2025 -26 | Human Resources & Talent Development

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

21000 Education Court, Ashburn, VA 20148 | www.lcps.org

NOTICE

All statements in this handbook may be modified, amended, or cancelled by Loudoun County Public Schools (LCPS or “School Division”) at any time, with or without notice. If there is a contradiction between this handbook and any laws, policies, or regulations, the exact laws, policies, and regulations will govern.

This most recent version of the handbook replaces all prior versions. This handbook is not a contract of employment and does not confer contractual rights, either express or implied, upon any LCPS officers or employee, nor does it guarantee employment for any period. All officers and employees of LCPS are employed at will, unless otherwise indicated by statute, policy, or by a written contract.

PURPOSE OF THE EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

As stated in Loudoun County School Board (LCSB or "School Board") Policy 7022, all employees are employees of the School Board and this handbook is provided to serve as a reference for these individuals. It is intended to provide clarity and answers to questions that may arise during employment with LCPS.

The handbook is intended to be a summary of the most common laws, policies and regulations impacting LCPS employees, but is not comprehensive. It does not supersede or reinterpret policy. School Board policies are the primary documents of reference and employees should always go directly to the original sources for current, complete, and accurate information.

This handbook is not intended to cover every situation. Therefore, the LCPS administration maintains the authority and right to make decisions in line with School Board policies and delegated authority. School Board policies are publicly available at https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/loudoun/Board.nsf/Public or https://www.lcps.org/o/lcps/page/policy-and-regulations.

HOW TO USE THIS HANDBOOK

Some of the references or information in this handbook is hyperlinked to webpages or sites that contain additional information. An employee using an electronic copy of this handbook may click on any of this hyperlinked information by positioning their cursor over the link and pressing the Control (or "ctrl") key on their keyboard while clicking their mouse.

As for questions concerning any of the information contained in this handbook, employees should:

- Ask their immediate supervisors.
- Refer to School Board policies and LCPS regulations.
- Visit the Department of Human Resources & Talent Development (HRTD) website or Intranet page.

Contact HRTD via Let's Talk or by calling (571) 252-1100.

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SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear LCPS Staff Member,

As Superintendent of Loudoun County Public Schools, it is my privilege to welcome you to the 2025–2026 school year. LCPS continues to be recognized among the strongest school divisions in the Commonwealth and the nation, thanks to the dedication, professionalism, and passion you bring to your work each day.

Your commitment to creating safe, inclusive, and academically rigorous environments ensures that every student feels valued and supported. Our students are at the center of all we do, and your efforts help them grow as learners, leaders, and citizens prepared for success in college, career, or military service.

To that end, my goal is that you feel empowered to do your job, inspired to be your very best, and equipped to deliver on the promise of public education. We remain focused on strengthening opportunities for both students and staff. You are part of an exceptional team of educators and professionals who inspire innovation, embrace continuous growth, and hold high expectations for themselves and others. We are proud to offer competitive compensation, outstanding benefits, and meaningful professional development to support your success -- because when our employees thrive, our students thrive.

Together, we will continue to nurture the limitless potential of the children of Loudoun County while upholding our shared values of equity, accountability, and excellence. Thank you for being part of the LCPS family and for making a difference in the lives of students every single day.

With appreciation,

Aaron Spence, Ed.D.
Superintendent

MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL BOARD



Melinda Mansfield
Chair
Dulles District



Anne Donohue
Vice Chair
At-Large Member



April Chandler
Algonkian District



Deana Griffiths
Ashburn District



Dr. Linda Deans
Broad Run District



Kari LaBell
Catoctin District



Arben Istrefi
Sterling District



Lauren Shernoff
Leesburg District



Dr. Sumera Rashid
Little River District

1. ABOUT LOUDOUN COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

As Virginia's third largest public school division, LCPS is a welcoming, safe, affirming and academically rigorous community serving more than 80,000 students across 100 schools. Over 18,000 full-time, part-time, and substitute employees engage in a student-centered approach that produces an overall graduation rate of 96.7% and an average attendance rate approach 98%.[1]

The School Division's workplace excellence is consistently recognized by Forbes as one of America's Best-In-State Employers, having again made the list in 2025.

For additional information, visit the LCPS fact sheet.

1.1. Strategic Plan

LCPS's current strategic plan, *One LCPS: 2027 Strategic Plan for Excellence*, is a five-year foundational tool that provides high-level direction for the School Division from 2022 through 2027. Recognizing the diverse needs of the LCPS community, *One LCPS: Strategic Plan for Excellence* identifies the School Division's vision, mission, and core values, sets out the School Division's goals, and outlines actions to be taken to meet them.

To review the entire Plan, click here.

1.2. Vision, Mission, and Core Values

As described in *One LCPS: 2027 Strategic Plan for Excellence*, students are at the center of the School Division's vision, mission, and core values:

- **LCPS Vision -** Every student will reach their full potential and achieve their dreams.
- **LCPS Mission -** Empowering all students to make meaningful contributions to the world.
- **LCPS Core Values -** The School Division's core values are holistic support, equity and opportunity, trust through listening, rigorous teaching and learning, individualized success, and continuous improvement.

Detailed information is available here.

1.3. Goals

Consistent with its five-year strategic plan, LCPS's goals are:

- **Empowered Students:** Prepare students to be knowledgeable critical thinkers, communicators, collaborators, creators, and contributors.
- **Exemplary Staff:** Cultivate high-performing teams of professionals committed to realizing LCPS's mission and goals.
- **Enriched Division:** Maintain an inclusive, safe, caring, and rigorous learning environment as the foundation for student growth.
- **Engaged Community:** Enhance educational excellence through building meaningful relationships with families and the community.

[1] School and enrollment data are calculated based on the LCPS 2025-2026 school year; this information is available on the LCPS Division Dashboards page.

1.4. Organizational Structure

LCPS is overseen by the School Board, which is the School Division's official policymaking body. The School Board has nine members: one for each of the eight electoral districts, and one at-large member. School Board member elections generally occur during the November general election.

As of the election in November 2023, five of the School Board members (representing the Algonkian, Broad Run, Dulles, Leesburg, and Sterling districts) are elected to two-year terms, and four (representing the Ashburn, Catoctin, Little River and At-Large districts) are elected to four-year terms. Moving forward, in accordance with Virginia Code Section 22.1-57.3:1.1, all School Board members shall be elected for four-year terms, and the School Board elections shall be conducted biennially for staggered terms.

All current school board members took office in January 2024. Each of their biographies and information on the districts they represent is available here.

1.4.1. Board-Staff Communications and Recognition

The School Board provides several open channels to facilitate and ensure communication between the School Board and School Division employees. Employees should review Policy 2530, Board-Staff Communications for guidance on how to communicate with the School Board or any of its individual members.

As stated in Policy 2620, Recognition of Student and Staff Accomplishments by the School Board, the School Board recognizes staff members periodically throughout the school year for above-and-beyond contributions to student achievement, career advancement, longevity and service, and heroism:

- Outstanding Performance: Recognizing exceptional contributions to the educational mission of the School Division;
- Professional Development: Honoring employees who engage in continuous professional development;
- Longevity and Service: Recognizing employees for their years of service to LCPS;
- Innovation and Improvement: Acknowledging staff members who introduce innovative practices or improvements;
- Heroic Acts: Under unique circumstances, including heroic acts where LCPS training or job functions contributed to a successful outcome, the School Board may recognize individuals for meritorious achievement beyond the scope of their regular job performance.

Submissions for consideration may come from School Board Members, LCPS employees, parents/guardians, or students. Submission is not a guarantee of School Board recognition.

School Board recognition may take various forms, including certificates, plaques, ceremonies, or public announcements. School Board recognition does not replace any school special recognition events, such as award ceremonies or assemblies, which may be organized to celebrate student and staff accomplishments.

The School Division will communicate the recognition process and criteria. Recipients and their families will be informed in a timely and respectful manner well in advance of a scheduled recognition event. Photos may be distributed to the media or used in LCPS marketing materials, including but not limited to, the website and videos.

1.4.2. Organizational Charts and Structure

In accordance with Policy 3010, Administrative Goals, the School Board places the primary responsibility and authority for the administration of the School Division in its superintendent ("Division Superintendent"). The Division Superintendent is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the School Division, including the direction, leadership, and coordination of students and staff in their efforts to reach educational goals adopted by the School Board.

LCPS is organized into the Division Superintendent's Office and nine departments:

- Academics
- Business & Financial Services (BFS)
- Communications and Community Engagement
- Digital Innovation (DDI)
- Human Resources & Talent Development (HRTD)
- School Leadership
- Student Services
- Support Services
- Teaching & Learning

Organizational charts for the Superintendent's Office and for each of the nine departments can be accessed using the hyperlinks above or by visiting the LCPS website and clicking "About Loudoun" under the menu option labeled, "About LCPS."

LCPS publishes a Guide & Directory, which, in addition to information of interest to LCPS parents, staff, and community members, provides a director of schools and departments. In addition to using the hyperlink above, this Guide & Directory is published on the Department of Communications and Community Engagement's website under Online Resources.

1.4.2.1. Administration and Operation of LCPS Schools

In accordance with Policy 3040, School Building Administration, the Division Superintendent employs principals and assistant principals, who hold Virginia Board of Education licenses. Each school principal, including the principal of a charter school, provides instructional leadership in, is responsible for the administration of, and supervises the operation and management of the school and property to which the principal has been assigned, as set forth in Policy 3040.

1.4.2.2. Policy Implementation

The School Board has directed the Division Superintendent to implement all School Board policies and to develop regulations that specify practices needed to carry out the policies. Please see Policy 3020, Policy Implementation for additional information.

1.5. Calendars, Closings, and Delays

1.5.1. Calendars

School and staff calendars are published annually and are available online. Staff calendars for the 2025-2026 school year should be referenced based on each employee's position classification.

Information pertaining to student and staff calendars is also available in Policy 7040, Student School Calendar and Staff Calendars and its corresponding regulation.

1.5.2. Closings and Delays

Whenever there is inclement weather, the safety of students and staff is the most important consideration. Details about the School Division's process in these circumstances is available online on the public LCPS website and in Policy 7040.

1.5.2.1. Decision-Making Process

Based upon the recommendation of the Chief Operations Officer, the Division Superintendent (or designee) will determine whether schools and administrative offices observe a delayed opening, an early release, or a closing in emergency situations. To ensure the safety of LCPS students and staff while providing timely notification to the LCPS community, a decision will be made as early as possible.

After the initial decision has been made, LCPS will continue to monitor the situation for conditions that warrant additional communications. For example, if there are major events or athletic competitions scheduled for the date that schools, offices or facilities are opened on a delay or are closed, additional information will be communicated.

1.5.2.2. Methods of Communication

LCPS notifies the community about these decisions using several means of communication: via pop-up alerts on the LCPS website; using social media; by way of the Alert 2.0 system offered by the Loudoun County Government; and on local radio and television. In addition, these communications are sent via email and text message. See the website for more information.

1.5.2.3. Employee Responsibility for Maintaining Information and Monitoring Updates

Calendars and closure information are subject to change; therefore, employees are responsible for routinely checking for updates and for ensuring contact information is current so that they receive timely notification of any changes that impact schedules.

1.6. Visitors and Visitor Management Protocol

All visitors, staff, and students require verification of authorization and a planned purpose for visiting. Expectations for visitors include the following:

- Visitors must present their government issued photo ID when requested.
- Visitors must engage in two-way communication via the visitor management intercom system located at the main entrance to all schools or worksites.
- Visitors must state their name and reason for visiting when requested.
- Requests to meet with particular staff must be preceded with an appointment.
- When the door is unlocked remotely by school staff, report directly to the main office as instructed.
- Do not hold the door open or allow anyone else to enter – all visitors must check in individually.
- Sign in at the greeter's table or at the main office.
- At the conclusion of the visit, check out with office staff and return the visitor's badge, if issued.

Additional information about building and access control, including visitor protocols, is set out in Regulation 6620, Access Control on Loudoun County Public Schools (LCPS) Property.

2. DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS & FINANCIAL SERVICES

The Department of Business and Financial Services (BFS) provides support, leadership, and direction to other LCPS departments, the Division Superintendent, and the School Board. BFS oversees the Accounting Division, Budget and Financial Analytics Division, Division of Financial Services, Payroll Division, Procurement Services, and School Nutrition Services.

2.1. Compensation

The Payroll Division provides accurate and timely pay to the School Division's employees and is responsible for reporting earnings and deductions to the Internal Revenue Service, Social Security Administration, and to employees' states of residence, as required by law. Payroll Services ensures all leave is timely and accurately recorded. Additionally, the Payroll Division processes mandatory deductions, voluntary deductions, tax liens, and other pay withholdings and garnishments.

Additional resources and resources are available on the Payroll Resources intranet page.

2.1.1. Payroll Schedules & Direct Deposit

All employees receive their earnings in biweekly installments based on the payroll schedule. Stipends are paid in three equal installments on the last paycheck of the month.

Employees must enroll in direct deposit. If an employee fails to enroll in direct deposit, their pay will be loaded onto a pay card.

For additional information, please review Policy 7620, Payroll Procedures.

2.1.2. Salary Deductions

Salary deductions are categorized as either mandatory or voluntary. These deductions are withheld from each employee's paycheck in accordance with Policy 7622, Salary Deductions.

2.1.3. Mandatory Salary Deductions

The following are **required deductions** from employee earnings:

- Federal withholding tax
- Social Security tax
- Medicare tax
- State withholding tax
- Virginia Retirement System (VRS) defined member benefit contribution (if applicable)

Because LCPS is a VRS participant, Virginia law requires retirement plan and group term life insurance benefits for full-time employees. All full-time LCPS employees are required to pay a 5% member contribution to VRS; LCPS contributes the employer share for the VRS Retirement Plan and the full cost of the basic group term life insurance.

There are currently three VRS plans in which LCPS members may be enrolled. The full-time hire date with LCPS (or other VRS participating employer) generally determines the plan in which the employee is enrolled.

Additional information is covered below. For full details about the VRS plans, visit the Employee Benefits: Savings page and review the information available under "VRS Retirement Plans."

2.1.4. Voluntary Payroll Deductions

Employees may **voluntarily withhold** certain deductions from their wages. These include deductions for:

- Flexible Spending Account (FSA)
- Healthcare Expense Reimbursement Account
- Dependent Care Reimbursement Account
- Health Savings Account (HSA)
- Health Insurance Premiums
- Contributions to LCPS 403(b) and 457 elective deferral plans

Additional details about voluntary deductions are set out on the Employee Benefits page and are provided in the Employee Benefits section of this handbook.

2.1.5. Contact Information

Except for information about VRS and benefits, questions regarding wage information and deductions or withholdings should be directed to the Payroll Division:

21000 Education Court
Ashburn, VA 20148
Room 312
(571) 252-1260 (Phone)
(571) 252-1425 (Fax)
lcpspayroll@lcps.org

2.2. Timecards

Unless otherwise instructed by their supervisors, all employees must register and use the LCPS Employee Self-Service portal for timekeeping.

As explained below, all employees are responsible for completing and submitting timecards according to the established payroll schedule. Timecards must be completed accurately. Falsification of any time record is prohibited and may be grounds for disciplinary action, including termination. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that time and leave are correctly reported and approved for their employees.

2.2.1. Non-Exempt Employees

Non-exempt employees are employees who, according to federal law (i.e., the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)), are eligible for overtime pay. The required workdays for non-exempt employees are outlined in their respective staff calendars, and their schedule of work hours are determined by the department or school to which they are assigned. Employees will be informed of their daily schedule of hours of work, including meal periods, and of any changes deemed necessary by the School Division, provided changes are not in conflict with the employees' assignment or, where applicable, contract.

Non-exempt employees are required to complete individual time records showing all daily hours worked and are to record their starting time and ending time for each workday. Employees are not permitted to sign in or commence work before their normal starting times, or to sign out or continue working after their normal ending times, without the prior approval of their supervisors. Employee time records are to be reviewed and approved by the supervisor. Authorized overtime must be approved by the supervisor.

Supervisors may schedule or authorize overtime when it is deemed necessary if they have received approval from the appropriate member of senior staff to verify the funding source before scheduling, permitting or asking a non-exempt employee to work on an overtime basis. FLSA nonexempt employees are not permitted to work overtime without the prior approval of their supervisors.

For hours of work performed in excess of the defined work schedule up to 40 hours for the work week, employees will be compensated at their regular hourly rate for the additional time. For hours of work performed in excess of 40 hours in the defined work week, non-exempt employees will be compensated at a rate equal to one- and one-half times their regular rate of pay.

Supervisors who schedule or authorize overtime retain the option of granting compensatory time instead of overtime. Employees are permitted to take compensatory time after making a request to their supervisor. A maximum of 40 hours of compensatory time can be accumulated between July 1, and June 30, annually. No compensatory time will be carried forward to the next fiscal year. It will be paid at the appropriate rate after June 30, or upon separation.

Please refer to Policy 7030, Staff Time Schedules and its corresponding regulation, or contact the Payroll Division for additional information.

2.2.2. **Exempt Employees**

Exempt employees are employees who, according to the FLSA, are not eligible for overtime pay.

Employees paid on the **teacher salary scale** (Scale A) are exempt from the minimum wage and maximum hours requirements set out in the FLSA. Generally, employees paid on the teacher salary scale are expected to be on site for the entire student school day, from prior to student arrival until after student dismissal. Teachers are expected to work additional time outside of the student school day but are not required to perform all duties on site. Exact arrival and departure times, as well as whether a particular duty must be performed on site or can be completed remotely, are established by the supervisor.

Typically, the defined workday for **teachers** is 7.50 hours, inclusive of a 30-minute duty-free lunch except when emergencies occur or special events are scheduled. Generally, the defined workday for **school counselors** is 8 hours, inclusive of a 30-minute duty-free lunch except on days when emergencies occur or special events are scheduled. Other employees in this category may be assigned different work hours as established by their supervisors, as specified by contract, or as established in applicable policies. Occasionally, supervisors may assign duties or schedule meetings that require employees who are paid on the teacher scale to remain at work on a particular day in excess of their established workday in order to ensure the proper functioning of the schools, including, but not limited to, team planning and staff development.

Employees paid on the **auxiliary salary scale** (Scale C) generally are expected to work pursuant to their established work hours, with exact arrival and departure times established by

their supervisors. Typically, the defined workday is 8 hours, unless otherwise specified by contract or assignment. Occasionally, supervisors may assign duties or schedule meetings involving time in excess of 8 hours per day as needed to ensure the proper functioning of the schools, including, but not limited to, team planning and staff development.

Employees paid on the **universal salary scale** (Scale B (Hourly or Salary)) are expected to work pursuant to the established work hours for the position, with exact arrival and departure times established by their supervisors. For positions on the universal salary scale that are exempt from the minimum wage and maximum hours requirements set out in the FLSA, the defined workday is 8 hours, unless otherwise specified by contract or assignment. Supervisors may assign responsibilities or schedule meetings involving time in excess of 8 hours per day.

Exempt employees are not required to enter individual daily hours worked. However, all exempt employees are required to complete individual time records when leave is taken. Employee time records are to be checked and approved by the supervisor.

Additional information is set out in Policy 7030.

2.2.3. Employee Self-Service

In addition to using the LCPS Employee Self-Service portal for entering timecards, Employee Self-Service provides employees access to much of their human resources, pay, and benefits information in one location. Employees can use Employee Self-Service to view paystubs, view and update benefits elections, make changes to personal contact information (such as their mailing addresses), and access iExpense.

Please contact the Payroll Division for additional information.

2.3. Additional Information for School Nutrition Services Employees

School Nutrition Services supports the LCPS education mission by providing nourishment to all students while teaching them to make life-long healthy choices. Each of the School Division's school kitchens is operated by highly trained staff, with food safety and customer service as highest priorities.

School Nutrition Services is centrally located in the Round Hill Support Center and provides guidance, accepts payments, and processes free/reduced meal applications.

LCPS staff may take advantage of the meal options offered in the school cafeterias. Adult meals are charged a la carte pricing. Interested staff should register for a LINQ account and can do so by logging into LCPS Go, clicking on Request Cafeteria Account, and completing the Google Form.

For additional information or assistance, staff may contact their School Nutrition Manager or email CAFE@lcps.org.

2.4. Additional Information for Account Managers & Financial Technicians

Principals are solely responsible for safeguarding, accounting, and managing student activity funds, including the conduct of student financial activities, and must ensure adherence to applicable law, School Board policies, and LCPS regulations, rules, and procedures set forth by the state, the School Division, and the Superintendent. The principal (or designee) must approve and sign all documentation and checks.

Specific duties of the principal, account managers, and financial technicians are addressed in guidance maintained on the BFS-maintained Financial Resource Center intranet site. Account managers and designees should review this information carefully and contact BFS with questions.

BFS maintains "survival guides" for Financial Technicians assigned to schools and for those assigned to the Central Office. Personnel occupying these positions should review this and other pertinent information on the Financial Resource Center intranet site to ensure compliance with BFS rules and procedures, and with applicable policies and regulations.

2.4.1. Custody and Disbursement of LCPS Funds

Except for school activity fund accounts and petty cash funds, all School Board funds are deposited with the Loudoun County Treasurer. Disbursement of funds must be drawn on the School Board account with the signature of the Loudoun County Virginia Treasurer and the Division Superintendent.

Please see Policy 4110, Custody and Disbursement of Loudoun County Public School Funds for more information.

2.4.2. Student Fees and Charges

Policy 4020, Student Fees and Charges and its accompanying regulation establish the policy and schedule of fees to ensure the consistent charging of student fees division-wide. Except for in connection with the operation of voluntary activities such as school stores, school banks, extracurricular activities, or fundraising, no fees or charges may be assessed or collected that either have not been approved by the School Board or are not listed in Policy 4020 and the schedule of fees.

No student's scholastic report card, class schedule, or diploma shall be withheld due to nonpayment of fees and charges. No student shall be suspended or expelled for nonpayment.

2.4.3. School Activity Funds

As provided in Policy 4115, School Activity Funds, school activity funds are all funds received from extracurricular school activities including but not limited to, club dues, fundraisers, pictures, yearbooks, and vending machine proceeds that are not part of the School Nutrition Services program, and donations from school support organizations.

Each school shall keep an accurate and complete record of all receipts and disbursements so that a clear and concise statement of the condition of each fund may be determined at all times. It is the duty of each principal to ensure that such records are maintained in accordance with the policies, regulations, and guidelines prescribed by BFS, the School Board, the Virginia Department of Education, and the Virginia Code.

School activity funds shall be audited at least once a year by a duly qualified accountant or accounting firm to be selected by BFS in order to verify compliance with the provisions of federal and state law, LCPS policy and regulations, and audit standards.

Please review Policy 4115 for more information.

2.4.4. Petty Cash Funds

Petty cash funds for individual schools or departments shall not exceed $500. All petty cash funds must be approved by the Chief Financial Officer. Any authorized person into whose hands any such fund is placed may pay such claims without necessity of prior receipt and approval of the claims by the Accounting Division. The authorized person shall report payments from petty cash funds to the Accounting Division for the replenishment and approval of claims.

For additional information, please review Policy 4145, Petty Cash Funds.

2.4.5. Commercial, Promotional, and Corporate Sponsorships and Partnerships

The School Board recognizes that corporate and other private sponsorship of programs and activities related to education can provide valuable enhancement of the educational program offered by the School Board. For this reason, the School Board may enter into commercial, promotional, and corporate sponsorship and partnership arrangements under certain conditions. Policy 4180, Commercial, Promotional, and Corporate Sponsorships and Partnerships provides the circumstances under which the Superintendent, Cabinet members, or principals may enter into educational partnership agreements or sponsorships on behalf of the School Board. For more information, please consult Policy 4180.

2.5. Fiscal Responsibility of All Personnel

Teachers and other school staff who come into possession of any funds in connection with School Division-sponsored activities shall not leave the money unattended. As soon as possible, and no later than the end of the school day or upon conclusion of an activity, teachers and other school staff in possession of funds shall turn the funds over to the designated person in the school or principal for safe-keeping and proper accounting.

Each LCPS school and department is responsible for maintaining proper controls over the receipt, storage, and deposit of LCPS funds in accordance with BFS requirements.

Please consult Policy 4125, Fiscal Responsibility for more information.

2.6. Expense Reimbursements

Pursuant to Policy 4155, Expense Reimbursements, requests for reimbursement will be honored only for professional development activities approved in advance by the Division Superintendent (or designee) and for which a statement of travel, with supporting documents, is submitted in accordance with Regulation 4155, Expense Reimbursement.

2.7. Conflicts of Interest

Policy 2160, Conflict of Interests and Disclosure of Economic Interests has a stated purpose of seeking “to assure that the judgment of [School Board] members, [along with its] officers and employees[,] will be guided by a policy that defines and prohibits inappropriate conflicts and requires disclosure of economic interests as defined by the General Assembly in the State and Local Government Conflict of Interests Act (the Act).” Although many of the policy’s provisions apply specifically to School Board members and the Division Superintendent, Policy 2160 sets out several rules that apply to the School Division’s employees, as well.

The following is a summary of pertinent provisions of Policy 2160 as they may relate to employees. For more information concerning, if applicable, its restrictions (and exceptions), please review Policy 2160.

2.7.1. General Rules Regarding Gifts and Favors

No School Board employee shall:

- solicit or accept money or anything else of value for services performed within the scope of their official duties other than their regular compensation, expenses or other remuneration;
- offer or accept money, or anything else of value, for or in consideration of obtaining employment, appointment, or promotion of any person in the School Division;
- offer or accept any money or anything else of value for or in consideration of the use of their public position to obtain a contract for any person or business with the School Division;
- use for their own or anyone else's economic benefit confidential information gained by reason of their office, and which is not available to the public;
- accept any money, loan, gift, favor, service or business or professional opportunity that reasonably tends to influence them in the performance of their official duties;
- accept any business or professional opportunity when they know that there is a reasonable likelihood that the opportunity is being afforded to influence their conduct in the performance of official duties;
- accept a gift from a person who has interests that may be substantially affected by the performance of the employee's official duties under circumstances where the timing and nature of the gift would cause a reasonable person to question the employee's impartiality in the matter affecting the donor;
- accept gifts from sources on a basis so frequent as to raise an appearance of the use of their employment for private gain; or
- use their public position to retaliate or threaten to retaliate against any person for expressing views on matters of public concern or for exercising any right that is otherwise protected by law.

2.7.2. Awards to Employees for Exceptional Service

Policy 2160 does not prohibit or apply to a School Board employee's acceptance of an award or payment in honor of meritorious or exceptional services performed by the employee and made by an organization exempt from federal income taxation pursuant to the provisions of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

2.7.3. Prohibited Conduct Regarding Contracts

No School Board employee shall have a personal interest in (i) any contract with the School Board or (ii) any contract with any government agency subject to the ultimate control of the School Board.

Please review Policy 2160 for exceptions to this prohibition.

2.7.4. Prohibited Conduct Regarding Transactions

Each School Board employee who has a personal interest in a transaction shall disqualify themselves from participating in the transaction if:

- the transaction has application solely to property or a business or governmental agency in which they have a personal interest or a business that has a parent-subsidiary or affiliated business entity relationship with the business in which they have a personal interest; or

- they are unable to participate pursuant to G.1.b, G.1.c., or G.1.d. of the policy.

As stated above, please review Policy 2160 for detailed information and its applicability.

2.8. Duty to Report Fraud, Embezzlement, and Fiscal Dishonesty; Investigations

Account managers are responsible for implementing required procedures to assure the safety and security of School Division assets, revenue, and financial data. In accordance with Policy 4165, Procedures for Reporting and Investigating Fraud, Embezzlement and Fiscal Dishonesty, any irregularity that is detected or suspected shall be reported immediately to the supervisor and the Executive Director of Financial Services. Any employee may contact the Executive Director of Financial Services directly if the situation warrants.

LCPS will take appropriate disciplinary and legal actions against responsible employees and/or other individuals or entities, which may include termination of or dismissal from employment or restitution. Employees who knowingly make false accusations will be subject to disciplinary action. Employees who retaliate against anyone for reporting fraud or for cooperating, giving testimony, or participating in an audit or investigation, or any other investigative or related proceeding or hearing, will also be subject to disciplinary action.

When there is suspected fraud, embezzlement, or fiscal dishonesty, HRTD will contact the appropriate law enforcement agency for conducting a criminal investigation unless HRTD is a target of the suspected activity. In that event, then the Chief Financial Officer shall notify law enforcement.

2.9. Insurance and Self-Insurance Program

Policy 4170, Insurance Management provides that the School Board will maintain an insurance and/or self-insurance program as it deems necessary or as required by law. The program may include, but not be limited to, property, liability, surety, workers' compensation, and automobile loss exposure insurance. Coverage may be provided for certain or all School Board members, employees, student teachers, and other persons performing functions or services for any school in the School Division, regardless of whether payment is made for such functions or services. Coverages shall be deemed appropriate to safeguard all property and interests of the School Board, the School Division, and/or its authorized employees or representatives. Please review Policy 4170 for more information.

For a detailed explanation, please request an Insurance Facts Brochure from BFS.

2.9.1. General and Professional Liability Insurance

Coverage is provided by LCPS as follows:

- **Persons Covered**: School Board members, employees, student teachers, and authorized volunteers.

- **Persons Not Covered**: Volunteers acting in their capacities as medical professionals, students, organizations, and other entities (such as parent teacher associations or booster clubs) that do not operate under the direction and control of the School Board.

Exclusions apply.

2.9.2. Vehicle Liability Insurance

LCPS provides vehicle liability coverage as follows:

- **Persons Covered**: School Board members, employees, student teachers, and authorized volunteers, all while using, with permission, vehicles owned, hired, or borrowed by the School Board. In addition, covered persons using privately owned vehicles on official School Board business are insured for liability on an excess basis, over and above the insurance protection on the privately-owned vehicle used.

- **Persons Not Covered**: Students, organizations, or other entities (such as parent-teacher associations or booster clubs) that do not operate under the direction and control of the School Board.

Exclusions apply.

All inquiries from citizens, parents, and students concerning reimbursement for expenses because of school-related accidents shall be referred to BFS. No employee or volunteer may ever agree on behalf of the School Board to pay any expenses or attempt to evaluate liability for any incident. All claims against LCPS are investigated by professional claims adjusters, and persons making claims are officially notified of the results of these investigations.

2.9.3. Employee's Personal Possessions

LCPS has no responsibility for an employee's personal belongings they bring to work. When an employee brings personal items to the worksite, the employee is accepting responsibility for the items. If an employee's personal materials are stolen, damaged, or otherwise go missing from the worksite, they will not be replaced by the School Division.

3. DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES & TALENT DEVELOPMENT

The Department of Human Resources and Talent Development (HRTD) supports a qualified and diverse workforce of more than 13,000 full-time employees and over 5,200 part-time, substitute, and hourly employees to accomplish the objectives of LCPS. HRTD directs all phases of employment practices through the planning, organization, and implementation of the School Division's programs of recruitment, staffing, placement, mentoring and development, evaluation, classification, employment verification, and separation of LCPS employees. HRTD is also responsible for the overall administration of compliance and equity as they relate to LCPS employees and the management of employee relations issues.

HRTD comprises the teams of School-Based Staffing, Recruiting, & Substitutes; Support Staffing, Classification & Compensation, Operations, and Employee Recognition; Employee Benefits; Talent Development; Workplace and Labor Relations; and Title IX. Through these teams, HRTD provides support and services to prospective and current employees in a myriad of areas, including:

- employee resources
- employee benefits and wellness
- leave and disability
- performance management
- classification and compensation
- workplace relations
- Title IX
- licensure
- talent development

- employee recognition
- recruiting
- staffing, including substitute hiring

3.1. Employee Resources

3.1.1. Employment Contracts and Letters of Assignment

As stated in Policy 7650, Licensed Staff Contracts, the School Board enters into written contracts with licensed staff (for example teachers, assistant principals, principals, and supervisors).

3.1.1.1. Contracts

Pursuant to Virginia law, contracts are issued to instructional licensed staff and administrators (for example, teachers, assistant principals, principals, and supervisors), as well as to other personnel as designated by the School Board.

Virginia law requires that bus drivers enter written contracts or agreements of employment that are consistent with forms authorized by the Virginia Board of Education. Generally, employees will obtain their contracts through an online portal, either after their start date or annually in the spring.

Please refer to Section 3.4, below, for more information.

3.1.1.1.1. *Coaching and extracurricular sponsorship contracts*

In accordance with Policy 7650, coaching contracts and contracts for extracurricular activity sponsorship assignments are issued separately from employees' annual or continuing contracts. For purposes of Policy 7650, "extracurricular activity sponsorship" means an assignment for which a monetary supplement is received, requiring responsibility for any student organizations, clubs, or groups, except for activities that are conducted in conjunction with regular classroom, curriculum, or instructional programs.

Termination of an employee's coaching or extracurricular activity sponsorship assignment contract shall not constitute cause for the termination of the licensed employee's annual or continuing contract.

3.1.1.1.2. *Temporarily employed teachers*

As reflected in Policy 7650, a temporarily employed teacher is: (a) one who is employed to substitute for a contracted teacher for a temporary period during the contracted teacher's absence; or (b) one who is employed to fill a teacher vacancy for no longer than 90 teaching days in such vacancy, unless otherwise approved by the Virginia Superintendent of Public Instruction on a case-by-case basis, during one school year.

Individuals who are temporarily employed do not receive contracts of employment.

3.1.1.2. Assignments

Assignment letters or memoranda are issued to employees who are not issued or eligible for employment contracts. Unless otherwise stated in policy or required by law, employees are at will and therefore do not have any expectation of continued employment or employment for a definite period. Please refer to Section 3.4, below, for more information.

3.1.2. **Tuition Assistance and Reimbursement Initiatives**

Policy 7630, Tuition Programs, authorizes tuition reimbursement for eligible full-time employees pursuing programs that help further the School Division's mission. Priority may be given to employees participating in a cohort established to meet critical areas of need.

HRTD is proud to support the following initiatives, which supports HRTD's mission of attracting, recruiting, developing, and retaining a high-performing and inclusive workforce that empowers all students to make meaningful contributions to the world. Interested candidates should visit https://www.lcps.org/o/hr/page/about-human-resources-and-talent-development, select "Tuition Initiatives" under the *Employee Resources* heading, and complete the form associated with the program of interest using the Let's Talk! Platform.

3.1.2.1. EducateVA and iteach

These programs offer an alternate, asynchronous pathway to licensure for current and newly hired employees (i.e., part-time, full-time, or substitutes for at least 50 school days) who are eligible for or have a provisional teaching license. Upon HRTD approval for the candidate's participation, EducateVA and iteach each directly bill LCPS for program costs. To be eligible, candidates must be ready to work as a classroom teacher or be a candidate preparing to begin teaching, have a bachelor's degree, and support one of the following certification areas:

- Career and Technical Education (Family and Consumer Sciences and Technology Education)
- English (middle and high school)
- English as a Second Language
- Math (middle and high school)
- Science (middle school, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and Earth Science)
- Spanish
- Computer Science ***(iteach only)***
- Elementary Education ***(iteach only)***
- Medical Health and Science ***(iteach only)***
- Special Education ***(iteach only)***

For more information about iteach, please go to https://iteach.net/.

Information about EducateVA is available at https://educateva.com/.

Please consult Regulation 7630, Tuition Programs or contact HRTD for additional information about these initiatives.

3.1.3. **Test Preparation**

3.1.3.1. RN Exam and Test Prep

This program is designed to assist LCPS Health Clinic Specialists with taking and passing the NCLEX. To be eligible, participants must be employed as Health Clinic Specialists who are preparing to take the NCLEX. Employees receive reimbursement after completing the course and taking and passing the NCLEX.

Additional information about the NCLEX is available at https://www.nclex.com/index.page.

3.1.3.2. Praxis Test and Test Prep

This program provides reimbursement for one Praxis Test and/or up to three months, or $90

total, of Praxis Test preparation fees for exams and preparation courses taken after July 1, 2025. It is open to current (including newly hired) LCPS employees who are eligible to work in a licensed teaching position and are seeking an initial or add-on endorsement in one of the following critical areas:

- Career and Technical Education (Family and Consumer Sciences and Technology Education)
- Computer Science
- Elementary Education
- English (middle and high school)
- English as a Second Language
- Math (middle and high school)
- Medical Health and Science
- Science (middle school, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and Earth Science)
- Spanish

Employees are reimbursed after passing the exam so long as they are current employees or have been newly hired to teach.

To learn more about Praxis test preparation, visit https://passagepreparation.com/states/virginia/.

For more information about the Praxis, please go to: https://praxis.ets.org/storehome.html.

To learn more about the test(s) the VDOE accepts, please visit https://www.doe.virginia.gov/teaching-learning-assessment/teaching-in-virginia/teacher-licensure/licensing-forms-information.

3.1.3.3. Special Education Foundations Course

Eligible employees may receive reimbursement of up to $572 for the Special Education Foundations Course fee for courses taken after July 1, 2025. This program is available to current LCPS or newly hired employees who have earned, at minimum, a bachelor's degree and who are seeking their initial Special Education endorsement. Employees are reimbursed after passing the class so long as they are current employees or are newly hired to teach Special Education as an LCPS employee.

For more information about the Special Education Foundations Course, visit https://courses.vccs.edu/courses/EDU250-FoundationsofExceptionalEducation.

3.1.3.4. Network Certifications

LCPS will pay for non-supervisory DDI staff to gain CompTIA Tech+, A+, Network+, Security+, ITLv4 Foundations, or Microsoft Office Specialist Associate certification. Upon approval, LCPS is billed directly the fees for eligible employees to take certification coursework and any required exam.

Starting on or after July 1, 2025, employees will be granted until June 30, 2026, to complete the certification and provide HRTD with the passing scores/certification. Please visit https://www.lcps.org/o/hr/page/about-human-resources-and-talent-development, select "Tuition Initiatives" under the *Employee Resources* heading, and click "Network Certifications" for additional information or to submit a request.

3.1.3.5. Central Garage Certifications

HRTD pays for non-supervisory central garage staff to obtain Automotive Services Excellence (ASE) Mechanic, ASE Parts, or ASE Service Certification. Upon approval, LCPS is billed directly the fees for eligible employees to take certification coursework and any required exam.

Starting on or after July 1, 2025, employees will be granted until June 30, 2026, to complete the certification and provide HRTD with the passing scores/certification. Please visit https://www.lcps.org/o/hr/page/about-human-resources-and-talent-development, select "Tuition Initiatives" under the *Employee Resources* heading, and click "Central Garage Certifications" for additional information or to submit a request.

3.1.3.6. Reading Endorsement Cohort

HRTD provides tuition assistance for current LCPS teachers who are accepted into a Reading Specialist Cohort through the Department of Teaching and Learning that starts after July 1, 2025. Accepted participants who submit supporting documentation will receive a one-time reimbursement of one three-credit course of up to $1,000.

For more information, please visit https://www.lcps.org/o/hr/page/about-human-resources-and-talent-development, select "Tuition Initiatives" under the *Employee Resources* heading, and click "Reading Endorsement Cohort" for additional information or to submit a request.

3.1.4. **Language Assistance Services**

Regardless of the language spoken, the Office of Outreach Services within the Department of Student Services helps to ensure engagement through quality interpretation and translation services, including:

- LCPS staff or contract interpreters
- Language Line (over the phone interpretation)
- On-demand virtual remote interpretation
- ASL services

To request language assistance services other than ASL services, please contact the Office of Outreach Services at (571) 252-1200, or visit https://www.lcps.org/o/hr/page/about-human- resources-and-talent-development and select the appropriate request under the *Employee Resources* hearing (i.e., "Translation Request," "Interpreter Request Form," or "Language Assistance Services") to complete and submit an online form.

ASL services are requested through the Office of Leave & Disability Programs by clicking https://lcpslfportal.loudoun.gov/Forms/ASL-Request or by calling (571) 252-1690.

3.1.5. **Employment Verification and Personnel File Requests**

3.1.5.1. Employment Verification Requests

Current and former employees may request verifications of their LCPS employment by visiting https://www.lcps.org/o/hr/page/about-human-resources-and-talent-development, selecting "Employment Verification Requests" under the *Employee Resources* hearing, and completing the form.

3.1.5.2. Personnel File Requests

Employees may request a copy of their official personnel files by visiting https://www.lcps.org/o/hr/page/about-human-resources-and-talent-development, clicking "Personnel File Request"under the *Employee Resources* heading, and completing the

form.

3.2. Employee Benefits & Wellness

LCPS provides its employees a range of benefits options and access to wellness services. In addition to the information provided below, employees are encouraged to visit the HRTD Employee Benefits webpage.

3.2.1. Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

LCPS partners with AllOne Health to provide LCPS employees and their family members free confidential counseling for many challenges that impact employees' wellbeing and ability to perform their job duties, including marital or family problems, financial challenges, issues with balancing work/life situations, emotional- or stress-related problems, drug or alcohol abuse, or problems related to work. This benefit provides up to six sessions per challenge per year and is available 24/7.

EAP highlights include:

- Assistance via a program member portal; If visiting for the first time, employees will need to set up a new account using the instructions set out on https://www.lcps.org/o/hr/page/support.
- Workshops on relevant topics, such as the role of the single parent, job stress, family disorders, and financial management.
- Access to program newsletters.

Appointments with a professional counselor may be made by calling the 24-hour telephone service at (800) 327-7272 or by visiting https://lytle.mylifeexpert.com/. For more information about EAP, please contact HRTD Leave & Disability Programs, HRTD Employee Benefits & Wellness at (571) 252-1810, via https://www.lcps.org/o/hr/page/contact-benefits, or visit the website.

3.2.2. Health Benefits

As stated in Policy 7626, Health Insurance, the School Board provides health insurance coverage to full time employees (as defined by Policy 7022, Employee Classification) and their eligible dependents for those who elect to participate.

All new full-time employees must complete a Benefits Orientation. It is recommended that employees complete this mandatory Benefits Orientation within the first 30 days of full-time employment. See https://www.lcps.org/o/hr/page/benefits-orientation for more details about the orientation and related information.

The below information is a summary of the benefits options available to eligible employees. Please review the plan documents, available on the HRTD Employee Benefits webpage:

- Medical and prescription drug coverage - https://www.lcps.org/o/hr/page/health
- Dental and vision coverage - https://www.lcps.org/o/hr/page/dental-and-vision-insurance
- FSAs (health and dependent care) and HSAs - https://www.lcps.org/o/hr/page/savings

For questions or to request copies of any plan documents, please contact Employee Benefits at (571) 252-1810.

3.2.2.1. Health Insurance

LCPS offers three medical plan options to benefits-eligible employees: a High Deductible Health Plan with Health Savings Account (HDHP), an Open Access Plus Plan (OAP), and a Point of Service Plan (POS). All plans are administered by Cigna.

- High Deductible Health Plan with Health Savings Account (HDHP)
  - Lowest monthly premium.
  - Paired with an LCPS-funded HSA providing $1,000 employee-only coverage and $2,000 for employee and one or more dependents coverage.
  - Includes $5,000 Critical Illness Policy funded by LCPS.
  - No referrals required to see a specialist.

- Open Access Plus Plan OAP
  - Lower monthly premium.
  - PPO plan offering in- and out-of-network coverage through a broad national provider network.
  - Enrollees pay either a fixed copayment or deductible and coinsurance, depending on the medical services provided.
  - No referrals required to see a specialist.

- Point of Service Plan (POS)
  - Highest monthly premium.
  - Provides care through a specific local network of providers to offer in- and out-of-network coverage.
  - Enrollees pay either a fixed copayment or deductible and coinsurance, depending on the medical services.
  - Referral required to see a specialist.

Premium amounts are based on the level of coverage and options the employee chooses.

To assist employees with evaluating and choosing benefits, LCPS has rolled out Alex. Employees who seek customized recommendations enter basic information about themselves and, if applicable, their families. To learn more about and use Alex, visit https://start.myalex.com/LCPS/.

3.2.2.2. Prescription Coverage

Prescription coverage is included with health insurance. Coverage is administered through Express Scripts. The extent of prescription plan coverage is tied to the medical plan elected.

3.2.2.3. Dental Coverage

Dental insurance is provided through Delta Dental of Virginia. This plan is a PPO and is part of the Premier and Preferred networks. Coverage is provided for both in-network and out-of-network services. Additional information, including the plan document and summary of benefits, is available online.

3.2.2.4. Vision coverage

Vision insurance is provided through Davis Vision and provides coverage for routine eye exams and glasses or contact lenses. Additional plan information, including the plan document and summary of benefits, is available online.

3.2.3. **Flexible Spending Accounts**

LCPS-sponsored FSAs (Healthcare Expense Reimbursement Accounts and Dependent Care

Reimbursement Accounts) offer eligible employees the ability to set aside pre-tax money for qualified out-of-pocket healthcare and/or dependent care expenses on an annual basis. Employees who participate make an annual election, which is divided evenly over the pay periods in the plan year. Contributions are deducted from each paycheck on a pre-tax basis and contributed to the elected health and/or dependent care account. The funds can then be used to pay qualified out-of-pocket expenses.

Additional information about and documentation relating to the different FSAs and employee eligibility are available at https://www.lcps.org/o/hr/page/savings.

3.2.3.1. Traditional Health Care FSA

For 2025, the Traditional Health Care FSA allows employees to set aside up to $3,200 pre-tax to be used for out-of-pocket healthcare expenses not reimbursed by their healthcare plans. Employees may be reimbursed for expenses such as medical, dental, vision, and prescription copays, deductibles and coinsurance. Employees may use a provided Flex Debit Card to pay these qualified expenses during the calendar year.

Elections for FSAs are for the calendar year. Expenses must be incurred during the calendar year and submitted by March 31 of the following year. Employees who separate from LCPS may only receive reimbursement for eligible expenses incurred from the date of enrollment through their last day of work.

3.2.3.2. Limited Purpose Healthcare FSA

Employees who enroll in the HDHP may contribute up to $3,200 to a Limited Purpose Healthcare FSA. In these instances, employee contributions to the Healthcare FSA are limited to dental and vision reimbursements.

3.2.3.3. Dependent Care FSA

A Dependent Care FSA is a pre-tax benefit account that an employee caregiver uses to pay for eligible child (up to age 13) and adult care programs that allow them to work. Participating employees may contribute an annual pre-tax maximum of $5,000 ($2,500 if married but file a separate tax return), or the lesser of the earned income of the employee or their spouse.

3.2.3.4. Eligibility for rollover of unused FSA allocations

For 2025, the Healthcare FSAs allow for a rollover of up to $660 of any unused allocations into the next calendar year. Different deadlines apply for employees who have a Traditional Healthcare FSA in a year prior to enrolling in the HDHP with HSA. Eligible rollover funds will be converted to a Limited Purpose FSA for the following year.

Any money remaining in the account for Dependent Care FSAs or over the rollover maximum for Health Care FSAs will be forfeited (i.e., use it or lose it).

3.2.4. **Health Savings Accounts**

An HSA is a tax-favored account used in conjunction with an HSA-compatible health insurance plan, such as the LCPS-sponsored HDHP. Employees who enroll save money tax-free to cover current or future eligible out-of-pocket medical expenses that are not paid by their health plan, such as deductibles, coinsurance and eligible prescription, dental and vision expenses.

3.2.4.1. Benefits of enrolling in an HSA

Unlike FSAs, which generally require employees to use the funds within the calendar year for which they are enrolled, employees may use HSA funds whenever needed, whether now or in the future. Additionally, employees may keep any HSA contributions, even when changing jobs, retiring, or changing their health insurance plan.

An HSA provides triple tax savings because:

- HSA contributions can be made with pre-tax dollars, which reduces taxable income;
- any after-tax contributions are tax-deductible;
- HSA funds earn interest tax-free and when used for eligible healthcare expenses;
- withdrawals are also free from tax.

3.2.4.2. HSA Eligibility

Eligible employees are those who:

- are enrolled in the School Division-sponsored HDHP;
- are not covered by any other health coverage (e.g., Medicare, Tricare, or a spouse's non-HDHP medical plan or full-purpose FSA); and
- are not claimed as a dependent on someone's tax return. (Spouses filing jointly are permitted.)

An HDHP without HSA option is available for employees who want the HDHP without the HSA. Contact Employee Benefits for more information.

3.2.4.3. HSA Qualified Medical Expenses

Employees may use their HSAs to pay a range of qualified medical expenses, including many that are not covered by their health insurance. Qualified medical expenses are any expenses the employee or their eligible dependent(s) incurs for healthcare services, medical equipment, or prescribed medications including:

- health plan deductibles and co-insurance
- dental care
- vision care
- prescription medications
- prescribed over-the-counter medications
- certain medical equipment

Qualified medical expenses are those incurred by:

- the employee or their spouse
- dependents the employee claims on their income tax return
- any person the employee could have claimed as a dependent on their return or as otherwise allowed by the IRS

Generally, a dependent child must be younger than 19 or be a student and younger than 24, or any age if permanently and totally disabled, to be considered a dependent for tax purposes. Employees should consult their tax advisors for more information.

3.2.4.4. Annual HSA Contribution Limits

The annual maximum contribution for 2025 is $4,300 for employee only coverage and $8,550 for family coverage. Employees must include the LCPS contributions ($1,000 or $2,000, respectively) in these maximum amounts.

Employees who are 55 or older may save an additional $1,000 per year in catch-up contributions. These maximums may be prorated if the employee is not covered by the HDHP for the entire plan year.

3.2.4.5. Rollover of Unused HSA Funds

Unused HSA funds roll over year to year; there is no “use it or lose it” penalty. Funds that are rolled over continue to grow and earnings are tax-free. Employees may continue to use these funds for eligible expenses even when they change plans.

At age 65, employees may use their HSA funds for **any** purpose without penalty, on a taxable basis. This makes funding the HSA a great way to save for retirement.

3.2.5. Enrollment, Changes and Termination

3.2.5.1. Medical Coverage and FSA Enrollment, Mid-Year Changes Because of Qualifying Life Events, and Changes During Open Enrollment

Employees may enroll in health insurance, dental insurance, vision insurance, and the FSAs within 30 days of initial eligibility (usually the date of hire). New full-time employees and newly benefits-eligible employees will complete their primary benefit elections in Oracle Self Service. The LCPS Benefits Handbook guides employees which benefits elections may be made via Oracle Self Service and how to do so.

Additionally, employees may enroll or make changes to their coverage within 30 days of a qualifying life event, including but not limited to:

- change in legal marital status;
- birth or adoption of a dependent;
- death of a dependent or spouse;
- change in employment status;
- other changes, such as a covered dependent turning 26 years old.

Employees who wish to make a mid-year change to their benefits due to a qualifying life event should complete and submit an online Qualifying Life Event form along with supporting documentation. Employees cannot make or submit these mid-year elections via Oracle Self Service.

Employees may also enroll or change their coverage during open enrollment, which occurs from October 15 through November 15 every year. In these cases, enrollment and changes to coverage are effective January 1 of the year following open enrollment. Employees use Oracle Self Service to make their annual open enrollment elections.

Please contact LCPSHealthWellness@lcps.org with any questions.

3.2.5.2. HSA Enrollment and Changes to Contributions

Employees enrolled in the HDHP may enroll, change, or stop contributions at any time. Employees will be offered the opportunity to make an election in the Employee Self-Service portal when they first enroll and during the annual open enrollment period.

Employees can also start, stop or change the amount of their HSA payroll deduction at any time by completing and submitting the HSA Change Form. Changes will begin within one to two pay periods following submission of the form.

It is the employee's responsibility to determine their eligibility to make contributions to an HSA and to ensure they do not exceed the IRS maximum annual contribution limit.

3.2.5.3. Termination of Coverage

For employees who separate from LCPS employment or change to a status that is no longer eligible for benefits (such as part-time or long-term leave without pay), their medical, dental and vision coverage ends on the last day of the month in which they separate from LCPS employment or convert to a status for which they are no longer benefits-eligible. In these instances, the employee may opt to continue coverage under federal COBRA provisions. Please see the COBRA Coverage section below.

For 10-month or 11-month employees who leave at the end of their contract year, health insurance coverage may continue for a longer period. Generally, 10-month employees will have coverage until August 31 and 11-month employees will have coverage until July 31.

Supplemental benefits in which separating employees are enrolled, such as FSAs, end on the last day of employment,

Additional information about termination of coverage is available by clicking here.

3.2.5.4. COBRA Coverage

Employees and/or dependents who lose health insurance coverage under the LCPS group health policy may be eligible to continue their coverage through a COBRA policy. Click here to learn more about COBRA coverage and rates.

Employees should contact Employee Benefits or Wellness Works!, or call (571) 252-1810, with questions.

3.2.6. **Life, Critical Illness, and Disability Insurance & Coverage**

LCPS offers several insurance products to eligible employees, which provide individuals the ability to develop and customize comprehensive protection based on their unique needs. For more details about the information summarized below, please click here.

3.2.6.1. Life Insurance

LCPS employees are automatically enrolled in Basic Group Term Life Insurance through VRS. The value of the employee's life insurance is twice their annual salary.

3.2.6.1.1. *Coverage options*

Additional term life insurance at group rates is available for purchase for an amount up to eight times the employee's annual salary. Spouse and dependent coverage is also available. (Note that coverage must be consistent with the option level elected by the employee).The eight coverage options are available for review here.

3.2.6.1.2. *Guaranteed issue*

If a full-time employee enrolls within the first 31 days of employment, employee coverage is guaranteed up to Option 4, which is four times the employee's annual salary or $400,000, whichever is less. Spousal coverage is guaranteed at Option 1, which is half the employee's annual salary. Children are guaranteed up to Option 4, which is $30,000 per child.

For changes made after the initial 31 days of eligibility, an Evidence of Insurability form is required and eligibility for coverage is no longer guaranteed.

3.2.6.2. Short-Term Disability Coverage

Short-term disability coverage provides income protection to employees who can no longer work because of a non-work-related or work-related illness, injury, or other condition. Coverage is dependent upon the VRS plan in which the benefits-eligible employee is enrolled.

Questions about Short-Term Disability should be directed to HRTD Leave and Disability Programs at (571) 252-1690.

3.2.6.2.1. *VRS Plan 1 and Plan 2 members*

In accordance with Policy 7740, Disability Insurance, LCPS provides short-term disability coverage to benefits-eligible employees enrolled in VRS Plan 1 or Plan 2. Employees are automatically enrolled. Employees must file any claims directly with New York Life Short Term Disability by calling (888) 842-4462 (Espanol (866) 562-8421).

This plan requires an elimination period, i.e., the period the employee must be continuously disabled before benefits are payable, of 20 calendar days. After, the plan pays 60% of salary, up to a maximum of 10 weeks from the first date of payment.

Employees must use sick leave to supplement the short-term disability benefit until the sick leave is exhausted or until the leave period ends.

Short-term disability benefits for maternity are provided the same as for injury/illness.

Additional plan information is available here.

3.2.6.2.2. *VRS Hybrid Plan members*

As indicated in Policy 7740, employees enrolled in the VRS Hybrid Plan are automatically enrolled in the Virginia Local Disability Plan (VLDP). Under VLDP, coverage is provided if an employee cannot work due to a non-work-related or work-related illness, injury, or other condition, such as surgery, pregnancy, complications from pregnancy, or a catastrophic or major chronic condition. A work-related disability is the result of an occupational illness or injury that occurs on the job and the cause is determined to be compensable under the Virginia Workers' Compensation Act.

To be eligible for VLDP benefits, employees must be enrolled in the VRS Hybrid Plan for at

least one calendar year (365 days).

Employees must file claims directly by calling Alight at (877) 928-7021. Benefits begin seven calendar days after the date of disability is approved through Alight. Payments are processed through LCPS payroll, on the normal payroll schedule.

Employees must use sick leave to supplement the short-term disability benefit until the sick leave is exhausted or until the leave period ends.

Additional information is available in the VLDP handbook.

3.2.6.3. Long-Term Disability Coverage

A long-term disability is a non-work-related or work-related condition that prevents a covered employee from performing the full duties of their job for an extended period. As explained in Policy 7740, coverage is dependent upon the VRS plan in which they are enrolled.

3.2.6.3.1. *VRS Plan 1 and Plan 2 members*

Employees may opt to enroll in long-term disability coverage. This program does not replace any VRS Disability Retirement plan but provides to VRS Plan 1 and Plan 2 employees more comprehensive coverage for partial and total disabilities.

New York Life offers two optional plans, which are available to active full-time employees who work more than 180 days and have a minimum of 20 hours per week on a regular, scheduled basis. Information about this plan is available at https://www.lcps.org/o/hr/documents/employee-benefits/protection/long-term-disability/vrs-plan-1-members/627908.

3.2.6.3.2. *VRS Hybrid Plan members*

VRS Hybrid Plan members are automatically enrolled in a Long-Term Disability plan paid for by the School Board.

VRS Hybrid Plan employees approved for long-term disability receive 60% of their pre-disability income after 125 workdays of short-term disability. If approved for a work-related long-term disability, the VLDP benefit will be offset by the employee's workers' compensation benefit but not more than the amount of worker's compensation benefit.

Disabled employees may be required to apply for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits. If this is the case, the VLDP benefit will be offset by the SSDI benefit at the employee's applicable income replacement level.

Additional information is available here.

3.2.6.4. Long-Term Care Insurance

Long-term care insurance is an optional coverage that provides a variety of services and support to meet health or personal care needs due to physical or cognitive disability over an extended period. These services can be provided in home or at a facility such as assisted living. This insurance covers care and services that Medicare and private health insurance programs may not pay for. Employees may enroll at any time and have access to two choices:

- **Commonwealth of Virginia (COV) Voluntary Group Long-Term Care Program-offered through Genworth.** Find basic information about the program on the COV Long-Term Care page. If employees enroll during the first 60 days of full-time employment, this program has reduced medical underwriting. To get a quote, call (866) 859-6060 or click here. (employer code 30158).
- **Virginia Retired Teachers Association (VRTA) Long Term Care Program, offered through Creekside Insurance.** For more information, visit the VRTA Website.

VRS Hybrid members who participate in the Virginia Local Disability Program are covered automatically under the VLDP Long-Term Care Program. For more information, log in to www.varetire.org or call (800) 761-4057.

3.2.6.5. Accidental Injury Insurance

For an additional cost, employees may enroll in accidental injury insurance, which pays enrollees or their beneficiaries a fixed cash payment for treatments or injuries resulting from a covered accident. This lump sum benefit can be used however the employee sees fit. Employees may enroll at their time of hire, during open enrollment, or following a qualifying event. See https://www.lcps.org/o/hr/page/protection for more information.

3.2.6.6. Critical Illness Insurance

Critical Illness insurance pays employees a fixed cash benefit if they are diagnosed with a critical illness as defined by the policy (such as invasive cancer, heart attack, stroke, renal (kidney) failure, major organ transplant, paralysis and ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease)).

Employees enrolled in the HDHP automatically receive $5,000 in critical illness coverage, paid for by LCPS. HDHP enrollees may purchase up to an additional $25,000 in coverage and additional coverage for their eligible family members.

Non-HDHP participants may purchase up to $25,000 in critical illness coverage for themselves as well as coverage for their eligible family members.

Employees may enroll in this benefit when newly hired, during open enrollment, or within 30 days of a qualifying event.

Additional information and plan documentation are available here.

3.2.6.7. Termination of Coverage

Supplemental benefits in which separating employees are enrolled end on the last day of employment. Some supplemental benefits, including accidental injury coverage, critical illness coverage, and life insurance, are portable or can be converted to an individual policy. Separating employees should receive conversion paperwork for accidental injury and critical illness policies in the mail after coverage ends. To convert life insurance coverage, employees must complete and submit a conversion form, found on the VRS website, within 31 days of the last day of LCPS employment.

Additional information is available by clicking here.

3.2.7. **Savings & Retirement**

In addition to FSAs and HSAs, LCPS employees have available to them several savings and retirement programs.

3.2.7.1. VRS Retirement Plans

As referenced in Section 2.1.3 Mandatory Payroll Deductions, LCPS participates in the Virginia Retirement System as its primary pension plan. Full-time employees eligible for benefits are enrolled in a VRS plan based upon their hire date.

3.2.7.1.1. *Mandatory contributions*

Under the Code of Virginia, the VRS Retirement Plan and group term life insurance benefits are mandatory for regular full-time employees, who must pay a 5% member contribution to VRS. LCPS contributes the employer share for the VRS Retirement Plan and the full cost of the Basic Group Term Life Insurance.

3.2.7.1.2. *The VRS plans*

There are currently three VRS plans in which LCPS members might be enrolled. An employee's full-time hire date with LCPS (or other VRS participating employer) is the primary indicator of which plan the employee is enrolled. Click a plan below to find more information.

- VRS Plan 1 - Members hired full-time before July 1, 2010 who have not taken a refund and were vested as of January 1, 2013.
- VRS Plan 2 - Members hired full-time between July 1, 2010 and December 31, 2013, or who were hired before but not vested as of January 1, 2013.
- VRS Hybrid Plan - Members hired full-time on or after January 1, 2014 and not already VRS members.

Employees may find answers to frequently asked questions on the VRS FAQs page.

3.2.7.2. 403(b) and 457 Tax-Deferred Plans

In addition to the VRS plans in which all employees must be enrolled, as stated in Policy 7624, Supplemental Retirement Plans, LCPS offers two voluntary retirement savings plans: a 403(b) Elective Deferral Plan through Lincoln Financial Group and a 457 Deferred Compensation Plan through VRS.

For more information about the 403(b) Elective Deferral Plan, click here.

Information about the 457 Deferred Compensation Plan is available here.

3.2.7.3. VA529 College Savings Plan

A 529 College Savings Plan allows individuals to put aside money for future higher education expenses. Most states, including Virginia, offer them. The money grows tax-deferred and is tax-free, when withdrawn, if used to pay qualified higher education expenses.

Contact Invest529 for more information or to request an enrollment kit.

3.2.8. **Wellness**

LCPS offers its employees a host of programs and incentives that recognize and reward healthy lifestyle choices. The following are current programs and incentives; please visit the Wellness page for additional details and information. Below are some of the program highlights.

- **Wellness Works! Program**. This program was developed to help LCPS employees maintain a healthy lifestyle while earning rewards along the way. Please review the Wellness Works! Handbook or Contact Wellness Works! with any questions.
- **LCPS Flu Shot Clinics.** LCPS hosts flu shot clinics for staff and their family members.
- **Move With Purpose Fitness Challenge.** Participants should aim to achieve a minimum of 28,000 steps per week (Monday through Sunday), which can be reached by averaging 4,000 steps per day. Employees register on the website and sync their fitness device or app, or manually log their steps and activities. Meet the weekly goal and be entered for a chance to win a $100 weekly prize. Employees may join at any time.
- **Wondr Health Online Weight Loss Program –** This program is offered once per year full-time employees, retirees, and their dependents. The ten-week program aims to teach new techniques about how and when to eat so that employees continue eating their favorite foods while improving their health. The Program includes self-paced video sessions, frequent communication and guidance from a personal health counselor, an online community to connect with other participants, a dashboard to track progress, and a year of video support to help with skill maintenance.
- **Wellness Screenings and Health Assessments** – Benefits-eligible employees earn rewards for completing their online health assessment through Cigna. Employees log on at www.mycigna.com (first-time users must register) and click on the Wellness tab.
- **Additional workshops, events, and communications.**

3.2.9. **Perks and Extras**

As valued employees, LCPS staff have access to various programs and discounts. These programs, including membership with Apple Federal Credit Union and Loudoun Credit Union, provide discounts on various products and services and can help with housing, wellness and family care. Please click here for a list of programs and discounts, or contact HRTD Employee Benefits and Wellness at (571) 252-1810.

3.2.10. **Benefits for LCPS Retirees**

Policy 7628, Retirement Benefits identifies the benefits that eligible retirees receive from LCPS, to the extent funds are budgeted and appropriated for this purpose. These benefits are distinct from the benefits provided by VRS. Employees preparing for retirement should carefully review Policy 7628 for full details about the benefits LCPS provides its retirees.

To be eligible for LCPS retirement benefits, employees must be eligible for retirement with VRS and must draw their VRS retirement benefit immediately upon separation from LCPS. If VRS retirement is deferred, LCPS retirement benefits do not apply. Eligibility for retirement benefits is based upon the most recent hire date

3.2.10.1. Health Insurance

Employees hired into a full-time position prior to July 1, 2013, are eligible for retiree medical, dental, vision, and prescription insurance so long as they have 15 cumulative years of full-time service with LCPS. For employees who are rehired after a break in service, the employee hire

date will be the most recent date they are rehired into a full-time position, and such employees will not receive retirement benefits for the years employed prior to their break in service.

Employees hired into a full-time position after July 1, 2013, are not eligible for retiree health insurance.

For more details about coverage and enrollment, please review Policy 7628.

3.2.10.2. Health Insurance: Disability Retirement

Employees hired or re-hired prior to July 1, 2013, who are approved for disability retirement, are not subject to a service requirement to be eligible for retiree health insurance, as long as they were enrolled in LCPS health insurance on their last day of active employment and have submitted an application for disability retirement within 90 days of their date of separation. If approved for disability retirement, the School Board will contribute an amount equal to the service retirement contributions.

An employee hired or rehired after July 1, 2013, who is approved for disability retirement is not eligible for retiree health insurance and may elect to enroll in COBRA.

3.2.10.3. Salary Supplement

Any retiree with 10 cumulative years of full-time service with LCPS will receive a one-time salary supplement payment equal to 0.5% of their final annual salary multiplied by the number of years of service to LCPS, which will amount to a minimum payment of $500 but will not exceed $2,500.

3.2.10.4. Sick Leave Payout

Any retiree with 10 cumulative years of full-time service will receive 25% of their final daily wage for each day of unused sick leave, the total amount not to exceed an index of 25% of the previous year's average teacher salary for LCPS as reported in the State of Virginia's Annual School Report (effective July 1, 2001).

Any person receiving a sick leave payout may not use service earned prior to receiving the sick leave payout to requalify for a sick leave payout if they are rehired as an active employee.

3.3. Leave & Disability Programs

The Employee Benefits team oversees the School Division's comprehensive leave and disability programs. Detailed information about these programs, summarized below, is available online.

3.3.1. **Workers' Compensation**

All LCPS employees are covered by workers' compensation insurance, as required by Virginia law. Workers' compensation coverage provides payment to employees when their disability is caused by a work-related illness or injury.

Employees who are directly injured or suffer an illness while performing their job duties must immediately (or as soon thereafter as practicable) notify their supervisors. To ensure accurate reporting and processing, supervisors shall refer to Policy 7640, Workers' Compensation and its corresponding regulation for additional information.

3.3.1.1. Employees' Responsibility for General Safety and Accident Prevention

Accident prevention and safety is everyone's responsibility. All staff must take appropriate measures to prevent accidents and injuries. If an adult or student accident occurs, designated individuals must be notified immediately so that appropriate action may be taken and LCPS can ensure compliance with applicable law and regulations.

Safety procedures should be followed at all worksites and whenever applicable, available safety equipment shall be used. Additionally, accommodations may be requested for individuals with disabilities.

3.3.2. Accommodations Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), American Sign Language (ASL) Requests, & Religious Accommodations

The Loudoun County School Board is committed to providing an equitable, safe and inclusive learning and working environment for all persons regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, disability, age, or genetic information.

If a medical condition prevents an employee from fully performing their essential job duties, using LCPS facilities, or accessing LCPS programs, services, or activities, the employee may contact the Leave & Disability team and request a reasonable accommodation.

3.3.2.1. Applying for Accommodations under the ADA

Employees seeking an ADA accommodation should complete and submit the ADA Employee and Healthcare Provider Forms. This packet includes the Employee Request for Accommodation form as well as the Medical Inquiry form that must be completed by the employee's medical provider. Employees should review with their medical provider a copy of the employee's job description, which can be obtained by visiting https://www.lcps.org/o/hr/page/job-descriptions.

To ensure all paperwork is processed in a timely manner, the employee should upload all completed forms using the ADA Request Form - Submittal Portal. The Leave & Disability Programs office will discuss the request with the employee's supervisor(s).

3.3.2.2. Pregnancy

Employees may be entitled to reasonable accommodations for limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions. To apply for consideration of reasonable accommodations, employees should contact the Leave and Disability team at LCPSLeaveDisability@lcps.org or by calling (571) 252-1690.

3.3.2.3. ASL services requests

Employees who need ASL services should contact their administrator or designated ASL site coordinator and have them complete and submit the online ASL Request Form.

These requests should be submitted at least seven business days before the event requiring ASL services so that there is sufficient time to secure an interpreter. However, if notice is less than 48 hours before the event, please have the administrator or designated ASL site coordinator call the Leave & Disability team at (571) 252-1690.

3.3.2.4. Religious Accommodations

Title VII of the federal Civil Rights Act requires employers to reasonably accommodate employees' sincerely held beliefs unless doing so would cause the School Division an undue hardship. Consistent with the Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, the School Board has adopted Policy 7730, Religious Accommodation. Employees seeking an accommodation due to a sincerely held belief should complete the Religious Accommodation Request Form.

3.3.2.5. Service Animals

The Virginians with Disabilities Act and the ADA permit an individual with a disability to be accompanied by their trained service animal on school property when required by law. A "service animal" means a dog or miniature horse that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. Other species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, are not service animals for the purposes of this definition. The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the individual's disability.

As set forth in Policy 3050, Trained Service Animals and consistent with the School Board's policy against discrimination, the School Division has established a process for accommodating individuals accompanied by trained service animals. For information and details concerning this accommodation and how to request it, please review Policy 3050 and its accompanying regulation.

3.3.3. **Lactation Support**

Pursuant to Policy 7170, Staff Lactation Support and its corresponding regulation, LCPS site administrators, (such as principals, directors or building administrators) must designate a non-restroom location at their school or worksite as an area in which any mother who is employed by the School Board may take breaks of reasonable length during the school or workday to express milk to feed her child. The area must be shielded from public view and be safe, clean, and free of toxic and hazardous materials, and have access to electricity.

3.3.4. **Leave**

LCPS provides employees with a range of leave options for employees who need to be away from the workplace during their regularly assigned work hours. In addition to annual leave and sick leave, employees may seek leave for specific medical purposes and in connection with public and military service. These options and entitlements are covered below. For additional information or questions regarding leave, employees may contact the Leave and Disability team.

3.3.4.1. Annual Leave

Pursuant to Policy 7710, Annual Leave, only full-time, benefits-eligible 12-month employees earn annual leave. These employees are classified for employment purposes as either exempt or nonexempt. As explained earlier in this handbook and in Policy 7022, Employee Classification, a particular employee's status as exempt or nonexempt is determined by FLSA requirements.

3.3.4.1.1. *How annual leave accumulates*

Annual leave accumulates based on an employee's position classification.

Exempt Personnel receive their annual leave in a prorated amount based on the date of hire and are advanced annual leave each subsequent July as follows --

- 20 days for the first and second years of service.
- 21 days after two years of service.
- 22 days after four years of service.
- 23 days after six years of service.
- 24 days after eight years of service.

Non-Exempt Personnel who are new to LCPS earn one day of annual leave a month (depending on date of hire) for the first six consecutive months of employment up to six days. Upon the completion of six months, the remainder of the first year's annual leave is advanced to the employee. Thereafter, annual leave is advanced in July of each year. One additional day is earned for each additional year of service up to the 13th year. A maximum of 24 days of annual leave are earned after the 13th year of service.

To earn annual leave, employees must be performing the duties of their position. In other words, employees cannot be in any unpaid leave of absence or in a non-working period of the year.

3.3.4.1.2. *Use of annual leave*

Employees must submit their plans to use annual leave to their supervisors in advance. Supervisors should make every effort to accommodate reasonable annual leave requests.

In the case of personal emergencies that occur during the workday, supervisors may use their discretion to authorize time away from work for no more than one hour. Such absences will not be charged against the employee's sick leave or annual leave.

3.3.4.1.3. *Computation of leave in certain circumstances*

In computing annual leave, an employee who is transferring from a 10- or 11-month position to a 12- month position will be given credit for all full-time years worked for LCPS. The employee will receive all annual leave at the beginning of the 12-month position for the fiscal year. Thereafter, as explained above, leave is advanced in July of each year.

Whenever an employee accumulates more than 60 days of annual leave as of June 30 of a given year, any annual leave in excess of 60 days will be converted to sick leave as of July 1.

3.3.4.1.4. *Annual leave upon separation*

When an employee separates from employment, LCPS will prorate their annual leave based on the total amount of annual leave earned for the fiscal year, i.e., July 1 through June 30. Any remaining earned annual leave will be paid to the employee in the second check following separation. This payment is calculated based upon the employee's regular rate of pay at the time of separation.

A separating employee who exceeds their total earned annual leave will be charged for the excess leave based on their regular rate of pay at the time of separation. This charge will be deducted from their final paycheck, and the employee will be invoiced for any amounts not recouped in the final paycheck.

3.3.4.2. Sick Leave

All full-time employees accumulate sick leave, which may be used to cover personal or family

illness. Employees may also use sick leave in connection with the death of individuals or as personal leave, as described in Policy 7712, Sick Leave.

3.3.4.2.1. *How sick leave accumulates*

Full-time employees are advanced sick leave as follows:

- 11- and 12-month positions: 14 days
- 180-206-day positions: 13 days

To earn sick leave, employees must be performing the duties of their position. In other words, employees cannot earn sick leave while in any unpaid leave of absence status or in a non-working period of the year.

For newly hired employees, sick leave is advanced at a prorated amount that is calculated based on date of hire. Additionally, whenever the length of an employee's contract or assignment has been shortened (e.g. for a late start or early release), the number of sick leave days will be prorated.

Unused sick leave may accumulate without a limit. Employees will be given an accounting of accumulated sick leave each pay period.

Any full-time employee transferring from another Virginia public school division or from Loudoun County Government, or a former LCPS employee returning directly to LCPS, may be credited with unused sick leave, provided:

- the employee has not received payment for the unused accumulated sick leave;
- in the case of an employee transferring from Loudoun County or another Virginia public school division, the entity provides documentation of available leave. In these instances, the employee may transfer a maximum of 90 days.

3.3.4.2.2. *Use of sick leave as personal leave*

Any full-time, benefits-eligible employee who is not a 12-month employee may request the use of up to five days of sick leave per school year as personal leave. Unless submitted for a religious observance, the personal leave request is subject to approval by the employee's supervisor or designee. The use of personal leave may be limited when, in the judgment of the immediate supervisor, a qualified substitute cannot be secured.

3.3.4.2.3. *Use and misuse of sick leave*

After three consecutive days of absence, an employee may be required to provide verification from a licensed medical provider. Refer to Policy 7712 for other circumstances that may require such written verification.

Employees who make excessive use of or who demonstrate a suspicious pattern of using sick leave may be subjected to disciplinary action. The misuse of sick leave may result in termination of employment.

3.3.4.2.4. *Impact of separation from LCPS employment*

Except for retirement, employees who separate from LCPS will not be paid unused sick leave. Employees who separate from employment with a balance of advanced but unearned sick leave will be charged in their final paychecks and/or invoiced for any amounts not

recouped.

3.3.4.3. Parental and Medical Paid Leave

Pursuant to Policy 7715, Parental and Medical Paid Leave and its corresponding regulation, LCPS provides parental and medical paid leave for employees who:

- have been employed by LCPS in a benefits-eligible position for a minimum of one calendar year (i.e., 365 days) immediately preceding the leave; and
- are approved for leave under the federal Family & Medical Leave Act (FMLA), under Policy 7712, Sick Leave, or under Policy 7722, Leave Without Pay for absences related to:
    - birth, adoption, foster care, or surrogacy;
    - their own non-work related, serious health condition and they have applied for short-term disability; or
    - the serious health condition of a spouse, child, or parent.

3.3.4.3.1. *Eligibility and use of parental and medical paid leave*

To be paid while in parental or medical leave status, the employee must use their accrued sick (including personal), annual, or paid leave. If no paid leave is available, the employee may be approved for leave without pay.

An employee is eligible once a year, calculated on a rolling backward calendar basis.

3.3.4.3.2. *Parental paid leave*

Provided an LCPS employee meets the above eligibility requirements, they generally may seek up to six weeks (or a maximum of 30 working days) of paid leave for any absence from work due to the birth, adoption, foster care or surrogacy of their child, whether they are the birthing or non-birthing parent. This leave may be used once during a 12-month period, calculated on a rolling backward calendar basis; in other words, each time an employee requests parental paid leave, LCPS uses the date of the leave and calculates 12 months back from it. If the parent is the birthing parent, they must apply and be approved for short-term disability.

This paid leave will run concurrently with any other paid leave options for up to six weeks.

For non-birthing parents, the leave may be used consecutively or intermittently in the 12 months beginning with the event date.

This leave may not be applied retroactively for more than 30 days.

3.3.4.3.3. *Medical paid leave*

In addition to meeting the requirements above, an employee is eligible for medical paid leave if, before applying for this leave, they are absent for a total of 30 scheduled working days, consecutively or intermittently, due to their own serious health condition or because of the serious health condition of a spouse, child or parent.

Eligible LCPS employees may seek six weeks (or a maximum of 30 scheduled working days) of paid leave for absences from work.

An employee who is absent due to their own serious health condition must apply for short-term disability and be approved for job and benefit protections under Policy 7716, Leave for FMLA

(Family and Medical Leave Act) or Policy 7722, Leave Without Pay, to run concurrently with this benefit.

Approved medical paid leave may be used consecutively or intermittently.

3.3.4.3.4. *Leave entitlement pursuant to FMLA*

FMLA entitles eligible employees to take up to twelve workweeks of unpaid, job-protected leave in a 12-month period for specified family and medical reasons as follows:

- the birth of a child and to care for the newborn child within one year of birth;
- the placement with the employee of a child for adoption or foster care and to care for the newly placed child within one year of placement;
- to care for the employee's spouse, child, or parent who has a serious health condition;
- a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the essential functions of their job;
- any qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent is a covered military member on covered active duty; or
- twenty-six work weeks of leave during a single 12-month period to care for a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness if the eligible employee is the servicemember's spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin (military caregiver leave).

To be eligible, an employee must have worked for LCPS for at least 12 months and for at least 1,250 hours immediately preceding the requested leave period.

Leave may be taken consecutively, intermittently on a reduced schedule, or a combination. An eligible employee who is approved for intermittent leave or leave taken on a reduced schedule may be required to transfer temporarily to an alternative position, with the same pay and benefits, if it is deemed necessary to accommodate the intermittent leave or reduced schedule. Upon the conclusion of the period during which the eligible employee is on intermittent leave or a reduced schedule, the employee will return to their original assignment.

Employees are required to use paid leave. Once paid leave is exhausted, any remaining FMLA leave is unpaid. LCPS shall provide benefits throughout the FMLA leave period under the same conditions as during regular employment. If the employee elects not to return to work, LCPS may recover these benefits upon demand. Employees are encouraged to review Regulation 7716, Leave for Family & Medical Purposes for details as to how the use of advanced leave may impact their benefits.

Employees requesting leave pursuant to the FMLA must submit medical documentation utilizing the FMLA form provided by the HRTD Leave & Disability Programs office or by providing written documentation from a medical provider with the required information. The form may be requested via MyLeave.

Employees may contact Leave & Disability Programs at LCPSLeaveDisability@lcps.org or (571)252-1690 with questions.

3.3.4.4. Leave for Organ or Bone Marrow Donation

Eligible employees who are donating organs are eligible to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid job and benefits-protected leave in any 12-month period. Eligible employees who donate bone marrow are eligible to take up to six weeks of unpaid job and benefits-protected leave in any 12-month period. Please refer to Policy 7717, Organ and Bone Marrow Donation Leave for details as to eligibility and the process for requesting approval.

3.3.4.5. Leave Associated with Jury Duty or Legal Proceedings

In accordance with Policy 7720, Leave Associated With Legal Proceedings, employees who require time off from work to attend legal proceedings for which they or their minor children have been subpoenaed as witnesses or to appear in court as crime victims will be granted leave with pay. Employees who request leave: to attend personal legal proceedings for which there is no subpoena or summons to court; who are defendants in criminal cases; or who are plaintiffs, defendants, or have personal or familial interest in the proceedings, must use annual leave or leave without pay.

For more information, please review Policy 7720.

3.3.4.6. Leave Without Pay

At its discretion, LCPS provides leave without pay under unusual circumstances that cannot be addressed by other forms of leave.

During leave without pay, COBRA health insurance coverage may be offered. Additionally, employees may continue life insurance during this period by paying the total cost of the premium. At the end of the leave period, employees may be eligible to purchase VRS credit for this absence.

The abuse of leave without pay is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Please refer to Policy 7722 and its corresponding regulation for additional guidance.

3.3.4.7. Public Service Leave

Full-time employees who have completed three continuous years of satisfactory service in LCPS may be eligible for public service leave to cover instances where they are absent from work to fulfill their duties associated with public office. Employees elected to the School Board are not eligible. Please refer to Policy 7724, Public Service for additional information.

3.3.4.8. Military Leave

In accordance with federal and state law, LCPS provides military leave to employees who:

- serve as active duty members in the United States armed services;
- are former members of the armed services;
- are current members of the reserve forces of any of the United States' armed services, or of the Commonwealth's militia (i.e., National Guard, naval militia, and Virginia State Defense Force);
- are current members of the National Defense Executive Reserve;
- are current members of the Federal Emergency Management Agency;
- are otherwise covered by the federal Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act or applicable Virginia law.

Please refer to Policy 7726, Military Leave and its corresponding regulation for additional information.

3.3.4.9. Misuse of Leave

Misuse of leave of any type, or taking leave that has not been authorized, may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

3.4. Performance Management

The Office of Performance Management, which falls under Talent Development within HRTD, provides training and support on the evaluation program to administrators and supervisors, including processes and procedures, mid-year support (MYS), Plans of Assistance (POA), and Plans of Improvement (POI).

3.4.1. Introductory Period for Non-Licensed Personnel

In accordance with Policy 7022, all new employees who are not required to have a license issued by the Virginia Board of Education must serve a six-month introductory (i.e., probationary) period. These employees are given regular status upon the successful completion of their introductory period.

Please refer to Policy 7022 for more information.

3.4.2. Probationary Period for Licensed Teachers

Before being eligible for and issued a continuing contract, LCPS teachers must complete a probationary term of service of three years with LCPS; except that once a continuing contract status has been obtained in another Virginia school division, the probationary term of service may be reduced to two years with LCPS.

After completing their probationary period, licensed teachers shall be entitled to continuing contracts so long as they successfully complete their job duties, meet the requirements of their contracts, are not recommended for dismissal, and comply with School Board policies and regulations along with applicable Virginia and federal law. LCPS reserves the right to recommend dismissal in accordance with Virginia law.

Written notice of non-continuation of the contract by either party must be given by June 15 of each year; otherwise, the contract continues in effect for the ensuing year in conformity with local salary stipulations, including any applicable increments.

For more information, please refer to Policy 7650, Licensed Staff Contracts and Policy 7314, Duties and Responsibilities of Teachers.

3.4.3. Probationary Period for Principals, Assistant Principals, and Supervisors

Principals, assistant principals, and supervisors, including those who have previously achieved continuing contract status as teachers, must serve a probationary term of three years in such positions with LCPS before acquiring continuing contract status as principals, assistant principals, or supervisors.

Here, “supervisor” means a person who holds an instructional supervisory position as specified in the regulations of the Virginia Board of Education and who is required to hold a license as specified by the Board of Education.

For more information, please refer to Policy 7650.

3.4.4. Evaluation and Performance Management of Employees

As reflected in Policy 7312, Performance Management of Employees, the Division Superintendent is responsible for developing and organizing an annual School Division-wide performance management program for employees in accordance with Virginia law. HRTD establishes evaluation handbooks that provide guidance on implementing the School Division’s

performance management program. The Division Superintendent and Chief Human Resources Officer, or their respective designee(s), are responsible for monitoring the implementation of the performance management program.

For more information, including instructions on how to access evaluations, timelines for the evaluation process, and how to enter information in the evaluation system, please contact HRTD's Talent & Development team.

3.4.4.1. Evaluation and Performance Management of Teachers During Their Probationary Period

Virginia law requires that teachers on their probationary period be evaluated annually. Additionally, teachers in their first year of the probationary period must be evaluated informally at least once during the first semester of the school year.

In the event a probationary teacher faces nonrenewal of their annual contract, the Division Superintendent must consider these evaluations, among other things, in connection with recommending nonrenewal of the probationary teacher's contract to the School Board.

3.4.4.2. Evaluation and Performance Management of Continuing Contract Teachers

Consistent with Virginia law, teachers who have attained continuing contract status are formally evaluated at least once every three years and more often as deemed necessary by their school principals. Additionally, teachers who have attained continuing contract status are evaluated informally during each year in which they are not formally evaluated.

Any teacher with continuing contract status who receives an unsatisfactory formal evaluation and who continues to be employed by the School Board will be formally evaluated the following year. The evaluations will be maintained in the teacher's personnel file as required by section 22.1-295 of the Code of Virginia.

3.4.4.3. Impact of Unsatisfactory or Ineffective Performance Ratings on Eligibility for Annual Step Increases or One-Time Payments Relating to Tenure

As reflected in Policy 7652, Evaluation Related to Step Increase and One-Time Payments Related to Tenure, while annual step increases and one-time payments related to tenure are contingent upon funding approved in the School Board's annual budget, any employee who receives an unsatisfactory or ineffective evaluation will not receive a step increase in pay, or a one-time payment when they are on the highest step of their respective salary scale.

3.5. Classification and Compensation

The Classification and Compensation team supports and sustains the LCPS workforce through the monitoring and reviewing of compensation and position classification. The team's primary objectives are:

- the establishment and maintenance of equitable and competitive compensation levels for each position;
- identification and determination as to whether positions are exempt or non-exempt in accordance with FLSA guidelines; and
- the provision of opportunities for progression through an equitable placement practice and recognition of employee experiences.

3.5.1. Salary Scales/Schedules

Policy 7610, Salary Scales/Schedules explains that the School Board establishes and approves salaries for all school board employees. The School Board's adopted salary scales/schedules are included in the School Board appropriated budget, which is posted on the LCPS website; visit https://www.lcps.org/o/business/page/budget-information to review detailed information.

Current salary scales are included in the Employee Calendars & Compensation Resource Guide.

3.5.2. Classification of Positions

As mentioned above, the FLSA requires employers to classify positions as exempt or non-exempt. Positions that are exempt meet criteria such as a minimum salary amount and the performance of specific job duties. Positions that do not meet these criteria are classified as non-exempt and the laws require that these positions are paid a minimum wage and are compensated for all time worked, including overtime. See Policy 7022 as well as Policy 7030, along with its corresponding regulation, for additional details.

Additional information concerning the classification of specific positions is published annually in the Employee Calendars & Compensation Resource Guide.

3.5.3. Classification and Placement of Positions on the Teacher Salary Scale

Federal law exempts teachers, including but not limited to: regular academic teachers; teachers of skilled and semi-skilled trades and occupations; teachers engaged in automobile driving instruction; home economics teachers; and vocal or instrument music teachers. This is so if their primary duty for which they are employed is teaching, tutoring, instructing or lecturing in the activity of imparting knowledge.

As reflected in Policy 7022, teachers include LCPS employees whose positions have been assigned to the teacher salary scale.

3.5.4. Classification and Placement of Positions on the Auxiliary Salary Scale

In accordance with Policy 7022, auxiliary employees include persons whose positions have been assigned to the auxiliary salary scale. According to FLSA guidelines, auxiliary employees are classified as exempt employees.

3.5.5. Experience Credit for New and Returning Employees Who Are Assigned to the Teacher, Licensed, or Auxiliary Salary Scales

As explained in Policy 7612, **returning and newly hired teachers** may receive credit for the following prior experience, subject to the maximum credit limits explained below:

- full-time teaching in public schools, whether in Virginia or elsewhere;
- full-time teaching in accredited institutions of higher learning, in Virginia and elsewhere;
- teaching in schools operated on military installations, supported by federal tax funds, and for which academic credit is accepted for admission to public schools in Virginia;
- full-time teaching in public resident schools such as the Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind;
- full-time teaching in accredited private schools and in private schools for which teachers receive credit under the provisions of VRS;
- teaching in the field of vocational education, where the requirement calls for occupational work experience beyond the apprenticeship level. In these instances,

employees may be allowed credit for one year of teaching experience for each year of relevant, full-time work experience;
- effective July 1, 2025, for student teacher placements and school counseling interns in a program within LCPS, that is 400 or more hours within one school year that provides direct services to students if the newly hired employee begins a full-time, contracted assignment with LCPS with a start date within 12 months of completion of the placement or internship. Hours for a practicum, observations, or indirect placements are excluded, and retroactive step adjustments will not occur. This is a one-time adjustment applied to an employee's step placement;
- a maximum of two years' credit for honorable military or Peace Corps service;
- other experience deemed relevant by the Chief Human Resources Officer or their designee.

Licensed and auxiliary employees may receive credit for the following prior experience, subject to the maximum credit limits explained below:

- full-time licensed and auxiliary positions in public schools, accredited private schools, and institutions of higher learning;
- full-time experience in hospitals and health related organizations that are specifically job related;
- for full-time, paid internship experience within LCPS in a capacity directly supporting students;
- effective July 1, 2025, for school social worker interns in a program within LCPS, that is 400 or more hours within one school year that provides direct services to students if the newly hired employee begins a full-time, contracted assignment with LCPS with a start date within 12 months of completion of the placement or internship. Hours for a practicum, observations, or indirect placements are excluded, and retroactive step adjustments will not occur. This is a one-time adjustment applied to an employee's step placement;
- a maximum of two years' credit for honorable military or Peace Corps service;
- other experience deemed relevant by the Chief Human Resources Officer or their designee.

The newly hired or returning employee is responsible for providing to HRTD verification of creditable experience.

3.5.5.1. Experience Credit Not Allowable

Unless provided for in policy, credit will not be granted for part-time, hourly, substitute, student teaching less than 400 hours or outside of LCPS, and unpaid internship experience, either inside or outside of LCPS.

3.5.6. **Classification and Placement of Positions on the Universal Salary Scales**

Pursuant to Policy 7614, Classification and Placement of Positions for the Universal Salary Scale, the universal salary scale applies to all employees occupying positions that are assigned to the Universal Salary Scale (Hourly Rates) or the Universal Salary Scale (Salary).

Policy 7614 provides specific guidance concerning placement of positions on the universal salary scales; the following provides highlights pertinent to these positions. That said, employees whose positions are assigned to either of the universal salary scales should review Policy 7614 and direct any questions to the Classification & Compensation team using Ask HRTD or by calling (571) 252-1100.

3.5.6.1. Initial Placement on the Universal Salary Scales

HRTD places new employees on the universal salary scales based on position classification. New employees' steps and, where applicable, levels are determined based on the employee's applicable full-time experience.

Generally, a former employee who separated from LCPS in good standing and who is reemployed may be placed at the step equivalent to the employee's former step placement. Any additional experience gained after the employee separated may be considered when determining step placement.

3.5.6.2. Annual Step Increases

Employees who have 12-month assignments and who have been employed on the first workday after January 1 are eligible to receive a salary step increase for the next school year assignment.

Employees whose assignments are less than 12-months and who have been employed on or before the last working day of the first semester are eligible to receive a step increase in their salary for the next school year assignment.

Any employee who receives an unsatisfactory/unacceptable evaluation shall not receive a step increase the next year if employment continues.

Annual step increases are contingent upon funding.

3.5.6.3. Step Placement Upon Reassignment or Transfer

When an employee is reassigned or transferred to another position within the same level, no change is made in step placement on the salary scale.

When an employee is assigned to a position on a higher level, the employee's step placement will be determined based on relevant full-time experience and current placement practices.

An employee retains their current salary or hourly rate should they accept a lower-level position because of a reorganization or elimination of the employee's position. However, if the employee's current rate exceeds the maximum rate of the new position, the employee's rate will be reduced to the maximum rate of the new position after one year in the new position. This does not apply to employees who are first offered a position of the same level or higher level but decline and subsequently accept a position of a lower level.

An employee in a position that has been downgraded will be placed at a step at the lower level that is nearest to the employee's current rate of pay without exceeding the employee's current rate of pay or, if the employee's current rate exceeds the maximum rate of the lower level, the employee's pay rate will be reduced within one year to the new maximum rate of the lower level.

An employee who voluntarily accepts a position at a lower level or accepts a position at a lower level because of a demotion will be placed on the same step at the lower level.

3.5.6.4. Temporary Assignment to Positions of Higher or Lower Level

Employees who are assigned the full scope and duties of a higher-level position on an interim or acting basis may be assigned the rate of the higher position. In these cases, the level and step placement will be based on current placement practices.

HRTD will notify employees of this temporary assignment in writing. Upon returning to the regular assignment, the employee's salary reverts to the former rate.

An employee assigned to perform work of a lower level will retain their current rate.

3.5.7. Cyclical and Off-Cycle Classification and Compensation Reviews

Positions are reviewed on a cyclical basis. Implementation is dependent upon funding approved through the budget process.

As for positions assigned to the universal salary scales, Policy 7614 outlines the Off-Cycle Classification and Compensation Review program. Off-cycle classification and compensation review requests must be based upon an organizational change, the substantive repurposing of a role, or market conditions. Please refer to Policy 7614 for additional information.

3.5.8. Supplementary Pay for Athletic Coaches, Sponsors of Virginia High School League Activities, and Co-Curricular Sponsors; Other Stipends

Pursuant to Policy 7316, Supplementary Pay: Athletic Coaches, Sponsors of Virginia High School League Activities, Co-Curricular and Other Stipends, the School Board approves all categories of athletic coaching, co-curricular and extracurricular activity sponsorships, and other positions for which supplementary pay will be provided. Additionally, the School Board establishes the amount of compensation for employees who coach, supervise, or participate in any of the activities defined in Policy 8350, Student Activities. These positions are published annually in the Employee Calendars & Compensation Resource Guide.

3.5.8.1. Athletic Coaches

The School Division's high schools are members of the Virginia High School League (VHSL) and abide by VHSL rules and regulations that govern interscholastic competition. Pursuant to the VHSL "Coaches Rule," all coaches and sponsors of VHSL activities, both athletic and nonathletic, shall be certified teachers regularly employed by the School Board and responsible to the school principal. They shall have not less than three regular periods of classes or study hall per day. Exceptions to the Coaches Rule are:

- students in training at institutions of higher learning;
- principals, assistant principals, or other members of the School Division's instructional or administrative staff with duties comparable to those of teachers carrying three regular periods of classes;
- retired Virginia teachers or administrators as approved by the Division Superintendent;
- persons approved for one sports season by the Executive Director of VHSL upon written certification from the principal and the Division Superintendent;
- instructional or administrative aides employed full-time within LCPS.

3.5.8.2. Other Activities for Which Stipends May Be Paid

Under Policy 7316, "other" activities may have an associated stipend. Separate contracts in the form permitted by the Board of Education will be executed between the School Board and an employee who receives supplementary pay for any other activity to which a stipend is assigned.

3.6. Workplace & Labor Relations

3.6.1. Commitment to Equal Opportunity and Equitable Treatment

As stated in Policy 1040, Equal Opportunity for Equitable, Safe and Inclusive Environment and in Policy 7012, Equal Employment Opportunity, the School Board is committed to providing for an equitable, safe and inclusive learning and working environment for all persons regardless of race, color, ethnic or national origin, ancestry, religion, citizenship or immigration status, sex, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, genetic information, military or veteran status, disability, or any other characteristic protected by School Board policy or law. LCPS centers equity as one of its foundational core values.

As an equal opportunity employer, the School Board values merit and excellence within its workforce and encourages the highest levels of professionalism for all its employees. As such, the School Board does not discriminate against qualified applicants or employees based on race, color, ethnic or national origin, ancestry, religion, citizenship or immigration status, sex, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, genetic information, military or veteran status, disability, or any other characteristic protected by School Board policy or law.

LCPS is committed to making certain that discrimination does not exist in its policies, regulations, and operations. Procedures have been established for employees to report any complaints of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation. These procedures, reflected in the School Division's policies and regulations, are further addressed below.

In addition, as explained earlier in of this handbook, employees with disabilities that prevent them from fully performing their essential job duties, using LCPS facilities, or accessing LCPS programs, services, or activities should contact the HRTD Leave & Disability Program office at (571) 252-1690 to request reasonable accommodations.

3.6.2. Expectation that All Employees Model Professional Conduct

Policy 7560, Professional Conduct and its corresponding regulation, 7560.1, set out the School Board's expectation that all staff, as public employees, recognize that they are in positions of public trust and are held to the highest standards of personal and professional conduct, serving as role models, influencing and shaping young lives, and representing the School Division. It is the policy of the School Board to promote and foster work and educational environments that demonstrate the principles of respect, professionalism, civility, and inclusivity. As stewards of the School Division, employees are expected to convey these principles to students, parents, colleagues, and the school community through their actions and day-to-day activities.

Employees are expected to perform all assigned job duties in accordance with performance standards and job-specific requirements (including but not limited to attendance-related policies, procedures, and guidelines). Employees are expected to conduct themselves professionally, to treat all individuals with dignity, respect, and civility, and to demonstrate a commitment to an inclusive, safe, and supportive work and educational environment where individuals from diverse backgrounds work together to pursue the shared mission of the School Division.

Additionally, consistent with the School Board's commitment to promoting an equitable and inclusive work and educational environment for employees and students, LCPS rejects behavior and language that denigrates or demeans individuals on the basis of actual or perceived race, national origin, ancestry, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, marital status, age, religion, disability, genetic information, veteran

status or any basis protected by School Board policy or law, recognizing that such behavior and language encourages discrimination, hatred, oppression, and violence. Employees are expected to support the School Division's commitment to action-oriented equity and nondiscrimination practices through the performance of their job duties in order to promote respect, professionalism, civility, and inclusivity for all persons.

Employees are prohibited from retaliating against any individuals for raising concerns of potential violations of Policy 7560 or its corresponding regulation. Individuals who knowingly make false complaints under this policy are subject to disciplinary action.

Employees with supervisory responsibilities are expected to encourage professional, respectful, civil, equitable, nondiscriminatory, and inclusive work and educational environments for employees and students, and to address issues of unprofessionalism. Employees and students who feel they have been subjected to conduct that may violate the expectations outlined within Policy 7560 or its corresponding Regulation, 7560.1 should notify their supervisor or appropriate school administrator, respectively, as outlined in Regulation 7560.1.

Please see Policy 7560 and its corresponding Regulation, 7560.1 for more details.

3.6.2.1. Professional Use of Email

Consistent with Policy 7560, in order to communicate effectively and professionally with the LCPS personnel, families and students, employees are expected to adhere to certain requirements regarding email communications. Employees should review Regulation 7560.2 to ensure they are familiar with and incorporate these requirements into their email communications.

Employees are reminded that communications sent using LCPS email or resources may be released to members of the public as provided for in the Virginia Freedom of Information Act.

3.6.2.2. Employees Must Ensure Appropriate Boundaries with Students

LCPS expects employees to establish and maintain appropriate physical, social, and emotional boundaries with students. All forms of contact and communication with students must be transparent, accessible to supervisors and parents, nonsexual, unambiguous in meaning, and professional in reference and content. Conduct that violates Policy 7560 and its corresponding Regulation, 7560.1 includes, but is not limited to:

- grooming, sexual misconduct, and sexual abuse;
- conversations and comments of an intimate, romantic, or sexual nature;
- commentary on a student's physical appearance or clothing that could reasonably be interpreted as sexual, flirtatious, or harassing;
- physical contact with students that reasonably could be interpreted as sexual harassment or as having sexual or flirtatious intentions;
- communications, unrelated to a legitimate educational purpose, that do not use an official LCPS account or have others included in the communication, such as parents/guardians or relevant others as well as social media contact not on an LCPS official account and unrelated to school activities, including but not limited to connecting with, following or friending students via social media, online gaming or email accounts, or inviting/giving students access to their personal or non-official social media accounts;
- prolonged, frequent or private contact between an employee and student during or outside of school hours that is unrelated to academics or school activities without the consent of a parent/guardian;
- singling out students for flirtation, friendship, or personal attention beyond the bounds

of the employee-student relationship;
- singling out students for receipt of gifts;
- transporting students in personal vehicles without the knowledge and consent of a parent/guardian, and without another adult present, outside of a case-by-case approval by a supervisor for an exception to transport the student, in the event of an emergency or unusual circumstance;
- entering the home of a student without the knowledge, consent, and presence of a parent/guardian;
- concealing or falsifying information pertaining to student safety, health, or welfare;
- encouraging or assisting students' use of controlled substances such as tobacco, vaping, alcohol and drugs. Should the employee be present at any school-sponsored event or function where students are in possession or use of these substances, the employee has a duty to report this behavior to the person in charge of the event and their immediate supervisor;
- allowing or causing students to miss instructional time for non-school sanctioned purposes.

If an employee believes a student is contacting or engaging with them inappropriately or that the student is attempting to blur the line of the student-teacher relationship, the employee will seek immediate guidance from their supervisor.

3.6.2.3. Communications That Go Beyond Protected Speech

The School Board recognizes an employee's right to engage in protected speech and their right to a private life outside of their work responsibilities. However, employees shall not poll their students to determine their political beliefs or how their parents are voting on any issue and shall not attempt to indoctrinate students with political or social philosophy. In the event LCPS receives an individualized inquiry about employee speech, including speech made via social media outside of their work responsibilities, LCPS may discipline employees if the employee speech:

- disrupts, or leads to a reasonable apprehension of a disruption of the learning and working environment;
- violates Virginia or federal law or otherwise violates public trust and confidence in the School Division;
- constitutes unprofessional or inappropriate communications with staff, parents, students, or community members.

3.6.3. **Dress Code for Staff**

In accordance with Policy 7564, Dress Code for Staff, LCPS employees are expected to dress appropriately for a professional and educational environment. Any clothing that interferes with or disrupts the educational or work environment or fails to present a professional image is not permitted.

Employees are expected to report for work in neat, clean business, or business casual attire, absence of visible holes, frays or patchwork. Business or business casual is defined as follows:

- Shirts with collars, crewneck or V-neck shirts, blouses, and golf and polo shirts;
- Casual slacks, trousers, and jeans;
- Dresses, skirts, or other dress clothing; and
- Appropriate footwear for the employee's daily work environment.

Clothing with the following characteristics is prohibited:

- Language and/or images that are vulgar, lewd, discriminatory, or obscene;
- Language and/or images that promote or incite illegal or violent conduct, the unlawful use of weapons, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or drug paraphernalia; or
- Threatening language and/or images.

Employees' dress and grooming may not present a danger to the health and safety of themselves or to other staff members or students, prevent them from performing their duties, or disrupt the functioning of the school or work environment. Employees are to serve as adult role models for appropriate attire.

Employees who are issued uniforms are required to wear them when in a duty status. When employees report for work, their uniforms should be clean, neat, and not in need of repair. Uniforms are the property of LCPS and must be returned when the employee leaves LCPS service.

Any employee who comes to work in clothing that does not meet the above standards will be required by their principal or supervisor to take immediate corrective action, which may includebeing asked to go home and change into appropriate attire. Annual leave or leave without pay will be charged for time away from work.

3.6.4. **Employee Complaints and Grievances**

A workplace relations incident can encompass any potential violation of School Board policy or LCPS regulation, including but not limited to allegations of discrimination or harassment based on a protected category, concerns regarding professional conduct and/or an abusive work environment, allegations of child or student abuse or neglect, concerns regarding employee-student boundaries, or any other conduct-related concern that a supervisor has about an employee.

3.6.4.1. Complaints under Policy 7016

Policy 7016, Employment Complaints provides an avenue for employee complaints related to general operational or management matters. An employee should first attempt to resolve their complaint at the lowest administrative level (i.e., their immediate supervisor). If an employee is not able to resolve the matter with their immediate supervisor, they should consult Policy 7016.

Confidentiality will be observed during review of the employee's complaint, provided that it does not interfere with the review of their concerns or with the ability to take corrective action.

Retaliation or reprisal against an employee who files a complaint under this policy is prohibited.

3.6.4.2. Complaints of Discrimination, Harassment, an Abusive Work Environment, and Retaliation

Policy 7014, Environments Free from Harassment, Discrimination, and Abuse provides employees an avenue for reporting discrimination, harassment, an abusive work environment, or retaliation. Employees should consult the School Board policies for comprehensive processes and coverage relating to filing discrimination, harassment, and retaliation complaints.

Under Policy 7014, complaints of discrimination and harassment are covered by Part I. Part I applies to harassment and discrimination complaints filed by any individual against an adult in the work or educational environment, including but not limited to LCPS employees, vendors or contractors, parents, or community members. School Board Policies 8030, Student Discrimination and Harassment and 8035, Title IX, Sex-Based Discrimination, Sexual

Harassment cover complaints of harassment and discrimination against students. (Note that Title IX also covers certain sex-based complaints involving complaints against adults.)

Part II of Policy 7014 applies to abusive work environment complaints filed by an LCPS employee against another LCPS employee.

Individuals may file a complaint regarding behaviors that are covered by both Parts I and II of Policy 7014. In such instances, the complaint may be investigated and addressed under either or both sections of the policy.

Please refer to Policy 7014 for more information. To file a complaint, visit https://www.lcps.org/o/hr and click "LCPS Workplace Relations Formal Complaint Form."

3.6.4.3. Non-Dismissal Grievances Under Policy 7018

The purpose of the School Board's Procedure for Adjusting Grievances (set out in Part II of Policy 7018) is to provide an orderly procedure for resolving disputes concerning the application, interpretation, or violation of any of the provisions of the School Board policies, rules and regulations as they affect the work of employees, other than dismissals.

By law, LCPS provides certain employees with the ability to file grievances relating to their employment, including but not limited to the application of personnel policies, rules and regulations, ordinances, and statutes; acts of reprisal for filing or processing a grievance, or participating as a witness in any step, meeting, or hearing related to a grievance; or complaints of discrimination on the basis of race, color, political affiliation, handicap, age, national origin, or sex.

However, employees **cannot** grieve complaints or disputes:

- relating to the establishment and revision of wages or salaries, position classifications or general benefits;
- suspensions or contract non-renewals for teachers who have not achieved continuing contract status;
- the establishment or contents of ordinances, statutes or personnel policies, procedures, rules and regulations;
- failure to promote;
- discharge, layoff, or suspension from duties because of decrease in enrollment, decrease in enrollment in or abolition of a particular subject, or insufficient funding;
- hiring, transfer, assignment, and retention of teachers within the School Division;
- suspension from duties in emergencies;
- the methods, means, and personnel by which the School Division's operations are to be carried on; or
- coaching or extracurricular activity sponsorship.

While these management rights are reserved to the School Board, failure to apply, where applicable, the grievance policy or procedures as written or established by the School Board is grievable.

To be eligible to file a grievance for these matters under Policy 7018, the individual filing the grievance must be a full-time employee of the school division, except for employees classified as supervising employees.

For more information or to review the process applicable to filing grievances, please review Part II of Policy 7018. Questions should be directed to HRTD.

3.6.4.4. Grievances Relating to Recommendations for Dismissals: Licensed Staff

Virginia law provides that the following procedure apply to all regularly licensed LCPS personnel employed under a written contract as a teacher, assistant principal, principal, or supervisor (as defined by section 22.1-294 of the Code of Virginia).

Below is a summary of this procedure, which is fully set out (and should be referenced) in Part III of Policy 7018, Procedure for Adjusting Grievances.

In the event the Division Superintendent recommends dismissal, written notice shall be sent to the teacher, which informs the teacher that within 10 business days after receiving the notice, the teacher may request a hearing as provided for in section 22.1-311 of the Code of Virginia. From the time the teacher receives notice of the Division Superintendent's recommendation until the hearing is held (if one is requested), the merits of the recommendation shall not be considered, discussed, or acted upon by the School Board.

The teacher may request from the Division Superintendent the reasons for the recommendation in writing or in a personal interview. If the teacher requests a hearing, the Division Superintendent will provide, within 10 days, the teacher, or their representative, the opportunity to inspect and copy their personnel file and all other documents relied upon in reaching the decision to recommend dismissal. Within 10 days of the request of the Division Superintendent, the teacher, or their representative, shall provide the Division Superintendent with the opportunity to inspect and copy the documents to be offered in rebuttal to the decision to recommend dismissal. The Division Superintendent and the teacher or their representative are under a continuing duty to disclose and produce any additional documents identified later that may be used in the respective parties' cases-in-chief. The cost of copying such documents shall be paid by the requesting party.

Once requested, the School Board or, at the School Board's option, a hearing officer appointed by the School Board, shall set a hearing within 15 days of the request. The teacher shall be given at least five days' written notice of the time and the place of the hearing, and may request a public hearing; otherwise, the hearing will be private. The teacher and the Division Superintendent may be represented by legal counsel and another representative, respectively.

The School Board or hearing officer, as the case may be, shall establish the rules for the conduct of the hearing, and such rules shall include the opportunity for the teacher and the Division Superintendent to make an opening statement and to present all material or relevant evidence, including the testimony of witnesses, and the right of all parties to cross-examine the witnesses. Witnesses may be questioned by the School Board or hearing officer. A stenographic record or tape recording of the proceedings shall be taken.

The teacher shall bear their own expenses. The School Board covers the expenses of the Division Superintendent and the hearing officer.

Witnesses who are employees of the School Board shall be granted release time if the hearing is held during the school day. The hearing shall be held at the school in which most witnesses work, if feasible.

If the hearing is conducted by a hearing officer, the recommendation shall be based exclusively upon the evidence presented at the hearing. If requested, the hearing officer may reopen the hearing for the purpose of hearing after-discovered evidence upon a finding of good cause by the hearing officer at any time before their recommendation is due. The hearing officer shall transmit their written recommendation and a record or recording of the hearing to the School Board as soon as practicable and no more than 10 business days after the hearing.

After receiving the record and recommendation from the hearing officer, the School Board may make its decision upon the record or recording of such hearing, or elect to conduct a further hearing to receive additional evidence. The School Board must hold such further hearing as soon as practicable and must give written notice of the time and place of such further hearing to the Division Superintendent and the teacher within 10 business days after the board received the record or recording of the initial hearing. The notice must specify each matter to be inquired into by the School Board. The School Board shall determine the procedure to be followed at such further hearing.

The School Board shall give the teacher its written decision as soon as practicable and no more than 30 days after the hearing, whether the hearing is held by the School Board, by a hearing officer, or after a further hearing by the School Board to receive additional information after the hearing officer has made their recommendation.

The School Board may dismiss or suspend a teacher upon a majority vote of a quorum of the School Board. The School Board's attorney, assistants, or representative, if they represented a participant in the prior proceedings; the grievant; the grievant's attorney or representative; and, notwithstanding the provisions of section 22.1-69 of the Code of Virginia, the Division Superintendent shall be excluded from any executive session of the School Board that has as its purpose reaching a decision on a grievance. However, immediately after a decision has been made and publicly announced, as in favor of or not in favor of the grievant, the School Board's attorney or representative and the Division Superintendent may join the School Board in executive session to assist in the writing of the decision.

The failure of the grievant to comply with the time limitations and all substantial procedural requirements shall terminate the teacher's right to any further proceedings on the grievance unless just cause for such failure can be shown. The determination as to whether the substantial procedural requirements have been complied with shall be made by the School Board.

Please see Part III of Policy 7018 for further information. Questions should be directed to HRTD.

3.6.4.5. Grievances of Dismissals and Demotions Under Policy 7024

As stated in Policy 7024, Classified Employee Dismissal and Demotion Grievance Procedures, the School Board has adopted the following procedure for the dismissal or demotion of employees who historically have been categorized by LCPS as "classified" employees. For purposes of this policy, "employee" means all full-time employees of the School Division who have completed the required probationary (introductory) period, except the Division Superintendent and employees who are covered under the provisions of Article 2 (e.g., principals, assistant principals, etc.) and Article 3 (e.g., teachers) of Chapter 15 of Title 22.1 of the Code of Virginia. "Employee" does not mean a part-time or temporary employee.

Under Policy 7024, written notice of, along with a statement of the reasons for, the proposed demotion or dismissal shall be given to the employee by their supervisor or appropriate administrator. This notice shall advise the employee that they may file a written request for a hearing with the Division Superintendent within five days and that failure to do so will constitute a waiver of the right to a hearing and the action will become final without a hearing or further notice.

Upon receiving a timely written request, the Division Superintendent or designee shall hold a hearing within ten working days. Notice of the hearing shall be given orally or in writing to the employee at least five calendar days before the hearing.

The employee and their supervisor may be represented by legal counsel or a designated representative at the hearing. The hearing shall be private and the Division Superintendent or designee shall have full discretion over the conduct of the hearing. However, the employee and the supervisor may make opening statements, may present material and relevant evidence, including the testimony of witnesses, may cross-examine witnesses, and may make closing remarks. Witnesses may be questioned by the Division Superintendent or designee. Rules of evidence do not apply and hearsay is permitted. The Division Superintendent or designee shall be responsible for compiling the record presented.

The Division Superintendent or designee shall give the employee a written decision within five working days after the completion of the hearing. The decision shall be based on the evidence relevant to the issues produced at the hearing in the presence of each party unless the employee fails to appear for the hearing. In such case, the decision will be based on the evidence adduced at the hearing. If the Division Superintendent/designee decides to accept the recommendation of dismissal or demotion, the decision shall specify the effective date of the action, which may be immediate. When a designee is designated by the Division Superintendent to hear an appeal, the designee will make the decision.

The employee may request a review of the decision by the School Board by providing written notice to the Division Superintendent within five (5) days. Upon timely filing of the request, the School Board shall make its decision based upon a review of the record from the Division Superintendent's or designee's hearing and render its decision within 30 days of the request. The School Board's decision is final.

Nothing in the procedure set out in Policy 7024 is intended to create, nor shall it be construed as creating, a property right in employment or expectation of continued employment, nor shall this procedure be interpreted to limit in any way whatsoever the School Board's exclusive final authority over the management and operation of the School Division.

Please see Policy 7024 for further information. Questions should be directed to HRTD.

3.6.5. Prohibition Against Corporal Punishment

In accordance with Policy 8280, Corporal Punishment Prohibited, no LCPS employee shall subject a student to corporal punishment. "Corporal punishment" means the infliction of, or causing the infliction of, physical pain on a student as a means of discipline. Corporal punishment does not include physical pain, injury or discomfort caused by participation in practice or competition in an interscholastic sport, extracurricular activity, or participation in physical education. Please see Policy 8280 for more details.

3.6.6. Duty to Report Child Abuse and Neglect

As explained in Policy 7530, Duty to Report Child or Student Abuse and Neglect, the School Board is committed to an environment that protects and supports the well-being of all students. Therefore, and pursuant to sections 63.2-1508 et seq. and 63.2-1606 of the Code of Virginia, any employee, who, in their professional or official capacity, knows or has reasonable suspicion that a child or student is the subject of abuse or neglect, or exploitation if a student is 18 years old or over, shall report such knowledge or reasonable suspicion immediately (i.e., as soon as possible, but not longer than 24 hours after having reason to suspect a reportable offense of child abuse or neglect).

All LCPS staff are mandated reporters. Failure to report may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. Please refer to Policy 7530 and https://www.lcps.org/o/doss/page/child-protective-services-referral for additional information and guidance.

3.6.6.1. Reporting Requirements

Any teacher or other school employee who has reason to suspect abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a child or student shall immediately report it t the principal or designee (such as an assistant principal, counselor, social worker, etc.) or supervisor of the department, who shall make the report to local or state agencies (i.e., Child Protective Services (CPS), or Adult Protective Services (APS), as applicable). The principal or designee must notify the person making the initial report when the report of the suspected abuse or neglect is made and of the name of the individual receiving the report. The reporting party must forward any communication resulting from the report, including any information about any actions taken regarding the report, to the person who made the initial report.

The initial report should be an oral report submitted directly to CPS or, if the student is over 18, to APS.

- During business hours, contact The Loudoun County Department of Health and Human Services at (703) 771-KIDS (5437) for CPS, and (703) 777-0437 for APS.
- After hours and on the weekend, call the Virginia Department of Social Services 24-hour hotline at (800) 552-7096 for CPS or (888) 832-3858 for APS.
- The principal or designee shall then submit such report, in writing, via the LCPS online CPS reporting portal.

If any principal is suspected of abuse or neglect of a child or student, the school employee who has this suspicion shall report it to the Division Superintendent or designee, who shall report it to CPS or, if applicable, APS.

Reports of reasonable suspicion that a student, who is 18 and older, is the subject of abuse or neglect shall be reported immediately to CPS, and to APS, regardless of the student's intellectual ability.

3.6.6.1.1. *Employees' duty to report if they are the subject of a CPS or APS investigation*

In accordance with Policy 7542, Required Notification and Consequences of Criminal Charges, Convictions, and Pleas; and Department of Social Services Investigations or Dispositions for Employees, any employee who is the subject of a CPS and/or APS investigation into an allegation of child abuse or neglect must notify the Division Superintendent or designee (who, for this policy is the Chief Human Resources Officer) of the investigation in writing no later than the first working day following the date the employee became aware of the CPS and/or APS investigation, or as soon as practical in extenuating circumstances.

3.6.6.1.2. *Administrators' responsibilities*

Principals or their designees, or department supervisors, shall report the following to an administrator in HRTD in addition to appropriate reporting to law enforcement, if they have reason to believe a crime may have been committed, and to CPS and/or APS. Reporting to HRTD must be made as soon as possible but within one workday of becoming aware of the allegations. The below behaviors or allegations to report include, but are not limited to:

- Allegations of employee sexual misconduct with a student.
- Allegations of an employee using physical force or making a threat of physical harm to a student.
- Allegations of an employee inflicting mental abuse or neglect, as defined in the Virginia Administrative Code, on a student, or making a threat of mental abuse or neglect to a student.

- Employee behavior that includes, but is not limited to:
    - Sexual or romantic invitations to students;
    - Dating students or soliciting dates with students;
    - Engaging in sexualized dialogue with students;
    - Making suggestive comments to students or in the known presence of students;
    - Physical exposure of a sexual, romantic, or erotic nature;
    - Self-disclosure of a sexual or erotic nature to students or in the known presence of students;
    - Sexual contact or inappropriate overtures to students whether physical, verbal, non-verbal, written or electronic.

The principal or designee or department supervisor shall report the suspected abuse or neglect by a non-LCPS employee to the local or state department of social services. Upon making such a report, they should also inform the proper Department of School Leadership and Department of Student Services designees.

If any LCPS employee is suspected of abuse or neglect of a child or student, the principal or designee or department supervisor shall report it to the proper HRTD designee and to the local or state department of social services.

The principal or designee or department supervisor is responsible for ensuring that all personnel are fully informed of their responsibilities under the law and the procedures of Policy 7530.

Notice of the duty to report suspected child abuse or neglect shall be posted in each school pursuant to section 22.1-291.3 of the Code of Virginia. This posting shall state that:

- Any teacher or other person employed in a public or private school who has reason to suspect that a child is an abused or neglected child, including any child who may be abandoned, is required to report such suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to local or state social services agencies or the person in charge of the relevant school or his designee; and
- All persons required to report cases of suspected child abuse or neglect are immune from civil or criminal liability or administrative penalty or sanction on account of such reports unless such person has acted in bad faith or with malicious purpose. The notice shall also include the Virginia Department of Social Services' toll-free child abuse and neglect hotline.

3.6.6.1.3. *Consequences of noncompliance with reporting procedures*

Any employee who fails to comply with the reporting requirements for child abuse and neglect may be subject to disciplinary action, up to, and including, termination or dismissal. In addition, Virginia law provides that any person required to file a report regarding suspected child abuse or neglect who fails to do so within 24 hours may be convicted of a class 1 misdemeanor and fined accordingly.

Please review Policy 7530 for more information.

3.6.7. Impact of a Criminal Conviction or Founded Complaint of Child Abuse or Neglect on LCPS Employment

As stated in Policy 7540, Criminal Conviction or Founded Complaint of Child Abuse or Neglect of Applicants for Employment, the School Board will not hire or continue the employment of any employees that are determined to be unsuitable for service by reason of criminal conviction or founded complaints of child abuse and neglect.

Any person making a materially false statement regarding their criminal history or child abuse record shall be subject to denial of employment, or termination or dismissal if already employed. Further, a materially false statement as to a criminal offense may constitute a crime.

The Division Superintendent shall inform the School Board of any notification of arrest of an employee received pursuant to section 19.2-83.1 of the Code of Virginia.

3.6.7.1. Applicants for Employment Must Submit to a Background Check

All applicants for employment, whether full-time or part-time, permanent or temporary, must undergo a background investigation, which includes a check of employment history as well as a release of criminal and investigatory information possessed by any state, local, or federal agency. Other areas of inquiry will include criminal convictions, involvement in drug/alcohol abuse, and a search of the registry of founded complaints of child abuse and neglect maintained by the Department of Social Services.

All applicants for employment, whether full-time or part-time, permanent or temporary, shall:

- certify that they have not been convicted of a felony or any offense involving the sexual molestation, physical or sexual abuse or rape of a child; and
- disclose whether they have been convicted of a crime of moral turpitude and if so convicted, the full particulars thereof; and
- that they have not been the subject of a founded case of child abuse and neglect.

All applicants who are offered or accept employment with the School Board shall submit to fingerprinting and shall provide personal descriptive information to be forwarded along with the applicant's fingerprints through the Central Criminal Records Exchange to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) for the purpose of obtaining criminal history record information regarding such applicant. Satisfactory report of this record check is a condition of employment.

Additionally, all applicants who are offered or accept employment shall provide written consent and the necessary personal information for the School Board to obtain a search of the registry of founded complaints of child abuse and neglect maintained by the Department of Social Services. In addition, where the applicant has resided in another state within the last five years, the School Board shall require as a condition of employment that such applicant provide written consent and the necessary personal information for the School Board to obtain information from each relevant state as to whether the applicant was the subject of a founded complaint of child abuse and neglect in such state.

Satisfactory reports of these registry searches are a condition of employment. If the information obtained reflects that the applicant or employee is the subject of a founded case of child abuse or neglect, the applicant or employee shall be denied employment, or the offer of employment shall be rescinded.

Please see Policy 7540 and its corresponding regulation for more information.

3.6.8. Required Notification and Consequences of Criminal Charges, Convictions, and Pleas and Department of Social Services Investigations or Dispositions

Policy 7542 requires that employees notify the Division Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee (who, for this policy is the Chief of Human Resources) whenever they are the subject of any criminal charges, convictions, or pleas, and investigations into or dispositions of child abuse and neglect. An employee may be dismissed from employment if they are determined to be unsuitable for service by reason of criminal conviction or of any founded complaint of child

abuse and neglect.

The notification to the Division Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee shall be in writing and must include the name and address of the complainant, date of the alleged offense and a copy of the summons, warrant, indictment, information or other document served upon the employee notifying the employee of the charge, investigation into child abuse or neglect, or disposition of any such summons, warrant, indictment, information, investigation, or disposition. The written notification to the Division Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee from the employee shall be no later than the first working day following service of the summons, warrant, indictment or information upon the employee, or as soon as practical in extenuating circumstances.

Failure of the employee to give the Division Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee written notice, as set forth above, may be cause for disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from employment.

Additional information can be found in Policy 7542.

3.6.8.1. Superintendent Notification to the School Board

By law, the Division Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee is required to inform the School Board of any notification of a felony arrest of a School Board employee.

3.6.8.2. Central Criminal Records Background Check

In accordance with section 19.2-83.1 of the Code of Virginia the Division Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee may require any employee covered by Policy 7542 to submit to an FBI background check.

3.6.8.3. Impact of Certain Criminal Convictions on Future or Current Employment with LCPS

The School Board will not employ any person who is convicted of a violent felony set forth in the definition of barrier crime in subsection A of section 19.2-392.02 of the Code of Virginia or any offense involving the sexual molestation, physical or sexual abuse, or rape of a child. If an employee is convicted of any such charge, the employee will be deemed unsuitable for service and will be dismissed from employment.

If an employee is convicted of a class one misdemeanor or a crime of moral turpitude, such employee may be deemed unsuitable for service and may be dismissed from employment.

3.6.8.4. Founded Complaints of Child Abuse and Neglect

If an employee is the subject of a founded case of child abuse or neglect, the employee will be deemed unsuitable for service and will be dismissed from employment.

3.6.8. **Commitment to a Drug- and Alcohol-Free Workplace**

As stated in Policy 7550, Drug- and Alcohol-Free Workplace, the School Board is committed to maintaining a drug- and alcohol-free workplace in order to maintain a safe, healthy and productive environment for all students and staff. Employees are prohibited from being under the influence of or using, selling, distributing, dispensing, possessing, transporting, consuming, or manufacturing illegal drugs, narcotics, drug look-alikes, drug paraphernalia, or alcoholic beverages on its premises, at any school activity whether on or off School Board property, on any school-sponsored field or foreign trip and on or in school buses and vehicles. The

unauthorized use or abuse of prescription drugs, over-the-counter medication, or any other substances that impair an employee's ability to perform their job safely or properly is also prohibited.

No employee shall report to work, perform assigned duties, or participate in any School Division business or activity with students while the employee is under the influence of alcohol, marijuana (including cannabis oil), illegal drugs, or unauthorized prescription drugs.

The School Board reserves the right to discipline its employees, up to and including termination of employment, where an employee's use, sale, distributing, dispensing, possession, transporting, manufacturing, or being under the influence of illegal drugs and narcotics, unauthorized use of prescription drugs, or alcoholic beverages off School Board property affects the employee's ability to perform their duties, causes a disruption to the learning or working environment, or causes circumstances that adversely affect the School Division, its employees, or students.

Violations of Policy 7550 may result in discipline up to and including termination of employment and/or the requirement to participate in a drug or alcohol abuse assistance and rehabilitation program. Please review Policy 7550 for more information.

3.6.8.1. Notification to the School Board

Whenever any employee has been charged by summons, warrant, indictment or information with the commission of any drug or alcohol related felony or misdemeanor, the employee should notify the Division Superintendent or their Designee in writing no later than the first working day following service of the summons, warrant, indictment, or information upon the individual (or as soon as practical in extenuating circumstances). This written notification must include the name and address of the charging agency, the date of the alleged offense, and a copy of the summons, warrant, indictment, information, or other document served upon the employee notifying the employee of the charge. Failure to do so may lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination or dismissal from employment. Additionally, regardless of whether an employee is terminated or resigns as a result of a violation of this policy, the Superintendent may petition for the revocation of the employee's license (if applicable), pursuant to regulations prescribed by the State Board of Education.

3.6.8.2. Employee Drug-Free Awareness Program

The School Division maintains an employee drug-free awareness program that provides employees information on the dangers of drug and alcohol use/abuse, the provisions of this policy, the availability of EAP and the disciplinary repercussions for violations of Policy 7550. Information is also provided in new employee information sessions and via periodic reminders.

3.6.8.3. Monitoring and Reporting Compliance

All supervisors are required to observe, monitor, and take effective action to detect and address alcohol and drug use and abuse among employees. All employees who reasonably suspect alcohol or drug use or abuse by other employees on School Board property or at school activities shall report their observations to their own supervisor or to another onsite supervisor. If the reasonable suspicions are about their supervisor, employees should report their observations to another on-site supervisor. If a violation is suspected, supervisors shall immediately contact law enforcement, which could be the assigned School Resource Officer for the school or area. Once law enforcement has been contacted, the supervisor shall immediately notify HRTD. If a supervisor cannot be contacted and an employee believes there is an imminent safety risk to students, staff, the public and/or to the suspected employee, the

employee should immediately report their observations to law enforcement, which could be the assigned School Resource Officer for the school or area. Following the contact to law enforcement, the employee should continue to try to reach their supervisor or another member of the supervisory chain to report what has been observed and what they have reported to law enforcement.

3.6.8.4. Employees Required to Obtain and Maintain a Commercial Driver's License as a Condition of Employment

Policy 7324, Drug and Alcohol Testing for Employees Required to Hold a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) and its corresponding regulation set out the extensive requirements that LCPS applicants and employees must meet if they are required to obtain and maintain a CDL as a condition of their employment. School bus drivers and other employees who drive vehicles designed to transport 16 or more passengers, or vehicles with a gross combination weight of 26,001 or more lbs. are subject to a drug and alcohol testing program that fulfills the requirements identified in Title 49, Part 382 of the Code of Federal Regulations. Visit https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/regulations/drug-alcohol-testing/overview-drug-and-alcohol-rules-employers for more information.

Please review Policy 7324 for additional information regarding these conditions of employment.

3.6.8.5. Employees' Responsibilities Concerning Student Drug or Alcohol Use

Policy 7554, Employee Responsibility Concerning Student Alcohol and Drug Usage sets out employee responsibilities to promote a safe and drug- and alcohol-free learning environment for students. All employees shall discourage and will not condone illegal alcohol or drug use by students at any time or place, including during school-sponsored activities whether on or off School Board property, such as sporting events, award ceremonies, and field trips. Any employee who has reason to believe that a student is under the influence of illegal drugs, illegally possessed or used controlled or synthetic substances, alcohol, or a chemical substance that affects the brain or nervous system must notify their principal or other appropriate administrator. The principal, administrator, or their respective designee shall notify the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) and shall immediately report any act that may constitute a criminal offense to the Division Superintendent or designee and the local law-enforcement agency.

Failure to comply with this requirement may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination or dismissal from employment. See Policy 7554 for additional details.

3.6.9. **Tobacco- and Smoke-Free Environment**

Pursuant to Policy 7552, Tobacco and Smoke-Free Environment, the use or distribution of any tobacco or nicotine vapor product in an LCPS-owned vehicle, including a school bus; on School Board property; or at an on-site or off-site school-sponsored activity is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, the use or distribution of any tobacco products, nicotine vapor or electronic products (i.e., for vaping), alternative nicotine products, or other smoking devices.

Employee violations may result in discipline, up to, and including, termination of employment or the requirement to participate in a tobacco or electronic or other smoking device cessation program.

3.6.10. **Staff Participation in Political Activities**

The School Board recognizes that all employees have the right to engage in political activity. An employee's participation in political activities must not adversely affect the employee's job

performance and shall comply with all laws, rules, and regulations. No School Board resources shall be used by employees for non-LCPS business including, but not limited to, use of the email system, vehicles, buildings, copy machines, or other assets.

In addition, no employee shall:

- use their position with the School Division to further a political cause, campaign, or support of any issue on any referendum matter during work hours.
- distribute campaign materials to any students and/or staff during school hours, except when such distribution is relevant to the curriculum and current candidates for the same office are treated equitably. If debates or other activities consistent with the curriculum are held, all candidates for a particular office must be offered the opportunity of comparable time to speak.
- suggest in any official capacity that the School Division or any component of it supports or opposes a candidate for election to any office or any political party.
- discuss internal confidential affairs in a public forum.

This policy shall not be construed to prohibit the discussion or use of political or issue-oriented materials as part of classroom discussions or projects or to prohibit the delivery of informational materials.

Employees who engage in political activities on their own time must make it clear that their views and actions represent their individual positions and do not represent the views of the School Division.

Employees planning to act as campaign managers or seek, accept an appointment or be elected to public office must give prior notice of their intentions to the Chief Human Resources Officer or designee. The Chief Human Resources Officer or designee will review with the employee the School Division's continuing requirements to avoid conflicts of interest and to maintain satisfactory attendance, effort, and performance standards.

Please review Policy 7524, Staff Participation in Political Activities for additional information and guidance.

3.6.11. Violations Related to Secure Mandatory Tests

Pursuant to section 22.1-292.1 of the Virginia Code, the Virginia Board of Education may suspend or revoke the administrative or teaching license it has issued to any person who knowingly and willfully commits any of the following acts related to secure mandatory tests administered to students as required by Virginia Code or by the Board of Education:

- giving unauthorized access to secure test questions.
- copying or reproducing all or any portion of any secure test booklet.
- divulging the contents of any portion of a secure test.
- coaching or assisting examinees during testing or altering test materials or examinees' responses in any way.
- making available any answer keys.
- failing to follow test security procedures established by the Department of Education.
- providing a false certification on any test security form required by the Department of Education.
- retaining a copy of secure test questions.
- excluding students from testing who are required to be assessed; and
- participating in, directing, aiding assisting in, or encouraging any of the acts prohibited by this Code provision.

Violations of this Code provision, or action taken by the Virginia Board of Education in accordance with section 22.1-292.1 of the Code of Virginia (or its implementing regulations), may serve as grounds for disciplinary action by LCPS, up to and including termination of LCPS employment.

3.6.12. **Absent Without Approved Leave**

As stated in Policy 7522, Absence Without Approved Leave, an employee who is absent without approved leave is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination or dismissal from employment. In addition, the employee's wages will be deducted for the unapproved leave.

An employee who does not report to work for more than three consecutive days without notifying their supervisor will be deemed to have voluntarily resigned their position, unless the employee can provide verifiable evidence of extenuating circumstances, as determined by the Division Superintendent or designee.

3.6.13. **Staff Discipline**

The School Board holds employees to the highest standards of performance and professional conduct. As stated in Policy 7310, Staff Discipline, the School Board may discipline and terminate or dismiss employees in accordance with Virginia law. Any discipline or dismissal of employees should be done in a manner to respect the employee's right to privacy to the extent practicable.

3.6.13.1. Discipline of Employees

Disciplinary actions may include, but are not limited to, verbal reprimand, written reprimand or warning, suspensions, demotions, or dismissals. If practicable, progressive discipline should be used.

Employee evaluations, placement on professional improvement plans, and referral of an employee to EAP, training, or other resource or support program is not considered disciplinary action.

Employees should be afforded an opportunity to provide a written or oral rebuttal of the reasons for the disciplinary action within 30 calendar days of receipt of the action.

3.6.13.2. Termination or Dismissal from LCPS Employment

Regularly employed full-time principals, assistant principals, and supervisors who are required to have a State Board of Education license and who are regularly employed full time in that supervisory capacity, teachers, and other licensed staff may be dismissed in accordance with Virginia law, regulations and School Board policies. In this context, "teacher" means a regularly employed full time teacher, a visiting/school social worker, a school counselor, or a librarian, all of whom must hold a valid teaching license. This procedure is covered in Part III of Policy 7018 and is summarized in Section 3.6.4.3.2 of this handbook.

Staff who were historically identified as "classified" may be terminated for disciplinary reasons in accordance with Policy 7024. This procedure is summarized in Section 3.6.4.3.3 of this handbook.

3.6.13.3. Duty to Report to the Virginia Board of Education

The Virginia Board of Education requires the School Board to notify it of any licensed personnel who are dismissed or resign due to: the conviction of any felony; any offense involving the

sexual molestation, physical or sexual abuse or rape of a child; any offense involving drugs; or because they are the subject of a founded case of child abuse or neglect.

3.6.13.4. Suspension of Employees

All employees are subject to the suspension procedures stated in section 22.1-315 of the Code of Virginia.

3.6.13.5. Effect of Probation Pursuant to Va. Code §18.2-251

For purposes of Policy 7310, a court's placing an individual on probation pursuant to section 18.2-251 of the Code of Virginia shall be treated as a conviction and as a finding of guilt.

3.6.14. Personnel Files: Contents, Confidentiality, and Corrections

In accordance with Policy 7306, Personnel Records and File, HRTD maintains a personnel file for each School Board employee. All current and former employees have the right to review their personnel files in accordance with the Virginia Freedom of Information Act. Employees who wish to review their files should contact the HRTD.

3.6.14.1. Definitions

The following are relevant definitions, which clarify the documents that comprise an employee's personnel file.

"Personnel records" are documents or information, however stored, relating to identifiable individuals maintained by LCPS.

A "personnel file" is a folder, electronic or otherwise, that includes demographic information, salary, contract information, licensure information, benefits information, training, policy acknowledgements and certifications, performance reviews, disciplinary memoranda, and letters of commendation.

Records that are ***not*** part of the personnel file include, but are not limited to:

- references and other pre-employment forms;
- interview forms;
- personnel records containing confidential personnel information of other employees;
- educational records relating to identifiable students; and
- confidential HRTD reports or other investigative reports prepared in anticipation of litigation, for use in active administrative investigations, and/or protected by the attorney-client privilege or work product doctrine.

3.6.14.2. Confidentiality of Personnel Records

Generally, LCPS personnel files, personnel references, academic credits and other similar documents owned or maintained by LCPS are confidential. The School Board reserves the right to release this information in accordance with law and written School Board policy or regulation.

3.6.14.3. Corrections to or Requests to Remove Personnel Records from a Personnel File

A former or current employee may request in writing to HRTD that a document in their file be corrected or removed from their personnel file. HRTD will review the request and determine

whether to approve or deny it. Requests to correct or remove a document should be submitted as soon as practicable, but within the same school year (July 1 - June 30).

If the request to remove or correct a document is denied or in lieu of such a request, an employee may also submit a rebuttal to a document contained in the file within 30 calendar days of review of the file.

While this policy affords employees the right to seek to amend personnel file records, this right cannot be used to challenge or appeal a disciplinary action, an individual's opinion, or a substantive decision made by the School Division about an employee. Such amendment procedure is intended to ensure the School Division conforms to fair recordkeeping practices, not to supplant the accepted standards and procedures for making disciplinary decisions or personnel actions.

For additional information, please review Policy 7306 or contact HRTD.

3.7. Reports and Complaints Pursuant to Title IX

The School Board has established policies for resolving complaints alleging sex discrimination, harassment, and bullying in violation of Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972.

Sex-based discrimination includes, but is not limited to discrimination in programs, athletics, extra-curricular activities, facilities, course offerings, and funding.

Sexual harassment means conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

- The provision of an aid, benefit, or service for an employee or student conditioned on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct;
- Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the recipient's education program or activity; or
- "Sexual assault" as defined in 20 U.S.C. 1092(f)(6)(A)(v), "dating violence" as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(10), "domestic violence" as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(8), or "stalking" as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(30).

Consult Policy 7014 with regard to Title IX reports concerning staff, and Policy 8035 (and its corresponding regulation) for reports concerning students.

3.7.1. Reporting Potential Title IX Violations

Employees should contact their supervisor or the appropriate HRTD Coordinator to file a complaint.

Employees with actual knowledge of sexual harassment must immediately report it to their supervisor, who will promptly notify the Title IX Coordinator. Actual knowledge means notice of sexual harassment or allegations of sexual harassment to any employee. This means that employees who reasonably suspect sexual harassment is taking place, even if only a bystander, are obligated to report it.

If an LCPS employee receives an alleged sexual assault notification, they must either report it directly to law enforcement or to a school administrator. If reported to the school administration, the receiving administrator must report the allegation immediately to law enforcement.

Title IX Coordinator
Christopher Moy
21000 Education Court
Ashburn, VA 20148
571-252-1000
Christopher.Moy@lcps.org

For more information, please visit https://www.lcps.org/o/hr/page/title-ix.

3.7.2. Prohibition Against Retaliation

Retaliation against an employee for filing a complaint of unlawful harassment/ discrimination is prohibited. Allegations of retaliation should be reported to the Title IX Coordinator.

3.8. Licensure

Pursuant to Policy 7301, no teacher or other school personnel required to hold a license issued by the State Board of Education may be regularly employed by the School Board or paid from public funds unless the individual holds a license issued by the Virginia Board of Education or a provisional license issued by the Virginia Board of Education, superintendent, or School Board; holds a local eligibility license in accordance with applicable law; holds a three-year license to teach high school career and technical education courses in specified subject areas; or is hired to teach in a trade or industrial education program and for whom the teacher licensure requirements have been waived by the Virginia Department of Education.

Please consult Policy 7301 for more information.

3.8.1. Licensure Information

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) website maintains current information regarding Virginia educator licensure. Links to the VDOE website, as well as to the application for licensure, fee schedule, and verification of employment, are included on the LCPS Licensure team's webpage. Additionally, the Licensure team's webpage provides information about license renewal and alternative pathways to licensure.

For general licensure questions, please call (571) 252-1100 and ask to speak with a licensure specialist.

3.8.2. National Board Certification

At its May 23, 2002 meeting, the School Board approved a National Board Certification incentive for teachers. Any teacher employed by LCPS earning initial National Board Certification will be awarded 180 points, all or part of which shall be eligible for credit in one re-licensure cycle. Teachers who extend their National Board Certification through the Maintenance of Certification (MOC) process will earn 90 points towards re-licensure.

LCPS will reimburse initial component fees of the certification process when National Board Certification components are submitted. LCPS will provide reimbursement one time for each of the four components. Additionally, LCPS will reimburse the component fee for recertification once recertification is achieved.

Each teacher achieving National Board Certification will receive a stipend each year they are employed as a licensed teacher with LCPS, dependent on state and division budgets.

3.9. Employee Recognition

In alignment with the School Division's Strategic Plan for Excellence, HRTD focuses on having exemplary staff (Goal 2) to "cultivate high-performing teams of professionals committed to realizing our mission and goals."

HRTD is committed to being the employer of choice and supporting the employee life cycle. The Employee Recognition Program supports this commitment by helping to cultivate an environment where employees feel valued, respected, and appreciated.

The Employee Recognition Program involves the coordination and celebration of annual awards including the Washington Post Teacher and Principal of the Year, as well as LCPS recognition awards and employee of the year programs. The goals for these programs include the expansion of employee categories that are recognized, promotion of a peer-to-peer recognition system, support of improved staff morale, and increased engagement for all LCPS employees by helping to create a culture of support and recognition embedded in each school and work location.

Additional information about the Employee Recognition program can be found here.

3.10. Staffing: Appointment and Assignment of Employees

All full-time employees must be appointed by the School Board, upon recommendation of the Division Superintendent, to fill budgeted positions. As reflected in Policy 7302, Appointment and Assignment, the Division Superintendent is authorized to employ new personnel on an interim basis between School Board meetings, subject to School Board approval. In addition, Policy 7302 authorizes the Superintendent to create additional positions, not within the adopted budget, provided those positions can be filled within the existing budget and are approved by the School Board in advance of being posted.

Please review Policy 7302 for additional information.

3.10.1. Interviews for Certain Positions

For all strategic positions, defined as all school principals and Superintendent Cabinet positions (the latter of which are listed in Regulation 3120, Powers and Duties), interview panels are required as part of the hiring process. Please review Policy 7302 for additional information concerning the interview process for strategic positions.

3.10.2. Employee Assignments

As stated in Policy 7302, the School Board authorizes the Division Superintendent to assign all employees to their respective positions in a school or work location. Subject to, and notwithstanding the terms of Policy 7304, Licensed Employee Transfers and Involuntary Reassignments and its accompanying regulation, the Division Superintendent may reassign any employee for that school year to any school or work location within the School Division, provided no change or reassignment affects the employee's salary for that school year. Written notice of such reassignment or transfer shall be sent to the affected employee.

The Division Superintendent has the discretion to temporarily fill vacant school principal and Superintendent Cabinet positions and to recommend such temporary appointees or assignees for permanent appointment or assignment to the School Board at its next meeting. Such appointees or assignees will continue to serve in a temporary capacity and only become permanent upon School Board approval of the Division Superintendent's respective personnel

recommendations.

3.10.3. Employment or Supervision of Family Members

In accordance with Policy 7020, Employment or Supervision of Family Members, the Division Superintendent may not recommend for employment, and the School Board cannot employ or pay, any family member of the Division Superintendent or of any School Board member except for a family member who:

- has been employed pursuant to a written contract with the School Board or employed as a substitute teacher or teacher's aide by the School Board prior to the taking of office of the Division Superintendent or any School Board member;
- has been employed pursuant to a written contract with the School Board or employed as a substitute teacher or teacher's aide by the School Board prior to the inception of the family relationship;
- was employed by the School Board at any time prior to June 10, 1994, and had been employed at any time as a teacher or other employee of any Virginia school board prior to the taking of office of any member of the School Board or the Division Superintendent;
- of a School Board member, unless the School Board member certifies that they had no involvement with the hiring decision and the Division Superintendent certifies in writing to the remaining School Board members that the employment recommendation is based upon merit and fitness and the competitive rating of the qualifications of the individual, and that no member of the School Board had any involvement with the hiring decision;
- of the Division Superintendent, unless the Division Superintendent certifies that they had no involvement with the hiring decision and the LCPS Chief Human Resources Officer certifies in writing to the School Board members that the employment is based upon merit and fitness and the competitive rating of the qualifications of the individual, and that the Division Superintendent had no involvement with the hiring decision.

"Family member" is defined as parent, spouse, sibling, child, child-in-law, or sibling-in-law.

Additionally, no family member of any employee may be employed by the School Board in a position if the family member is to be employed in a direct supervisory or administrative relationship, either supervisory or subordinate to the employee. No employee will be reassigned to a position where a family member is directly responsible for that employee's supervision or employment activities. Here, an "employee in a direct supervisory position" is a person who exercises any control over the employment or the employment activities of another person or persons, or is in a position to influence another person's or persons' employment activities.

Please review Policy 7020 for more information.

3.11. Staff Health

The School Board recognizes its obligation to provide a safe and healthy environment for students and staff. In addition to the below, please consult Policy 7320, Staff Health for health requirements and screening relative to staff.

3.11.1. Tuberculosis Screening is Required as a Condition of Employment

Pursuant to Policy 7320, as a condition of employment, every new employee shall submit a certificate, signed by a licensed healthcare professional, stating that the employee appears free of communicable tuberculosis.

After consulting with the local health department director, the School Board may require the submission of such certificates at such intervals it deems appropriate, as a condition of continued employment.

3.11.2. Blood-borne Contagious or Communicable Diseases

Work attendance by employees who suffer from communicable or blood-borne diseases that are contagious shall be determined on a case-by-case basis through implementation of the process delineated in Regulation 7320. The privacy rights of the employee involved shall be respected. The number of personnel who are made aware of the employee's condition shall be minimized but shall not jeopardize the safety of the employee and other persons within the school or work environment.

3.11.3. Other Contagious or Infectious Diseases or Illnesses

Generally, any employee suspected of having a contagious or infectious disease (except an employee suffering from a blood-borne contagious or communicable disease) shall be examined by a school nurse or public health nurse to confirm the presence or absence of symptoms of the disease. The employee may provide such documentation from his/her personal physician at the employee's expense. If a nurse is unavailable, the principal or supervisor shall contact the Supervisor of Student Health Services, who will determine whether the employee should be excluded from the school or work environment due to exhibited symptoms. In all cases, the affected individual should be isolated from other persons within the school or work environment until a decision can be made regarding the presence or absence of the disease.

3.11.4. Epidemics, Pandemics, or Periods of Increased Public Health Risk

During an epidemic, pandemic or period of increased public health risk, and in compliance with recommendations from the Loudoun County Health Department, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), or the Commonwealth of Virginia, employees may be required to submit to enhanced health screening as well as mitigation protocols for the legitimate business need of maintaining a safe learning and working environment. High-risk employees, as defined by the Loudoun County Health Department, CDC, the Commonwealth of Virginia, or the employees' health care provider, may request the use of sick leave, annual leave, or a combination of leave as provided by School Board Policy, the FMLA, or the ADA but will not be required to do so.

Additional details are set out in Policy 7320.

3.12. Additional Requirements for Bus Drivers and CDL Holders

Bus drivers and other employees who, as a condition of employment, are required to obtain and maintain a CDL must comply with the following.

3.12.1. Requirements of Applicants for School Bus Driver Positions

As stated in Policy 7322, Records Required of Commercial Driver's License (CDL) Holders, before an applicant is accepted into the School Bus Driver training program, the applicant must:

- Be at least 18 years old;
- submit a School Bus Driver's Application for a Physician's Certificate;
- furnish a statement or copy of records from the DMV showing that the applicant, within the preceding five years, has not been convicted of driving under the influence of alcohol

or drugs, refusing to take a blood or breath test, or a felony; has not been assigned to any alcohol safety action program or driver alcohol rehabilitation program pursuant to section 18.2-271.1 of the Code of Virginia; or, within the preceding twelve months, has not been convicted of two or more moving traffic violations or has not been required to attend a driver improvement clinic by the Commissioner of the Department of Motor Vehicles pursuant to section 46.2-498 of the Code of Virginia;

- furnish two statements, each signed by a person who resides in the School Division or in the applicant's community, which state that the applicant is of good moral character.
- exhibit a license showing the applicant has successfully undertaken the examination prescribed by section 46.2-339 of the Code of Virginia; and
- submit to applicable alcohol and/or controlled substance testing in accordance with School Board Policy 7324.

For additional details, please review Policy 7322.

3.12.2. Requirements of School Bus Drivers

Pursuant to Policy 7322, no employee may operate a school bus unless they are medically cleared by a licensed physician, nurse practitioner, or advanced practice registered nurse ("licensed medical professional"). This clearance is documented in the School Bus Driver's Application for Physician's Certificate, which is signed by the employee and the licensed medical professional.

School Bus Drivers must have an annual physical examination that complies with Virginia Board of Education requirements.

In addition, no employee shall drive a school bus unless they furnish a statement or copy of their Department of Motor Vehicle (DMV) records showing that the employee has a valid and current CDL with the required endorsements. Each school year, the employee must furnish a copy or statement from the DMV showing that the employee, within the preceding five years:

- has not been convicted of driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs;
- has not been convicted of a charge of refusing to take a blood or breath test;
- has not been convicted of a felony, or assigned to any alcohol safety action program or driver alcohol rehabilitation program pursuant to section 18.2-271.1 of the Code of Virginia; and
- within the preceding twelve months, has not been convicted of two or more moving traffic violations or has not been required to attend a driver improvement clinic by the Commissioner of the Department of Motor Vehicles pursuant to section 46.2-498 of the Code of Virginia for the applicable employment period.

3.12.3. Requirements of CDL Holders In Non-School Bus Driver Positions

With respect to any applicants for non-school bus driver positions that require the selected candidate to obtain and maintain a CDL, applicants must:

- furnish a statement or copy of records from the DMV showing that the employee has a valid and current CDL, with the required endorsements;
- furnish a copy or statement from the DMV showing that the employee, within the preceding five years, has not been convicted of driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, convicted of a charge of refusing to take a blood or breath test, convicted of a felony, or assigned to any alcohol safety action program or driver alcohol rehabilitation program pursuant to section 18.2-271.1 of the Code of Virginia or, within the preceding twelve months, has not been convicted of two or more moving traffic violations or has

not been required to attend a driver improvement clinic by the Commissioner of the Department pursuant to section 46.2-498 of the Code of Virginia for the applicable employment period;
- exhibit a license showing the applicant has successfully undertaken the examination prescribed by section 46.2-339 of the Code of Virginia;
- submit to applicable alcohol and/or controlled substance testing in accordance with School Board Policy 7324, the Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act of 1991 as amended, and 49 CFR Parts 40 and 382.

With regard to employees, no individual shall drive an LCPS-owned commercial motor vehicle unless the employee:

- has a valid and current CDL license, with the required endorsements, issued by their state residency motor vehicle agency;
- furnishes a statement or copy of records from the DMV showing that within the preceding five years, the employee has not been convicted of driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, convicted of a charge of refusing to take a blood or breath test, convicted of a felony, or assigned to any alcohol safety action program or driver alcohol rehabilitation program pursuant to section 18.2-271.1 of the Code of Virginia or, within the preceding twelve months, has not been convicted of two or more moving traffic violations or has not been required to attend a driver improvement clinic by the Commissioner of the Department pursuant to section 46.2-498 of the Code of Virginia for the applicable employment period; and
- must submit to applicable alcohol and/or controlled substance testing, records of which shall be provided to HRTD and/or the Transportation Department in accordance with School Board Policy 7324, the Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act of 1991 as amended, and Federal Regulation 49 CFR Parts 40 and 382.

3.12.4. Drug and Alcohol Testing of CDL Holders

School bus drivers and all other employees who operate vehicles designed to transport 16 or more passengers, including the driver, or with a gross combination weight of 26,0001 or more pounds must submit to the LCPS drug and alcohol testing program.

Regardless of the consequences provided for under the regulations of the Federal Department of Transportation and Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (contained in 49 CFR Parts 40 and 382, et al.), any employee working in a safety sensitive capacity and/or exercising their CDL license who violates this policy shall be subject to the following consequences established by the School Board:

- Refusal to consent to alcohol and/or drug testing will result in immediate removal from duty and termination of employment.
- A positive test for a controlled substance will result in immediate removal from duty, a referral to an alternative substance abuse and recovery program as outlined in Regulation 7324, Drug and Alcohol Testing for Employees Required to Hold a Commercial Drivers License (CDL), and may result in discipline, up to, and including, termination of the employment.
- A blood alcohol concentration of .04 or greater will result in the immediate removal from duty, a referral to an alternative substance abuse and recovery program, as outlined in Regulation 7324, and may result in discipline, up to, and including, termination of employment.
- A blood alcohol concentration of .02 to .039 will result in the immediate removal from duty for a period of no less than 24 hours and a referral to an alternative substance abuse and recovery program. Test results at this level, coupled with facts and

circumstances indicating the employee was under the influence of alcohol at work, may lead to discipline up to and including termination, provided the action is not based solely on the test results.

Please review Policy 7324 and its corresponding regulation for additional details.

3.13. Employment of Temporary Employees

Policy 7330, Employment of Temporary Employees and its accompanying regulation set out the requirements and guidelines for the employment of temporary employees. A temporary employee is defined as a substitute teacher who is not working as a volunteer, or substitute, temporary, or part-time employees.

Please review Policy 7330 and its accompanying regulation for additional information.

3.13.1. Temporarily Employed Teacher Substitutes

A temporarily employed teacher, as used in this section, means:

- one who is employed to substitute for a contracted teacher for a temporary period during the contracted teacher's absence; or
- one who is employed to fill a teacher vacancy for no longer than 90 teaching days, unless otherwise approved by the Superintendent of Public Instruction on a case-by-case basis, during one school year.

All substitute teachers shall be at least 18 years of age and hold a high school diploma or have passed a high school equivalency examination approved by the Board of Education.

The building principal or their designee is responsible for obtaining substitutes and for ensuring established school rules and emergency procedures are provided to the substitute. Any request for a substitute must give as much advance notice as possible and ensure lesson plans are available for the substitute. The School Board reserves the right to approve all substitutes. Reports of absences and employment of substitutes shall be made by the principal to the Payroll Office.

3.13.2. Temporary Long-Term Teacher Substitutes

Temporary long-term teacher substitutes may be employed when:

- the term of substitution is of indeterminate length, for a minimum of eleven consecutive days; or
- when the circumstances are such that the substitute may temporarily replace the regular teacher; or
- under other conditions that the Division Superintendent may deem necessary.

Temporary long-term teacher substitutes may be paid a daily salary as established by the School Board without any regular fringe benefits.

Any temporary substitute for a long-term teacher assignment shall be paid the long-term substitute teacher daily rate effective on the eleventh day of the assignment in a single position. The long-term substitute teacher daily rate will be retroactively applied to the first 10 consecutive teaching days of the assignment. The long-term teacher daily rate is established by the School Board and is without any regular fringe benefits. Temporary substitutes will not be issued contracts and temporary services are not counted as part of a probationary term leading

to a continuing contract.

3.13.3. Student Teachers/Teachers in Training

The School Division accepts student teachers only from accredited institutions. All student teachers must meet the same hiring requirements as all other personnel. Student teachers may be used as substitute teachers in accordance with their program and with prior HRTD approval.

3.13.4. Employment of Temporary Employees

A substitute, temporary, or part-time employee is an employee hired to fill a temporary need for a limited duration of time. The appropriate budget holder, Superintendent's Cabinet or designee, is authorized to employ substitute, temporary, and part-time employees as needed for the operation of business.

Substitute, temporary, and part-time employees do not hold contracts and are employed on an as-needed basis. Services of a substitute, temporary, or part-time employee may be discontinued with or without cause at any time.

3.13.5. Expectations of Temporary Employees

Temporary employees are to conduct themselves professionally and abide by all School Board policies and School Division regulations and with applicable law.

3.14. Licensed Employee Transfers and Involuntary Reassignment

Policy 7304, Licensed Employee Transfers and Involuntary Reassignments and its corresponding regulation establish the procedures by which LCPS permits the voluntary and involuntary transfers of licensed employees.

3.14.1. Voluntary Transfers

Licensed employees who are on annual or continuing contracts are eligible to enter the Licensed Transfer Process. Employees who are not eligible are employees on an "end of year" contract, employees who work 0.4 FTE or less, employees who have not successfully completed the Mid-Year Support program, employees who have received an overall final performance rating of ineffective and will continue employment in the ensuing school year, and employees who are not otherwise eligible for continued employment with the School Division in the following school year. Additionally, an employee who has two or more Developing/Needs Improvement individual ratings on their completed performance review for the same school year (regardless of their overall final performance rating) may be impacted in their ability to transfer. A licensed employee who has not been subject to an involuntary reassignment and who has accepted a voluntary transfer offer will not be eligible for an additional voluntary transfer during the same contract year unless the subsequent transfer request is for a position that is considered a promotion or demotion from their current licensed assignment.

Generally, the process for licensed employees to apply for voluntary transfers to other licensed positions within the School Division is administered by HRTD through an annual Licensed Transfer Process. The Licensed Transfer Process begins on a date established by HRTD and ends on June 15.

Please consult Policy 7304 and its corresponding regulation for more detailed information about this process.

3.14.2. **Involuntary Transfers**

The involuntary transfer process authorizes the Division Superintendent to require the transfer for licensed employees whenever the Division Superintendent determines that an excess number of school-based licensed personnel exist at a particular school. Reassignment situations will arise, from time to time, in response to increased class sizes, eliminated or reduced programs, or due to enrollment reductions. This process requires school principals or supervisors to work in collaboration with HRTD and other departments, as applicable, to identify licensed employees to be involuntarily reassigned.

Whenever a principal must recommend specific individuals for reassignment from their school, the principal will first identify the pool of employees in the teaching assignment or endorsement areas designated for staff reallocation. The principal will then ask for volunteers for reassignment from the pool. If there are no volunteers, the principal will use an employee's length of service within the School Division to identify the least senior employee(s) to be reassigned. "Length of service within the School Division" is defined as the employee's effective date as a licensed employee beginning with the most recent term of continuing employment in a licensed position.

The least senior employee(s) may be eligible for certain exceptions to reassignment, including but not limited to:

- the employee holds a co-curricular or extra-curricular responsibility defined by Policy 7316;
- the employee functions as lead teacher, subject area lead teacher, or department chair;
- the employee participates in other critical responsibilities within the school; or
- the employee holds multiple licensed endorsements for flexibility for the school's overall instructional program.

In these circumstances, the next least senior employee who does not qualify for an exception shall be reassigned. This process shall continue until staffing reallocation numbers have been met.

Additionally, employees who have not yet been released from the Mid-Year Support program, who have two or more Developing/Needs Improvement individual ratings on their completed performance review for the same school year (regardless of their overall final performance rating), and who are not eligible for continued employment for the following school year will not be considered for reassignment.

Reassignment recommendations for special education teachers shall ensure all federal and state mandates and School Division needs are met, which may mean that certain teachers are excluded from reassignment regardless of seniority ranking. Reassignment decisions regarding special education teachers are made in collaboration with the Director of Special Education or designee.

Consideration should be given to avoid circumstances where an employee will be subject to an involuntary reassignment multiple years in a row, although such circumstances will not preclude an employee from being selected for involuntary reassignment.

If more than one teacher has the same length of service and none of them qualify for an exception, the last four digits of the employee's social security number will be used to identify the employee(s) selected for reassignment, with the highest number being the most senior and continuing in descending order.

Being eligible for one or more exceptions does not automatically exclude an employee for selection for reassignment. All exceptions must be approved HRTD.

The Division Superintendent will inform the School Board when an involuntary reassignment process will be implemented.

Please consult Policy 7304 and its corresponding regulation for detailed information about these processes.

3.15. Reductions in Force

A reduction in force policy, Policy 7910, Reduction in Force, along with its corresponding regulation, set out the process for occasions when reductions in force are appropriate. This process involves the application of several steps, which are administered by HRTD.

A decline in student enrollment, abolition of a particular subject or reduction in the number of classes offered in a particular subject, reorganization, budgetary consideration, the closing of a school, office or facility, elimination of a program, expiration of a special grant, or adverse economic or other conditions, as determined by the School Board, may require a modification of an instructional program that could result in a reduction in staff at one or more schools, program areas or departments, or for the entire School Division. In such circumstances, the Division Superintendent will determine the positions that will be reduced or eliminated.

Please consult the complete text of Policy 7910 and its corresponding regulation for additional details.

3.16. Provision of Professional References or Assistance

LCPS has many high-performing team members who may choose at various times to grow their careers within LCPS or via other opportunities. As an organization, LCPS seeks to hire, cultivate, promote and support high-performing team members. This may involve the provision of professional references.

A professional reference request is one that seeks information concerning an employee's performance or eligibility for rehire. As explained below, Policy 7308, Provision of Professional References or Assistance outlines guidance to employees requesting, and to supervisors considering whether to provide, professional references.

3.16.1. General Reference Requests

Principals and/or direct supervisors are encouraged, but are not required, to provide references for high-performing employees. Care should be taken to ensure references do not contain information that discloses confidential personal information or that contains information that is related to race, ancestry, color, sex, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, marital status, age, religion, national origin, disability, genetic information, or pertaining to any other status that is protected by federal or Virginia law or School Board policy. Additionally, the reference should not disclose information pertaining to any leave entitlement or status that is protected by law (such as leave entitlement under the FMLA or military leave taken in accordance with the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994).

It is acceptable for a principal or direct supervisor to communicate to an employee that they are not comfortable serving as a reference, provided the withholding of a reference is not being done for an unlawful discriminatory reason.

3.16.2. When the Provision of References are Prohibited

Neither LCPS nor any employee, contractor, or agent of LCPS shall assist an LCPS employee, contractor, or agent in obtaining a new job, apart from the routine transmission of administrative and personnel files, if LCPS or its employee, contractor, or agent knows or has probable cause to believe that:

- the employee, contractor, or agent seeking a reference has engaged in sexual misconduct regarding a minor or student in violation of law; or
- the employee, contractor, or agent seeking a reference is the subject of an ongoing investigation of sexual misconduct in violation of law; or
- the employee is the subject of a founded case of child abuse or neglect.

Any employee, contractor, or agent who receives a reference request from an individual they know or has reasonable cause to believe has engaged in sexual misconduct regarding a minor or student in violation of law, is the subject of an investigation of sexual misconduct in violation of law, or is the subject of a founded case of child abuse or neglect shall immediately notify HRTD.

Any contractor or contractor employee who violates this prohibition may be banned from being awarded or working on future LCPS contracts and a contractor employee may be immediately removed from working on any current LCPS contract.

Any LCPS employee violating Policy 7308 may be disciplined up to and including termination.

Please consult Policy 7308 for additional information.

3.17. Separation from or Termination of LCPS Employment

Policy 7318, Separation of Staff Members provides that employees can separate from employment with LCPS in one of three ways: retirement, resignation, or termination/dismissal. The Division Superintendent or designee is authorized to approve the separation of employees.

Please see Policy 7318 and its corresponding regulation for more details.

3.17.1. Retirement

As explained in Section 3.2.7 of this handbook, LCPS participates in VRS. Employees may retire in accordance with the provisions of VRS and receive retirement benefits in accordance with Policy 7628.

3.17.2. Resignation

LCPS employees may resign under the procedures set forth in Regulation 7318-1, Separation of Staff Members. The Division Superintendent or designee may approve the resignation request of any employee.

For licensed staff who are under contract with LCPS, the Division Superintendent or designee is authorized to approve or deny a request for resignation tendered by licensed staff after June 15 of the school year prior to the school year in which the resignation takes effect.

3.17.3. Dismissal or Termination

The Division Superintendent has implemented procedures for the termination or dismissal of LCPS employees in accordance with applicable law and School Board policies. Generally,

these procedures are identified in Section 3.6 of this handbook.

Additionally, the contract of a teacher or any other employee who is required by the Virginia Board of Education to hold a State Board of Education certificate to be employed may be terminated or not renewed, pursuant to applicable provisions of the Code of Virginia, and as provided in Policy 7650.

3.18. Non-LCPS Employment

Policy 7520, Outside (Non-LCPS) Employment establishes guidelines related to activities for which School Board employees receive monetary compensation or other non-monetary financial incentives for non-LCPS employment and/or for participation in activities outside their job responsibilities as a School Board employee.

Please review Policy 7520 for full details.

3.18.1. Generally

Employees may receive compensation for outside employment or non-monetary financial incentive(s) as long as the outside employment or activity:

- does not adversely affect their LCPS job performance or interfere with their responsibilities to the School Board;
- does not involve the unauthorized use of School Division property, equipment, or records, including but not limited to:
    - using LCPS email or other documents created through the course of the employee's LCPS job duties (e.g., a classroom newsletter) to solicit or advertise for participation in the services offered through the outside employment or activity;
    - using classroom time or space, or work time or space, to verbally solicit or advertise for participation in the services offered through the outside employment or activity;
    - using LCPS technology to promote external websites related to the outside employment;
    - using any LCPS facility without having secured approval for the use of the facility in accordance with Policy 6310, Facility Use;
- does not violate School Board policy or state or federal laws.

Examples of opportunities for which employees may receive compensation include but are not limited to: paid trips in exchange for services as a field trip chaperone of LCPS students on a non-LCPS sponsored field trip during non-work hours; private coaching or instruction; summer camps; and/or furtherance of a private business enterprise.

3.18.2. Tutoring

Employees may not be paid by anyone other than the School Board for tutoring a student in an academic area in which the student is enrolled in a class under their direction.

3.18.3. Disclaimer of Liability in Certain Circumstances

For off-duty employment or activities involving LCPS students, LCPS employees shall notify the students' parent or guardian that the School Board does not endorse, support, or assume liability for any outside employment or activity conducted by School Board employees.

4. DEPARTMENT OF ACADEMICS

The Department of Academics works to design, support, and monitor the educational vision and mission of LCPS as articulated in the One LCPS Strategic Plan. The Department of Academics includes the Department of Teaching and Learning, the Department of Student Services, and the Division of Research, Assessment, and School Improvement (RASI). Within these departments, curriculum, assessments, and instructional strategies are designed and developed for the School Division's more than 80,000 students.

Major efforts include:

- continuing work toward meeting the goals of the One LCPS | 2027 Strategic Plan for Excellence;
- continuing emphasis on the LCPS instructional framework to streamline, focus, and set instructional priorities; and
- strengthening the School Improvement Process and collaboration between all the offices within the Department of Academics and schools.

4.1. Department of Teaching and Learning

The Department of Teaching and Learning provides resources, structures, and support to ensure students develop as knowledgeable critical thinkers, communicators, collaborators, creators, and contributors. Its mission is to provide support to school and division staff in their work of implementing the School Division's mission of empowering all students to make meaningful contributions to the world.

The Department of Teaching and Learning provides leadership and support in many areas, including:

- identifying significant content and important competencies;
- supporting teachers as designers of deeper learning experiences through authentic challenging problems;
- engaging parents, business partners, and community members;
- supporting and improving teaching and learning;
- ensuring system answerability and internal accountability.

Within the Department of Teaching and Learning is the Division of Professional Growth and Innovation, the Division of English Learners, the Division of Teaching and Learning k-12, Division of Academic Programs, and Division of Career, Technical, and Adult Education.

For more information, please visit https://www.lcps.org/o/dtl.

4.1.1. Professional Learning

As explained in Policy 7562, LCPS provides high-quality professional learning for all instructional staff in accordance with section 22.1-253.13:5 of the Code of Virginia. As an integral component of the comprehensive plans required by section 22.1-253.13:6, LCPS provides high-quality professional learning and development programs that support the recruitment, employment, professional growth, and retention of qualified teachers and principals.

All instructional personnel shall participate in professional learning each year.

Please see Policy 7562 for more information.

4.2. Department of Student Services

The Department of Student Services comprises the Offices of Diagnostics & Prevention Services, Special Education, Procedural Support, Student Services, and Student Mental Health Services. Please visit https://www.lcps.org/o/doss for more information.

4.2.1. Special Education

It is the policy of LCPS to follow federal and state law and to implement special education programs for children with disabilities, consistent with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA"). These mandates are detailed in the Regulations Governing Special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities in Virginia (Virginia Regulations) and any additional documents that the Virginia Department of Education publishes to address federal and state statutes and regulations for delivering special education and related services to children.

In furtherance of these federal and state laws, the School Board has adopted Policy 5310, Special Education. LCPS provides a free and appropriate public education to all children with disabilities, ages 2 through 21, residing in Loudoun County. LCPS prohibits the harassment of children with disabilities in academic and nonacademic settings during the school day and for school-sponsored extracurricular activities.

For more information, please review Policy 5310, along with Policy 5320, Procedures for Location of Self-Contained Special Education Programs and its accompanying regulation; Policy 5330, Special Education Student Eligibility and Transfer Procedures; Policy 5345, Restraint and Seclusion of Students and its accompanying regulation; and Policy 5350, Parental Notification for Screening and Assessments and its accompanying regulation.

4.2.2. Restraint and Seclusion of Students

Policy 5345, Restraint and Seclusion of Students makes clear that the maintenance of a safe and productive environment for student learning is a high priority of LCPS. A multi-tiered systemic approach, to include Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), shall be used to address the needs of students with behavior challenges.

Physical restraint is a personal restriction that immobilizes or reduces the ability of a student to move freely. Physical restraint does not include briefly holding a student in order to calm or comfort them, holding a student's hand, wrist, arm, shoulder, or back to temporarily escort a student safely from one area to another, or using incidental, minor, or reasonable physical contact or other actions designed to maintain control.

Mechanical restraint is the use of any material, device, or equipment to restrict a student's freedom of movement. This term does not include devices implemented by trained school personnel or used by a student that have been prescribed by an appropriate medical or related service professional and are used with parental consent and are for the specific and approved purposes for which such devices were designed.

Seclusion is the involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room or area from which the student is physically prevented from leaving until the student no longer presents imminent danger to self or others.

Physical restraint and seclusion safety procedures shall only be used consistent with Policy 5345 and its corresponding regulation. Physical restraint and seclusion procedures apply to all students when the student is an imminent danger to self or others. Physical restraint is not permitted except as an emergency safety procedure that is used as a last resort in response to

situations where the student's behavior poses a threat of imminent danger or serious physical harm to self or others.

Please review Policy 5345 and its accompanying regulation for additional information and obligations.

4.3. Division of Research, Assessment, & School Improvement

The Division of Research, Assessment, and School Improvement (RASI) is responsible for the planning, administration, and use of assessments of student learning; administration of data requests, surveys, and program evaluations; and support of the continuous improvement of school and division practices to meet the needs of all students in the School Division. Additional information is available at https://www.lcps.org/o/lcps/page/research-assessment-school-improvement.

4.4. Key Policies Relating to Instruction and Students

The following summary is not comprehensive. Employees are encouraged to review School Board policies and their corresponding regulations, as well as any policies and procedures specific to their worksites, for more complete information; and to direct any questions to their supervisors.

4.4.1. Planning Periods

As stated in Policy 7556, Planning Periods, LCPS recognizes the importance of providing planning time during the standard workday. Planning periods are reserved for classroom preparation, conferences, constructing assessments, grading assignments, and other professionally related activities deemed appropriate by the building principal. Planning time shall be afforded in accordance with section 22.1-291.1 (and, as appropriate, other sections in) the Code of Virginia and the Virginia Administrative Code.

4.4.2. Duties and Responsibilities of Teachers

Pursuant to Policy 7314, teachers shall comply with all state and federal laws, Virginia Board of Education policies and regulations, and the policies, rules, and regulations of the School Board, the Division Superintendent, and their work locations.

In addition to teaching, the duties and responsibilities of a teacher include but are not limited to, the following:

- Lesson plans shall be completed in advance of instruction and should be accessible so that a substitute, in an emergency, could provide instruction.
- All reports and records should be made as requested and submitted as required.
- School keys and ID badges must be protected and are for use by the teacher only.
- All serious or recurring problems of student misconduct or student absenteeism should be discussed with the principal or their designee to prevent the development of more serious situations.
- Students must be supervised in classrooms, cocurricular activities, and activities throughout the building and campus, (e.g. recess, cafeteria, bus, and hallway).
- Attendance at meetings, including staff meetings, staff development meetings, department or grade level meetings, and meetings with parents, is required.

4.4.3. Assessment and Grading

Policy 5030, Assessment and Grading, and its accompanying regulation, Regulation 5030.1, K-12 Assessment and Grading Common Guidelines, are based on the belief that assessment of student learning is an essential component of the teaching and learning process, and has the potential to motivate students and improve learning.

Policy 5030 and its corresponding regulations, 5030.1 and 5030.2, Procedures for Determining Class Rank and Transition to Latin Honors System, establish a consistent approach to assessment and grading in all schools within LCPS. Please review this policy and its corresponding regulations for additional information.

4.4.4. Supplemental Instructional Materials: Criteria and Selection

LCPS provides a wide variety of instructional materials to support and enrich its educational programs. Policy 5045, Criteria and Selection of Supplemental Instructional Materials defines the criteria and selection of supplemental instructional materials. For more information, please review Policy 5045 and Regulation 5045, Online Resources as Supplemental Instructional Materials.

4.4.4.1. Supplemental Instructional Materials

Supplemental instructional materials are materials used by students under the guidance of teachers to extend, expand, and supplement the primary materials adopted by LCPS under Policy 5130, Textbook Adoption, and which constitute an integral part of the instructional program. Supplemental instructional materials are items that the School Division, a school, or an individual teacher has discretion over acquiring and using to assist the teaching and learning process. This includes materials selected for interscholastic activities, cocurricular activities, and school-sponsored extracurriculars and clubs and may include books, magazines, newspapers, articles, charts, pictures, certain workbooks, kits, videos, games, and presentations. Materials selected for supplemental instructional use must relate directly to the established objectives of the course or content area in which they are used.

4.4.4.2. Division-Level Instructional Materials

Division-level supplemental instructional materials include items that have been approved by the School Division for use in classrooms to meet the goals of the curriculum. The selection process for division-level supplemental instructional materials should involve content supervisors, specialists, facilitators, and teachers, and may include library media specialists, administrators, professional specialists, students, and parents. The following criteria are considered when selecting division-level instructional materials:

- National, state, and local curriculum requirements;
- Content;
- Student interest and appeal;
- Clarity;
- Organization and format; and
- Accessibility.

In subjects that involve human relationships or values, either directly or incidentally, the evaluation shall consider the following factors, if applicable, to support a culturally responsive environment:

- Moral and ethical sensitivities of various groups per guidance in Policy 5420,

Controversial and Sensitive Curriculum Standards (and its accompanying regulations, 5420.1 Instructional and Communication Practices for Sensitive and Controversial Standards, 5420.2, Instructional Guidance for Use of Role-Play, Simulations, and Assuming Different Perspectives, and 5420.3, Instructional Guidance Using Materials With Racial Slurs, Hate Speech, and Sensitive Content);
- Representative of this pluralistic society;
- Representative of all backgrounds within the LCPS community and beyond, as defined in Policy 1040, Equal Opportunity for Equitable, Safe & Inclusive Environment;
- Diversity of environments: social, economic, and geographic;
- Preservation of freedom, civic responsibility, and individual worth; and
- Personal integrity, honor, and service.

Sexually explicit instructional materials, as defined by Policy 5055, Parental Notification of Instructional Materials with Sexually Explicit Content, shall not be used in elementary classrooms.

All Family Life Education materials are compliant with Policy 5045 and are governed by Policy 5048, Family Life Education.

4.4.4.3. School-Level Supplemental Instructional Materials

School-level supplemental instructional materials include items that have been selected for use in classrooms to meet the goals of the curriculum. The selection process for school-level supplemental instructional materials should involve teachers and collaborative learning teams (CLTs), and may include library media specialists, administrators, professional specialists, students, and parents. Each school is responsible for selecting and using supplemental instructional materials. Teachers must carefully review supplemental instructional materials before use and shall exercise professional judgment in their use of supplemental instructional materials, to ensure that such materials support and complement the primary educational objectives.

In the selection of school-level supplemental instructional materials the school staff shall consider the following:

- National, state, and local curriculum requirements;
- Content;
- Student interest and appeal;
- Clarity;
- Organization and format; and
- Accessibility.

In subjects that involve human relationships or values, either directly or incidentally, the evaluation of supplemental instructional materials shall consider the following factors, if applicable, to support a culturally responsive environment:

- Moral and ethical sensitivities of various groups per guidance in Policy 5420 (and its accompanying regulations, 5420.1, 5420.2, and 5420.3);
- Representative of this pluralistic society;
- Representative of all backgrounds within the LCPS community and beyond, as defined in Policy 1040;
- Diversity of environments: social, economic, and geographic;
- Preservation of freedom, civic responsibility, and individual worth; and
- Personal integrity, honor, and service.

4.4.4.4. Online Instructional Resources

As defined by Regulation 5045, online instructional resources are any web-delivered software application (including web-based software, Chrome apps, or Chrome extensions) used for instruction and that requires teachers or students to log in to access the service, except for (i) websites that are freely available and do not require student or teacher logins (but nonetheless may be considered supplemental instructional resources as defined by Policy 5045), and (ii) professional resources for teachers.

LCPS has a defined process for reviewing installed and online software titles called Onboard. The Onboard process is supported by teams in the Departments of Digital Innovation, Student Services and Teaching and Learning. As part of the review process, titles are evaluated for:

- instructional value and alignment with LCPS practices;
- duplication or overlap of functionality of supported titles;
- technical compatibility with LCPS systems;
- data privacy, security, and interoperability; and
- accessibility.

To request a review, schools and school-based staff can consult with their school's Instructional Facilitator, Technology (IFT). IFTs will discuss the instructional need the teacher or school is trying to address, work with the teacher to find solutions that may already be available before requesting a review of a new title, and act as a liaison between the teacher or school and the software review team. Division-based staff can consult with the Instructional Software Specialist in the Office of Instructional Technology to initiate an Onboard review.

LCPS maintains a catalog of titles that have been reviewed through the Onboard review process. All reviewed titles are listed in the catalog, along with guidance about how to use a title safely with students. The catalog is available to all staff through LCPS GO. A parent-facing version is publicly available on the LCPS website. Please consult Regulation 5045 for descriptions of the approval categories of catalogued titles.

4.4.4.4.1. *Division-selected online resources*

LCPS adopts online resources as supplemental instructional materials to address identified instructional needs. Because providers of division-selected software titles are typically acting as "school-officials" as defined by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), parental consent for specific division-selected online software is not required under most circumstances.

4.4.4.4.2. *School-selected online resources*

Schools may adopt online resources as supplemental instructional materials provided the title is reviewed via the Onboard review process and the title is not designated as "Denied" as a result of that review. Schools may need to obtain verifiable parental consent prior to creating accounts for students or asking students to create their own accounts. Parental consent is not required when providers meet the criteria of a "school official" as defined by FERPA. When required, consent must be obtained from parents each school year. Schools that contract with online resource providers are responsible for requesting that the provider delete data once the provider is no longer contracted by the school.

4.4.4.4.3. *Teacher-selected online resources*

Teachers may adopt online resources as supplemental instructional materials, provided that the

software has been reviewed via the Onboard review process and the title is not designated as "Denied" as a result of that review. Teachers may be responsible for obtaining verifiable parental consent prior to creating accounts for students (or asking students to create their own accounts). Titles designated as "Parental Consent Required" require parental consent. Titles designated as "Approved with Cautions" may require parental consent depending on how the title is used. Generally, consent is required if accounts are created for students (or students have to create their own accounts). Teachers should follow guidance provided in the Ed Tech catalog and, when in doubt, err on the side of obtaining consent from parents or guardians before creating accounts for students or asking students to create their own accounts. Consent must be obtained from parents each school year using one of the district-created permission templates available in Permission Click. Teachers who adopt online resources as supplemental instructional materials are responsible for ensuring providers delete student data once the service is no longer in use by a student (typically at the end of a school year).

4.4.4.4.4. *Change of status for reviewed resources*

At any time, LCPS may revisit titles that have been previously reviewed. New information or circumstances may lead to a change in the guidance for if (or how) a title should be used and a change in designation in the Ed Tech catalog. Teachers and schools should consult the Ed Tech catalog each school year before using tools with students to ensure the guidance for the tools they have selected has not changed.

4.4.4.5. School Library Materials

School library materials are considered supplemental instructional materials when assigned by a teacher to be used: (i) for the completion of an assignment, or (ii) as part of interscholastic activities, co-curricular activities, or school-sponsored extracurricular and club activities. However, for such selected materials to be deemed supplemental instructional materials, their use must relate directly to the established objectives of the course or content area in which they are used.

4.4.4.6. Use of Copyrighted Materials

As covered in Policy 5050, Use of Copyrighted Materials, the use, display, performance, distribution or reproduction of copyrighted works, including computer software, audio and video works, sound recordings, books, software applications, electronic works, digital and non-digital materials, and photographs, are controlled by federal law. Copyright owners have the exclusive right to use, modify, display, perform, distribute, and reproduce their works. Federal law does provide limited exceptions which may permit certain uses of copyrighted works in some circumstances.

LCPS encourages its staff and students to enrich the educational experience by making proper use of supplementary materials. However, each staff member and student is responsible for complying with copyright law. The School Board prohibits the illegal use or unauthorized copying of copyrighted works. Unlawful copies of copyrighted works may not be made or used on LCPS computers, online networks, or any other LCPS equipment within LCPS facilities or at official LCPS functions. Employees or students who violate Policy 5050 or copyright law do so at their own risk, and may be held personally liable for copyright infringement and subject to disciplinary action.

Any employee or student who is uncertain as to whether reproducing or using copyrighted works complies with the division procedures or is permissible under law, should contact their school librarian or the LCPS Library Media Services Supervisor, who will provide clarification and assist staff members and students in obtaining proper authorization to make use of

protected works when such authorization is required.

4.4.5. Student Counseling Services

Each elementary, middle, and high school provides academic, career, and personal/social counseling services to students. Additionally, secondary school students may receive employment counseling and placement services. Parents and guardians are notified annually about the counseling programs available to their students. School counseling program materials shall be made available at each school for review. Interested parents or guardians seeking to review counseling program materials may contact the school counselor.

Parents or guardians may elect to have their student opt out of participation in personal/social counseling by notifying their child's school in writing. Parental consent is not required for short-duration personal/social counseling needed to maintain order, discipline, or a productive learning environment. No student is required to participate in any counseling program to which the student's parents/guardians object.

Personal/social counseling records and information are to be kept confidential and separate from a student's educational records and will not be disclosed to third parties without prior parental (or guardian) consent or as otherwise provided by law.

Additional details and information regarding the provision of school counseling services is set out in Policy 5040, School Counseling Services – Elementary, Middle, and High Schools and its corresponding regulation.

4.4.6. Student Field Trips

The School Board believes that field trips can provide excellent educational experiences for students by enriching the curriculum and by making classroom learning experiences more meaningful. Policy 5070, Field Trips establishes guidelines for off-campus instructional and student activity field trips that are extensions of academic, athletic, and other student activities. Please review Policy 5070 and its corresponding regulation for additional details and information.

4.4.6.1. Student Safety, Accountability, and Supervision

Student safety, accountability and supervision are of utmost importance during the field trip. Teachers, coaches and staff members may change schedules, limit the participation of individual students or take other appropriate actions to preserve the safety and well-being of all concerned, to maintain order and discipline and to achieve the purposes of the trip.

For overnight field trips, no adult will share a room with a student unless the adult is the student's parent or legal guardian.

In the event of student conduct issues, at the conclusion of the field trip and upon return to the school, student disciplinary action may be initiated, if appropriate, as provided for in the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook and in School Board policies and LCPS regulations.

4.4.6.2. Field Trips Not Sponsored by LCPS

LCPS does not endorse or accept responsibility for any non-LCPS trips for students, or any student trips that are not part of the instructional program. Employees are not permitted to solicit students for such trips through school resources. Employees who are involved with such trips must emphasize to any interested student/parent/guardian that such trips are strictly private

enterprises and not affiliated with LCPS.

4.4.7. Prohibition Against Student Discrimination and Harassment

As stated in Policy 8030, Student Discrimination and Harassment, LCPS is committed to maintaining an equitable, safe, and inclusive learning environment for students free from all forms of harassment and discrimination. LCPS prohibits discrimination and harassment against any student or by any student on the basis of any actual or perceived race, color, national origin, caste, religion, sex, pregnancy status, childbirth or related medical conditions, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, disability, age, genetic information, and any other characteristic provided by law. Retaliation against anyone involved in any discrimination complaint process is a violation of LCPS policy and is prohibited.

For provisions regarding harassment, discrimination, sexual harassment, and harassment or retaliation filed against or by LCPS employees see Policy 7014, Environments Free from Harassment, Discrimination, and Abuse.

Discrimination and harassment claims not covered by current LCPS regulations should be immediately reported to the school principal.

4.4.7.1. Procedures for Addressing Discrimination Against Students with Disabilities

LCPS has implemented procedures for addressing complaints of discrimination against students based on disability. For detailed information concerning these procedures, please review Regulation 8030.1, Non-Discrimination on the Basis of a Disability for School-Age Students for the process pertaining to school-aged students, and Regulation 8030.2, Non-Discrimination on the Basis of a Disability for Students Enrolled in an Adult Education for the process applicable to students enrolled in an LCPS adult education program.

4.4.7.2. Procedures for Addressing Discrimination and Harassment Based on Racism and Hate Speech

As stated in Regulation 8030.3, Discrimination and Harassment Based on Racism and Hate Speech, LCPS is committed to providing a safe, empathetic, respectful, and supportive learning environment in order to empower every student to make meaningful contributions to the world. When students or staff use or experience racial insults, slurs, and/or other hate speech, LCPS lacks the positive culture and climate that supports students' growth.

Every individual is valued in LCPS. When overheard or reported, staff members are to immediately address racial slurs, hate speech, or related incidents in accordance with the Code of Conduct Student Discipline Guidelines or LCPS policy.

Should an incident involving racial slurs, hate speech, or a related event occur, staff should consult Regulation 8030.3 to identify the actions to be taken, including the steps to be implemented immediately.

4.4.7.3. Prohibition Against Hazing

LCPS defines hazing as recklessly or intentionally endangering the health or safety of a student or students or inflicting bodily or psychological harm on a student or students in connection with or for the purpose of initiation, coercion, admission into or affiliation with or as a condition for continued membership in a club, organization, association, or student body, regardless of whether the student or students so endangered or injured participated voluntarily in the relevant

activity.

Regulation 8030.4, Hazing makes clear that hazing is prohibited in all LCPS programs and facilities. All allegations of hazing shall be reported to a school administrator. In cases where required by law or School Board policy, law enforcement and/or the Title IX Coordinator must be notified as well. For incidents of hazing that may result in a violation of Title IX, see Regulation 8035, Title IX, Sex-Based Discrimination, Sexual Harassment for required reporting procedures.

Students shall be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the LCPS Student Code of Conduct for any instance of hazing in any School Division program or facility.

4.4.8. Prohibition Against Title IX Sex-Based Discrimination or Harassment

LCPS maintains and implements Policy 8035, which addresses sex-based discrimination and harassment. Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 is a federal law that states: "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance..."

Sex-based discrimination includes, but is not limited to discrimination in programs, athletics, extra-curricular activities, facilities, course offerings, and funding.

Sexual harassment means conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

- The provision of aid, benefit, or service for a student on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct;
- Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to LCPS's education program or activity; or sexual assault" as defined in 20 U.S.C. § 1092(f)(6)(A)(v); "Dating violence" as defined in 34 U.S.C. § 12291(a)(11); "Domestic violence" as defined in 34 U.S.C. § 12291(a)(12); "Stalking" as defined in 34 U.S.C. § 12291(a)(36);
- Sexual Assault. If an LCPS employee receives an alleged sexual assault notification, they must either report it directly to law enforcement or to a school administrator. If reported to the school administration, the receiving administrator must report the allegation immediately to law enforcement.

The U.S. Department of Education has published implementing regulations that include, but are not limited to, the need for the designation of a Title IX Coordinator and for a specific complaint and grievance procedure meeting federal requirements regarding sexual harassment. LCPS has implemented Regulation 8035, which provides grievance procedures for addressing allegations that violate Title IX.

Please review Policy 8035 and its implementing regulation, Regulation 8035, for more details and reporting obligations.

4.4.9. Rights of Transgender and Gender-Expansive Students

As stated in Policy 8040, Rights of Transgender and Gender-Expansive Students, in accordance with section 22.1-23.3 of the Code of Virginia, LCPS endorses policies, procedures, and practices for an inclusive school environment that are consistent with the Virginia Department of Education's publication, Model Policies for the Treatment of Transgender Students in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools. This approach is consistent with the School Division's commitment to providing an equitable, safe and inclusive learning

environment in which all students are treated with dignity and respect regardless of their sex, sexual orientation, transgender status, or gender identity/expression.

Please review Policy 8040 and its corresponding regulation for additional details and information.

4.4.10. Bullying Prevention and Education

As defined in Policy 8250, Bullying Prevention and Education, bullying is the systematic and chronic infliction of physical hurt or psychological distress on another person. The Code of Virginia § 22.1-276.01 defines bullying as "any aggressive and unwanted behavior that is intended to harm, intimidate, or humiliate the victim; involves a real or perceived power imbalance between the aggressor or aggressors and victim; and is repeated over time or causes severe emotional trauma."

Bullying includes cyberbullying. Cyberbullying is bullying by a student towards another through electronic communication and includes such things as sending mean, vulgar, or threatening messages or images; posting sensitive private information about another person; pretending to be someone else in order to humiliate another person; and defamatory online social media websites. Bullying does not include ordinary teasing, horseplay, arguments, or peer conflict.

Policy 8250 requires staff members to take steps to prevent bullying and attempt to take developmentally appropriate steps to intervene. When allegations of bullying are reported to the principal or designee, they shall investigate such allegations or incidents promptly. Additionally, the principal (or designee) shall attempt to promptly report any allegation of bullying, by or against a child, to the parent/guardian. The status of any investigation of an allegation or incident of bullying shall be reported to the parent/guardian within 24 hours' notice. Notification must be consistent with the student privacy rights under the applicable provisions of FERPA. If at any time during the investigation it is determined that criminal charges may be pursued against the perpetrator, all appropriate local law enforcement agencies should be notified.

Please review Policy 8250 for examples of bullying and other information regarding staff obligations when they learn of or witness bullying behavior.

5. DEPARTMENT OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

The Department of School Leadership (DOSL) provides leadership and support to all school principals and leads schools in a continuous school improvement process designed to accomplish the mission and strategic goals established by the School Division. The Department of School Leadership is led by the Chief of Schools and includes the Offices of Athletics and Activities, Elementary Education, Middle School Education, High School Education, and School Administration.

To contact the Department of School Leadership, click here or call (571) 252-1502.

5.1. Chief of Schools

The Chief of Schools provides leadership and support to all school principals and leads schools in a continuous school improvement process designed to accomplish the mission and strategic goals established by the School Division. The Chief of Schools, in collaboration with the LCPS Deputy Superintendent, oversees all schools, academies and programs PK-12.

5.2. Athletics and Activities

The Athletic & Activities programs dynamically support the academic mission of the School Division by providing opportunities for lifelong lessons in the value of teamwork, empathy, work ethic, resilience, and sacrifice for a goal, all within the values of respect and honor. To view the objectives of the program, click here.

Information about the athletic training program, as well as a link to the VHSL manual and other helpful resources for eligible employees who are interested in becoming involved in the Athletic & Activities programs, is available online by visiting the Athletic & Activities programs website.

5.3. Offices of Elementary, Middle School, and High School Education

5.3.1. Office of Elementary Education

The Office of Elementary Education works to promote academic excellence in an inclusive environment, to enhance educational opportunities and equity for all elementary students, and to improve the quality of teaching through educational leadership. The Director and Executive Principals of Elementary Education are responsible for the supervision and evaluation of elementary principals. As part of their principal supervision role, the Director and Executive Principals coach and support principals while engaging in effective learning strategies to help principals grow as leaders of learning. This is done through a focus on school leadership in relation to focusing direction, cultivating collaborative structures, deepening student learning, and securing accountability.

This office also supports principals with ongoing, research-based professional development to strengthen the connection between vision and action. This office also works with principals to ensure that school improvement plans are developed collaboratively with members of the school community and that decisions are based on student achievement data along with other specific school-level indicators. In addition to providing guidance and support to elementary principals, the Executive Principals of Elementary Education provide direct support to assistant principals and deans in the areas of building leadership capacity, implementing discipline policies, and reporting student disciplinary data.

5.3.2. Office of Middle School Education

The Office of Middle School Education promotes high academic achievement, developmental responsiveness, and equitable practices for all students. The Director of Middle School Education is responsible for the supervision and evaluation of school principals and direction regarding the assessment of their performance and accomplishments. As a principal supervisor, the Director coaches and supports principals and engages in effective learning strategies to help principals grow as leaders of learning. This is done through a focus on school leadership in relation to focusing direction, cultivating collaborative structures, deepening student learning, and securing accountability. The Director provides assistance in the development of the school improvement plan and monitors progress towards established goals. The Director assists principals in monitoring school operations, provides advice on the implementation of policies, and responds to community inquiries about school operations.

The Office of Middle School Education analyzes enrollment projections and available class space and prepares budget proposals for general education staffing including administrators, teachers, teacher assistants, and support staff. The Director prepares and administers the budgeted per-pupil allotments for instructional materials and postage. This office oversees the site-based summer recovery programs typically offered during the month of July.

Additional information is available at https://www.lcps.org/o/dsl/page/middle-school-education.

5.3.3. Office of High School Education

The Office of High School Education promotes the mission, goals, and core beliefs of the LCPS Strategic Framework to the staff and students at all high schools and the Academies of Loudoun. The Director of High School Education is responsible for the support, supervision, and evaluation of 19 principals.

As a principal supervisor, the Director coaches and supports principals while engaging in effective learning strategies to help principals grow as leaders of learning. This is accomplished by assisting leaders to focus direction, cultivate collaborative structures, deepen student learning, and secure accountability. This office supports principals with ongoing, research-based professional development to strengthen the connection between vision and action. This office provides assistance in the development of the school improvement plan, aligns division resources in support of the plan, and monitors progress towards established goals. The Director assists principals in monitoring school operations, provides advice on the implementation of policies, and responds to community inquiries about school operations in collaboration with the Office of School Administration.

For more information, please visit https://www.lcps.org/o/dsl/page/high-school-education.

5.4 Office of School Administration

The Office of School Administration (OSA) supports safe schools and positive learning environments, including by determining student disciplinary outcomes on behalf of the Superintendent; resolving petitions for review of short-term suspensions from school; and fostering the Student Support Advisor Program. OSA actively collaborates with other LCPS offices and departments to provide resources and staff development to LCPS administrators and other stakeholders.

For more information, please visit https://www.lcps.org/o/dsl/page/school-administration.

6. COMMUNICATIONS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Department of Communications and Community Engagement provides a proactive communications structure, aligned with the One LCPS: 2027 Strategic Plan for Excellence, to drive results and communications across the School Division. The Department handles communications and marketing duties, storytelling and video projects, publications, crisis communications, and social and media relations, both internally within the School Division and externally for the community at large. The Department of Communications and Community Engagement serves to strengthen the involvement of the students, staff and community by ensuring two-way communication and outreach and supporting the goals of the School Division.

For more information about the Department of Communications and Community Engagement and its services, visit https://www.lcps.org/o/communications.

6.1. The LCPS Letter

The LCPS Letter is a twice-monthly newsletter to School Division families and staff that serves as an excellent way to get relevant news, notices, and information about what is happening at LCPS. It features student and teacher success stories, vital program information, quick calendar updates, and other notable information. A link to the LCPS Letter publications is available at https://www.lcps.org/o/communications/page/online-resources.

6.2. Communication Audit Report 2023-2024

In the Fall of 2023, as part of the Superintendent's Entry Plan, LCPS worked with the National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA) to conduct a communications audit to help the Department of Communications and Community Engagement understand the effectiveness of current communication strategies and identify areas for improvement. Members of the LCPS community participated in focus groups and a division-wide survey. Results of the audit, published in May 2024, are available online at https://issuu.com/lcpspio/docs/audit_report_loudoun_2024_final.

7. DEPARTMENT OF SUPPORT SERVICES

The Department of Support Services is comprised of the Divisions of Construction Services; Environmental Health and Safety; Facilities Operations; Management and Coordination Services; Planning & GIS Services; Sustainability; and Transportation. The Department's goal, and one of its core values, is to the provision of timely, responsive, and professional support to the School Division's students, staff, and community.

The Department of Support Services designs, builds, maintains, operates, serves, and supports safe, comfortable, well-maintained educational facilities and grounds, and safe student transportation. As stewards of the public trust, the Department of Support Services prides itself on its sustainability and energy conservation efforts as part of the LCPS culture while "empowering all students to make meaningful contributions to the world."

Additional information about the Department of Support Services is available at https://www.lcps.org/o/support.

7.1. Division of Construction Services

The Division of Construction Services manages the architectural, engineering, and construction management process for the design and implementation of the projects in the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) and provides system-wide technical guidance and assistance for renovation activities at existing facilities. In ensuring the successful accomplishment of the CIP, the Division of Construction Services works cooperatively with the Department of Planning and Legislative Services in the evaluation of sites for new schools and supports the legislative process through administrative approvals.

In addition to planning and design, the Division provides budget analysis, estimating, bidding, contract administration, construction management, and post-construction support processes.

More information is available at https://www.lcps.org/o/support/page/construction-services.

7.2. Environmental Health and Safety Division

The LCPS Environmental Health and Safety Division is responsible for the testing and mitigation of environmental and health hazards, oversight of occupational safety programs and compliance, and staff training related to these programs.

Specific information as to these programs is available at https://www.lcps.org/o/support/page/environmental-health-and-safety.

7.3. Facilities Operations Division

The Facilities Operations Division's mission is to provide quality services to the School

Division's students, staff, and community in an efficient and professional manner that ensures a safe, well-maintained instructional environment. The Facilities Operations Division's vision is to be a model for other facilities services departments to emulate through its adaptability and focus on cutting edge resources and processes.

The Facilities Operations Division operates and maintains the School Division's 100 schools and 15 support facilities, with 3,120 acres of campus located throughout the 521 square miles of Loudoun County. In addition to schools and support facilities, Facilities Operations Division operates six potable water wells and one waste water treatment plant. The services this division provides include: routine and emergency facility maintenance, routine and emergency equipment repairs; built infrastructure preventive maintenance; energy management; grounds maintenance; maintenance services contract management; integrated pest management; turf management services; management and execution of the Capital Asset Preservation Program (CAPP); management of custodial services including training and assignments of custodians; ordering and delivery of custodial equipment and consumable supplies; collection of municipal solid waste for LCPS and County of Loudoun sites; collection of recyclable materials for LCPS and some County of Loudoun sites; environmental management (hazard communication, indoor air quality, asbestos, radon, drinking water, wastewater), disposal of hazardous waste; occupational safety training and personal protective equipment management; snow removal operations and other weather related emergency services and various other services as required for the efficient operation and maintenance of all LCPS facilities and grounds.

Additional information is available on the Facilities Operations Division's website.

7.3.1. LCPS Recycling Program

The Facilities Operations Division oversees the recycling of commonly used materials in order to help preserve natural resources and reduce waste. LCPS currently recycles cardboard, aluminum cans, plastic bottles, bi-metal cans, white and colored paper, newspaper, and fluorescent light tubes.

For more details and a complete list of items that LCPS recycles, please visit https://www.lcps.org/o/support/page/recycling-in-lcps.

7.4. Division of Management and Coordination

The Division of Management and Coordination provides project and program management support to the divisions of Construction Services, Facilities Services, Planning Services, and Transportation Services. The Division oversees efforts that require coordination across the entire School Division, including the Office of Facility Use Management, which guides the use of school and administrative facilities by both school-based and non-LCPS groups, as well as the Property Improvement Review Team, which reviews, approves, and manages modifications to grounds and facilities across more than 90 sites.

The playground program is coordinated through this division. Also within the Division are both the Distribution Center, which provides furniture, paper, and other equipment and supplies to all schools and management of LCPS surplus and the Public Surplus auction, as well as the Administration Building Operations Office, which includes a copy center, mailroom, and meeting space that serves all schools, facilities, and the School Board. The Division of Management and Coordination collaborates with other Support Services divisions on revisions and updates to School Board policies, the development of each fiscal year's proposed budget, as well as acts as a liaison between LCPS and both Loudoun County Parks, Recreation and Community Services and the Loudoun County Office of Elections.

For more information, visit https://www.lcps.org/o/support/page/management-and-coordination.

7.4.1. Community Use of School Facilities

When not being used for instructional purposes, extra-curricular activities, non-curricular student clubs and/or athletic events, or LCPS administrative purposes, LCPS facilities are available for use by other organizations and individuals as outlined in Policy 6310, Facility Use, its corresponding regulation including its Schedule of Facility Use Fees 2025-2026, and Community Use "Terms and Conditions".

For additional guidance and information, and to submit a request, visit https://www.lcps.org/o/support/page/community-use-of-school-facilities.

7.5. Division of Planning & GIS Services

The Division of Planning & GIS Services develops student enrollment projections, facilitates school attendance zone change processes, prepares the CIP, coordinates school site acquisition, and provides demographic and geographic information relating to Loudoun County's public school population.

Additional information is available at https://www.lcps.org/o/support/page/planning-gis-services.

7.6. Division of Sustainability

Loudoun County Public Schools has implemented sustainability initiatives for many years. In fact, LCPS has earned awards and recognitions at the local, state, national, and international levels. For the last twelve years LCPS has earned the United States Environmental Protection Agency's Sustained Excellence recognition. Sustained Excellence is reserved for ENERGY STAR partners demonstrating outstanding leadership year after year.

In 2020, LCPS began advancing existing efforts with a focus on sustainability. Until now, sustainability organically evolved within each department. The Division of Sustainability is currently working to develop LCPS's Sustainability Strategy in an effort to provide a new perspective for implementing sustainability throughout the LCPS community.

For more information and to check out the LCPS Energy Conservation and Efficiency Report, please visit https://www.lcps.org/o/support/page/sustainability.

7.7. Transportation Division

The Transportation Division's mission is to provide student-focused transportation efficiently in a safe environment. To carry out its mission, the Transportation Division oversees well-trained support personnel that includes bus drivers and bus attendants who utilize a fleet of approximately 800 school buses to travel 8.1 million miles a year.

In addition to home-to-school bus services, transportation services are provided for field and athletic trips, special needs students, alternative education programs, and other services needed by LCPS students. The Transportation Division is also responsible for traffic and pedestrian safety.

Detailed information about the Transportation Division's services, as well as how to access employee resources, is available at https://www.lcps.org/o/support/page/transportation.

8. DEPARTMENT OF DIGITAL INNOVATION

The Department of Digital Innovation (DDI) is responsible for coordinating the development, implementation, and support of the School Division's strategic technology plan by aligning instruction, business, and technology, using measurable key performance indicators that ensure effective, equitable, and economical delivery of technology to support quality education. DDI is committed to building a transparent open organizational environment providing students, teachers, parents, administrators, and the community with highly functional technology that is easy to use, reliable, and cost-effective.

Please visit https://www.lcps.org/o/ddi for more information on the tools and resources that DDI provides to support the School Division's students, parents, and community.

8.1. Technology Support Center

The Technology Support Center (TSC) is the single point of contact for front-line technology support across the LCPS community. Engineers are primarily responsible for incident, problem, and change management, in addition to the development of ITSM tools.

The TSC provides value by resolving incidents and requests on a first-call basis or seamlessly escalating to a subject matter expert. LCPS employees may call, email, or submit a self-service request anytime technology assistance is needed by using the following:

Technology Support Center
Hours: M-F, 7:30 AM - 5:00 PM EST (LCPS holidays excluded)
Phone: (571)252-2112
Email: DDI-TechnologySupportCenter@lcps.org
Chat: https://help.lcps.org
Self-service ticket: Support Center

8.2. Acceptable Use of Employee Technology

Pursuant to Policy 7566, Employee Technology Acceptable/Responsible Use, the School Board provides technologies, including access to internet, to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication. "Technology" includes hardware, software, data, communication lines and devices, terminals, printers, servers, mainframe and personal computers, the internet and other internal or external networks. Please refer to Policy 7566 and Regulation 7566, Employee Technology Acceptable/Responsible Use for additional information regarding the Acceptable Use Policy.

All use of the School Division's technology must be consistent with the educational or instructional mission or administrative function of the School Division or for legitimate school business. LCPS may provide staff with access to online services and websites through contracts with educational companies and vendors. Staff may be provided with a username and password to access these websites and shall follow the password security protocol located in Regulation 3065, Information Security Regulation.

Each staff member shall annually acknowledge the acceptance of this Policy and Regulation 7566. By doing so, staff agree to accept the terms of this policy and the failure of any staff to follow the terms of this policy or accompanying regulation may result in disciplinary action as defined by School Board policy, and/or law.

8.2.1. **LCPS Routinely Monitors Usage of LCPS Technology**

LCPS routinely monitors individual usage of the School Division's technology. The normal operation and maintenance of the School Division's technical infrastructure and services requires that usage and activity are monitored, date and electronic communications are routinely backed up, and programs and other devices are employed to maintain the functionality, integrity, or security of the network infrastructure. Any communication or material using School Division technology, including electronic mail and documents created, stored, or shared from a user's account, may be monitored, read, recorded, copied, seized, and/or provided to appropriate authorities by school officials without prior notice. Staff shall have no right or expectation of privacy. None of the School Division's technologies shall constitute a traditional, limited, or designated public forum. Staff shall not send, receive, view, or download illegal materials.

8.2.2. **Content Filtering**

The School Division operates technology protection measures that monitor, filter, or block internet access for all devices connected to LCPS and LCPS-OPEN networks. The protections prevent access to child pornography, obscene material, and material that the School Division deems to be harmful and otherwise inappropriate. Employing measures to circumvent the content filter is prohibited.

8.2.3. **Personal Devices**

Personal technology devices are permitted to use the LCPS OPEN wireless network only. Personal technology devices are prohibited from accessing the LCPS network (wired or wireless). All Personal Devices used within school or at school functions must be free from anything that would violate Policy 7566, including the use of a Virtual Private Network (VPN) to subvert the division's protection measures.

8.2.4. **Personal Use**

School Division technology is not to be used for personal commercial purposes or for personal financial or other gain. Occasional personal use of School Division technology for other purposes is permitted when it does not consume a significant amount of those resources, does not interfere with the performance of the user's job or other School Division responsibilities, and is otherwise in compliance with this and other School Board policies. Further limits may be imposed upon personal use in accordance with normal supervisory procedures concerning the use of School Division equipment.

8.2.5. **Limited Liability**

The School Board is not responsible for any information that may be lost, damaged, or unavailable when using the computer system or for any information retrieved via the Internet. Furthermore, the School Board will not be responsible for any unauthorized charges or fees resulting from access to the computer or network system.

8.3. **Information Security Protection**

Policy 3065, Information Security Protection provides specific instructions to classify, maintain, protect, and support LCPS assets, including but not limited to, security controls for passwords,

authorized system access, timely reporting of compromised data or lost devices, and ensuring all compliance guidelines are met. The Information Security Regulation (ISR), Regulation 3065, clarifies operating practices regarding data collection, dissemination, and use, while enhancing communication and transparency with parents, students, and staff. In addition to the below summary, please review these documents carefully to ensure full understanding of employee responsibilities pertaining to the use of LCPS technology.

8.3.1. Users

All users are those individuals in departments of the School Division, affiliates, subsidiaries, staff, students, contractors, consultants, temporaries, including those users affiliated with third parties who access, process, and use School Division information assets that may be located in division facilities or other off-site locations. All users will comply with the requirements specified by information security policy and any supporting regulations.

8.3.2. System Access and Privileges

Access to School Division systems and applications will be granted only when authorized, appropriate, and compliant with LCPS policy and relevant legal requirements. To help establish accountability, any records reflecting this access must be retained until the user's employment, enrollment and/or contract has ended.

Individuals who fall outside of the definition of users must not be granted a user-ID or otherwise be given privileges to use School Division computers or communications systems unless advance written approval has first been obtained.

Whenever possible temporary privileges granted to users (vendors, contractors, etc.) should be granted for a limited period of time (180 days or less is recommended). As needed, temporary users should have their privileges reauthorized by the sponsoring department head.

Before privileges are granted all temporary users (vendors, contractors, etc.) must sign an acknowledgement stating they have read and understand the applicable Acceptable/Responsible Use Policy.

By accessing School Division systems, users voluntarily consent to all policies and regulations, and to having actions, emails, or other electronic activity monitored, recorded, seized, and disclosed by authorized School Division personnel. Exemptions to this may be listed in the applicable Acceptable/Responsible Use Policy (AUP/RUP) or other School Division policies.

All users shall have all access privileges revoked in a timely manner upon the termination of employment, enrollment, contract, and/or the "need to know." Owners and custodians shall reevaluate the access privileges granted to users annually. In response to feedback, the administrator or designee must promptly revoke all privileges no longer needed by users and/or where systems software permits, after 90 days of inactivity (30 days in the case of newly assigned IDs).

8.3.3. Information Classification

To effectively secure LCPS information, the School Division must have a classification scheme to describe the information, the risk level associated with exposure or loss, and the amount of protection required. This classification scheme applies to all LCPS information (physical and

electronic), the systems that process it (portable computers, desktop computers, servers, voice mail systems, etc.), the physical location of where information is housed (removable media, onsite, vendor site, cloud storage, etc.), or the methods by which it is moved or transmitted (public networks, electronic mail, face-to-face conversation, etc.). DDI is responsible for evaluating and maintaining the classification scheme, which consists of three hierarchical categories into which all LCPS information can be divided:

- Confidential Information (High Risk)
- Internal/Private Information (Medium Risk)
- Public Information (Low Risk)

Please review Regulation 3065 for details about this classification scheme and for guidance as to how to designate information.

8.3.4. Information Access and Administration

User access to information for viewing, modification, or other purposes must be restricted based on the category of information and the roles assigned to the user based on a valid business or educational need. Please review Regulation 3065 for additional information about the user roles.

Users shall take appropriate security precautions to encrypt or otherwise protect High or Medium Risk assets when accessing it in locations outside of the School Division network.

8.3.5. Information Administration

Regulation 3065 provides detailed information regarding the labeling, saving, filing and storage, disclosure, transmission, printing, transportation, archiving, destruction, and overall handling of information covered by Policy 3065. Users should carefully review this information to ensure compliance.

8.3.6. LCPS-Owned Devices and Use of LCPS Networks

Regulation 3065 sets out specific procedures for reporting lost or stolen LCPS-owned devices, the use of multi-factor authentication and the creation and use of passwords used to access LCPS-owned devices or LCPS networks, and responsibilities relating to user access to LCPS networks. Users should carefully review this information to ensure compliance.

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