance shall be governed by the terms of individual policies issued and in effect at the time the issue occurs); Walton County School Board Rules (Board Policy, as established by Walton County School Board, in effect at the time the issue occurs, including the Student Progression Plan and the Code of Conduct). The documents listed above are readily available for your examination.

The Walton County School Board reserves the right to alter, modify, amend or terminate these policies and benefits in content or application as it deems appropriate, and these changes may be implemented even if they have not been communicated, reprinted, or substituted in this handbook.

I acknowledge receipt of the employee handbook, and I agree to read and familiarize myself with its contents.

Signature

Date

Print Employee Name



Walton County Schools Superintendent, A. Russell Hughes