CARTERET COUNTY

PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

Employee Handbook

School Year 2026-2027

Equal Opportunity Workplace

Carteret County Public School System will not discriminate against any person or groups of persons because of age, race, creed, country of origin, sex, or physical or other impairment or disability not related to the performance of a position.

Carteret County Board of Education

Katie Statler, Chair
Clark Jenkins, Vice Chair
Kathryn Smith Chadwick
Matt Johnson
Stephanie Krzich
Kevin White
Brittany Wheatly

Administration

Richard Paylor	Superintendent
Jody McClenny	Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction
Blair Propst	Assistant Superintendent for Personnel, Policy, and Operations
Mike McKay	Chief Technology Officer
Jennifer Johnson	Chief Communication Officer
Julie Bernotski	Finance Officer
Casey Harris	Deputy Finance Officer
Dr. Anna Brooks	Director of Teaching and Learning and Federal Programs
Jessica Emory	Director of Alternative Learning and Behavior Support
Dr. Anita Boyd	Director of Exceptional Children's Program
Crystal Burke	Assistant Director of Exceptional Children's Program
Allison Dees	Director of Career & Technical Education
Heather Boston	Director of Special Populations
Kimberly Krohn	Director of Student Support Services and Title IX Coordinator
Crystal Bailey	Director of Testing and Accountability
Melissa Albright	Director of Child Nutrition
Kenneth Pedersen	Director of Facility Support Operations
Joey Guthrie	Director of Transportation

For school system contacts and phone numbers, see "Whom To Call When You Need Assistance" at: https://5il.co/3haqd

Disclaimer: *The information in this booklet is intended to serve as a general reference source outlining the major benefits provided to Carteret County Schools' employees. The explanations in this booklet cannot alter or modify the controlling legal documents or statutes in any way, nor can any right accrue by reason of any statement or omission of any statement in this booklet.*

Document reference key:
Policy= Board of Education Policy Manual
BEPM = NC Public Schools Benefits and Employment Policy Manual

School Directory

Atlantic Elementary School
151 School Dr., P. O. Box 98
Atlantic, NC 28511
252-225-3961
Deidre Arthur, Principal

Beaufort Elementary School
110 Carraway Drive
Beaufort, NC 28516
252-728-3316
Charity Clemmons, Principal
Jennifer Wilke, Asst. Principal

Beaufort Middle School
100 Carraway Drive
Beaufort, NC 28516
252-728-4520
Merilee McLean, Principal

Bogue Sound Elementary School
3323 Hwy 24
Newport, NC 28570
252-393-1279
Mary Ellington, Principal
Tonya Wagner, Asst. Principal

Bridges Alternative School
140 Vashti Drive
Morehead City, NC 28557
252-808-3040
Adam Olander, Principal

Broad Creek Middle School
2382 Highway 24
Newport, NC 28570
252-247-3135
Jenny Bell, Principal
Kent Pittman, Asst. Principal
Michael Self, Asst. Principal

Carteret Preschool Center
903 Church St.
Newport, NC 28570
252-223-4574
Karen Wood, Principal

Croatan High School
#1 Croatan Lane
Newport, NC 28570
252-393-7022
Chris Davis, Principal
Kalen Biggers, Asst. Principal
Chuck O'Neal, Asst. Principal
Angela Werhner, Asst. Principal

East Carteret High School
3263 Hwy. 70
Beaufort, NC 28516
252-728-3514
Jay Westbrook, Principal
Amber Anfinson, Asst. Principal

Harkers Island Elementary School
1163 Island Road
Harkers Island, NC 28531
252-728-3755
Brooke DePinto, Principal

Morehead Elementary School
3316 Arendell Street
Morehead City, NC 28557
252-726-1131
Christy Propst, Principal

Morehead Middle School
400 Barbour Road
Morehead City, NC 28557
252-726-1126
Allison Graham, Principal
Rebecca Harrell, Asst. Principal

Morehead Primary School
4409 Country Club Road
Morehead City, NC 28557
252-247-2448
Nikki Sasser, Principal
Ashley Schultz, Asst. Principal

Newport Elementary School
219 Chatham Street
Newport, NC 28570
252-223-4201
Laura Parish, Principal
Mark Sheehe, Asst. Principal

Newport Middle School
500 E. Chatham St.
Newport, NC 28570
252-223-3482
Wade Reifsnyder, Principal
Laurin Garza, Asst. Principal

Smyrna Elementary School & Down East Middle School
174 Marshallberg Road
Smyrna, NC 28579
252-729-2301
Reba Lewis, Principal

West Carteret High School
4700 Country Club Road
Morehead City, NC 28557
252-726-1176
Justin Holt, principal
Maegan Harrison, Asst. Principal
John Suralik, Asst. Principal
Mikaela Worsinger, Asst. Principal

White Oak Elementary School
555 W. B. McLean Blvd.
Cape Carteret, NC 28584
252-393-3990
Dr. Crystal Howard, Principal
Jake McAllister, Asst. Principal

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JOB STATUS

The benefits and policies that apply to employees depend on whether the employee is classified or licensed, 215-day or 12-month, part-time or full-time, regular or temporary, at-will or contract, and instructional or non-instructional. Questions about eligibility for certain benefits should be directed to a supervisor or the Department of Human Resources. (BEPM 1.1)

Licensed or Classified?

Licensed personnel must hold a North Carolina teaching or administrative license. Teachers, assistant principals, counselors, media coordinators, principals, and many other administrators are licensed. All other positions are **classified**, meaning they do not require an educational license and fall into certain classifications for salary purposes. Most policies apply to everyone. However, certain policies in this handbook apply only to licensed employees or only to classified employees because of their different responsibilities under state law or their roles and relationships with students.

215-Days or 12-Months?

Whether the employees work for 215 days, 12 months, or somewhere in between affects when they are paid and when they can or must take annual leave. Teachers and many other school-system employees work for 215 days. The 215-day calendar includes 180 student days, 10/11 holidays, 10 annual leave days, and 14/15 workdays. TA Bus drivers and hourly food service staff have separate calendars.

Full-time or Part-time?

Full-time employees work the number of hours set as full-time for their class of work but not less than 30 hours per week. Any permanent employee who works at least 30 hours per week must be enrolled in the state Retirement System and is eligible to receive employer-paid medical insurance. These employees are also eligible for other benefits such as annual and sick leave, dental, vision, and other optional insurances and annuities. The standard workweek for teachers and teacher assistants is 37½ hours, and for all other classified employees, it is 40 hours unless otherwise specified.

Part-time employees who regularly work at least 20 hours per week, but less than the number of hours set as full-time for that class, are only eligible for annual leave, sick leave, and holiday pay. Employees who work less than 20 hours per week are not eligible for any employment benefits. (BEPM 1.1.3/1.1.4)

Permanent or Temporary?

A **permanent employee** is an employee who is either (a) employed with the expectation of permanent employment to fill a position that is to be permanent if present needs and funds continue or (b) employed with the expectation of at least six full consecutive monthly pay periods of employment to replace one or more employees who are on leave of absence without pay. Eligibility for benefits must be designated at the time of initial employment or upon change of employment status. (BEPM 1.1.2)

A **temporary employee** is an interim employee who will be employed for less than six full months or an employee whose regular workweek is less than 20 hours per week. A temporary employee is not eligible to earn leave or participate in the retirement system or receive (or purchase) health benefits. Temporary employees may not use leave earned during any previous employment while working as a temporary employee. (BEPM 1.1.5)

At-will or Contract?

Classified employees work at the will and pleasure of the school system. They may resign from their job at any time. However, the district requests that classified employees provide written notice at least two weeks prior to the effective date of their resignation to ensure the smooth operation of schools. They may be dismissed or demoted for any reason at the discretion of the school system. However, the reason may not be arbitrary, capricious, or discriminatory.

Licensed employees may not be dismissed for any reason that is arbitrary, discriminatory, or for personal or political reasons. Special conditions may apply to certain situations and will likely be stated in the employee's contract. Licensed employees may be employed on a contract for a fixed term, or they may have acquired **career status** (tenure) and be employed on a continuing contract. (Policy 7410)

Instructional or Non-Instructional?

Instructional employees have responsibility for students in a classroom. Teachers, teacher assistants, or media coordinators who require a substitute cannot take annual leave on student days or required workdays. All other personnel are considered non-instructional. (BEPM 1.1.7)

WORKPLACE RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

As an employee and representative of the school system, professional and ethical behavior is always expected. Basic responsibilities are outlined in a job description. An employee's principal or supervisor may designate specific instructions and has the right to assign tasks, as necessary. Do not hesitate to ask questions about what is expected. (Policy 7300)

Staff and Student Relations

The Carteret County Board of Education expects the relationship between staff and students to be one of cooperation, understanding, and mutual respect. All staff members have the responsibility to provide an atmosphere conducive to learning and to motivate each student to perform to their capacity. Staff are also expected to model the behavior expected of students in staff-student relationships. **All employees are prohibited from dating, courting, or entering into a romantic or sexual relationship with any student enrolled in the school district regardless of the student's age.** Employees engaging in or attempting to engage in such inappropriate conduct will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, and may be subject to criminal action.

To ensure professionalism and confidentiality, particular caution should be exercised when using cell phones, social networking sites, and electronic media. Any employee who has reason to believe that another employee has placed a student in an abusive situation is required to report this information to their immediate supervisor or face disciplinary consequences. Further, district administration will report such misconduct to the State Board of Education for licensed employees. (Policy 4040/7310)

Reporting Abuse and Improper Activities

Employees should report to their immediate supervisor if they have evidence of activity by any person on campus, including a school employee, who violates a state or federal law, is fraudulent, involves misappropriation of resources, or endangers public health or safety. Reporting such activity in good faith cannot result in an employee being dismissed, demoted, or subjected to any form of discrimination for having made the report. Any employee who has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect, regardless of location, should report this to the principal, immediate supervisor, Department of Social Services, or law enforcement. (Policy 4240/7312)

Proper Management of Student Behavior

Each school has a plan for managing student behavior that incorporates effective strategies and procedures. This plan will include positive interventions, how to correct student misbehavior, and parental involvement strategies. No teacher, other employee, or volunteer may use corporal punishment with any student. Reasonable force used to protect oneself or others is not considered corporal punishment. School board regulation 4302-R designates when it is acceptable to use reasonable force, physical restraints, mechanical restraints, seclusion, and isolation. **It is imperative that staff members recognize positive methods for redirecting students and use physical contact only when reasonable force is absolutely necessary to protect the staff member, student, or others.**
(Policy 4302, Regulation 4302)

Freedom from Discrimination and Harassment

Discrimination refers to any act that unreasonably and unfavorably differentiates the treatment of others based solely on their membership in a socially distinct group or category, such as race, ethnicity, sex, religion, and/or disability. **Harassment or bullying** is any pattern of gestures or written, electronic or verbal communications, or any physical act or any threatening communication that places a student or school employee in actual and reasonable fear of harm to their person or damage to their property. The board believes that all employees and students should be free from unlawful discrimination, harassment, and bullying in their school environments. All persons in the school system are expected to comply with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations regarding nondiscrimination. All reports should be made in accordance with policy 1720 and reported to one of the school officials identified in that policy. Reports may be made anonymously, and all reports shall be investigated in accordance with that policy.
(Policy 4329/7311, Policy 1720/4030/7235, Policy 1730/4022/7231)

Title IX Discrimination

Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 (Title IX) provides: "*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.*" The Carteret County Public School System is fully committed to honoring, implementing, and enforcing the provisions of Title IX. Equal opportunities for participation in our educational programs, regardless of sex, are provided. Title IX protects both students and employees. Discrimination based on sex, which includes sexual harassment and sexual violence, is prohibited. Areas of the Carteret County Public School System where Title IX may have application include fundamental access to our educational programs, athletics, the arts, and employment.

The Title IX Coordinator for the Carteret County Public School System is Ms. Kimberly Krohn, Director of Student Support Services, and her contact information is:

Carteret County Schools
107 Safrit Drive, Beaufort, NC 28516
email address: kim.krohn@carteretk12.org
phone number: (252) 728-4583 X 160163.

Complaints relating to discrimination on the basis of sex, including sexual harassment and sexual violence, may be filed with her or may be brought to the attention of teachers or principals. Teachers or principals receiving a complaint, or who reasonably suspect the occurrence of discrimination on the basis of sex, including sexual harassment or sexual violence, are required to report the same to the Title IX Coordinator. A person may also file a complaint regarding an alleged violation of Title IX with the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights ("OCR"). The contact information for the OCR office with jurisdiction over North Carolina is:

4000 Maryland Ave, SW,
Washington, DC 20202-1475
Telephone: 202-453-6020
TDD: 800-877-8339
FAX:202-453-6021
email: OCR.DC@ed.gov

(Policy 1710/4020/7230, Policy 1720/4030/7235, Policy1725/4035/7236, Regulation 1725/4035/7236, Policy 1726/4036/7237)

Complaints and Grievances

Many concerns and disagreements can be resolved through informal channels. **Complaints** should be received and addressed at the level closest to their point of origin. For example, a complaint regarding a classroom should be heard first by the teacher. A complaint regarding the school should be addressed first by the principal. If the complainant is not satisfied with the response, the complainant should be informed of the options for further review of the complaint.

A **grievance** is a formal written claim by an employee regarding specific decision(s) made by another employee, alleging that such decision(s) have adversely affected the person making the claim. Grievances should be filed in a timely manner following the steps and procedures outlined in board policy. (Policy 1742/5060, Policy 1750/7220)

Prohibition Against Retaliation

The Board of Education prohibits and will not tolerate any form of reprisal, retaliation, or discrimination against any employee who, in good faith, has made or intends to make a report that there has been a violation of federal, state, or local law, regulation or public policy due to a practice, policy, act or omission of the board of education, of a school district employee or of an entity/person with whom the school district has a business relationship.

An employee who reasonably believes that any such violation exists shall file a written complaint with the superintendent. Once a complaint is filed, the superintendent or his/her designee shall conduct a prompt and thorough investigation of the complaint. Any complaint alleging inappropriate conduct by the superintendent should be filed with the board, and the board will authorize a prompt and thorough investigation.

The provisions of this policy apply only to those situations in which an employee brings the alleged unlawful activity, policy, or practice to the attention of the board or superintendent and provides the board or superintendent with a reasonable opportunity to investigate and correct the alleged unlawful activity. If necessary, the superintendent or board may specify reasonable steps to protect the complaining employee from retaliation. (Policy 1760/7280)

Drug and Tobacco-free Workplace

The use and possession of tobacco products is prohibited in all school district buildings, on school grounds, and other property under school system jurisdiction. The term tobacco product includes electronic cigarettes, vaporizers, and other electronic smoking devices. In addition, employees must not possess, use, sell, have measurable amounts of, or be under the influence of any alcoholic beverage or prohibited substance while at work or on duty. Prohibited substances include but are not limited to alcohol, speed, ice, Phenobarbital, LSD, Quaaludes, codeine, heroin, morphine, PCP, steroids, marijuana, cocaine, and crack. Additionally, employees are prohibited from possessing, using, selling, delivering, manufacturing, or being under the influence of a substance containing cannabidiol (CBD) or tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) at any time, regardless of whether it constitutes a controlled substance under state or federal law. Employees may use prescription drugs as authorized by a properly licensed medical practitioner. Depending on the seriousness of the violation, an employee could receive disciplinary action ranging from a written reprimand to dismissal from their job.

Transportation personnel who use alcohol or drugs on the job will be recommended for dismissal. School bus drivers, activity bus drivers, driver education teachers, and some transportation employees may be tested for drugs and alcohol at any time without cause. Any positive results for drugs or alcohol on random screenings may lead to the employee's termination. **All employees must report any arrest or conviction for an alcohol or drug-related offense to their immediate supervisor no later than the next scheduled business day from the time of the event.**
(Policy 7240, Policy 7241, Policy 5026/7250)

Pre-employment Checks

Before being hired, all persons must show proof of citizenship or resident alien status, submit to a criminal background check, and complete a required health examination. Criminal background checks are required as a condition of employment and may also be conducted at any point during an individual's employment with Carteret County Schools. (Policy 7100, Policy 7120)

Criminal Offense Reporting

All employees are required to notify their immediate supervisor if they are arrested for, charged with, or convicted of a criminal offense other than a minor traffic violation. Such notice must be in writing, must include all pertinent facts, and must be delivered to their immediate supervisor no later than the next business day following the arrest, charge, or conviction, unless the employee is hospitalized or incarcerated, in which case the employee must report the alleged violation within 24 hours after his or her release.

Upon Judicial action in the matter, the employee must report the disposition and pertinent facts in writing to the assistant superintendent of human resources no later than the next business day following the adjudication.

Failure by an employee to adhere to these notification requirements may lead to disciplinary action. (Policy 7300)

Personnel Records

All employees have a personnel file in the central office. The employee shall receive a copy of any material placed in his or her Department of Human Resources personnel file, with the employee maintaining the right to submit a written rebuttal for inclusion in the file. If the employee fails to respond within five (5) calendar days, the document may be placed in the employee's personnel file without the right of further challenge. The following have access to personnel files: superintendent, immediate supervisor, appropriate director or coordinator, employees in the Human Resources and Finance Departments, board attorney, and Board of Education members if access is related to specific duties of the Board member. Others may also have a right to this file, as granted by law. **Please report changes in name or address to the HR data manager, 728-4583 ext. 160129.** (Policy 7820)

Dress Code

Carteret County Schools believes that all employees, while on duty or in attendance at school functions, should dress professionally and appropriately for their job duties and responsibilities. Employees are expected to dress in appropriate professional attire that distinguishes them from students and to follow basic rules of good grooming and personal hygiene. (Policy 7340)

Conflict of Interest

Administration, faculty, or staff of the school system may not: a) sell goods or services to the school system; b) engage in or have a financial interest, directly or indirectly, in any activity that conflicts with their duties and responsibilities; or c) engage in any type of private business during school time or on school property. Gifts from any person or group desiring or doing business with the school district will not be accepted by a school employee except for nominally valued instructional products or advertising items that are widely distributed. (Policy 7730)

School Trips

School trips occur when a student or group of students leaves a school campus under the sponsorship of the school and under the supervision of school employees. School trips should extend students' educational experiences in a manner consistent with the goals and objectives of the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. Any trip made by students that has not been properly approved shall not be considered a school trip. The principal must approve all school trips in advance. Certain school trips require the approval of the superintendent and Board of Education. (Policy 3320)

Lunch

All full-time employees are entitled to time to eat lunch. Duty-free lunch periods are not counted in the total hours that an employee works unless a classified employee is required to answer phones or perform some other duty during the lunch hour. Lunch times for most employees are staggered so that there is always someone at each work location.

Assignment of Family Members

Unless granted an exception by the superintendent, spouses shall not be assigned to positions or locations which would enable them to supervise or evaluate each other. Neither should other family members be assigned to positions or locations which would enable them to supervise or evaluate each other. (Policy 7100)

Parking

There is no charge for parking for any school employee. Some schools issue staff parking permits. Staff and visitor parking are designated at each campus.

Protecting Confidentiality

In order to provide students with appropriate instruction and educational services, the district must maintain extensive and sometimes personal information on students and their families. Such information may include educational records and health assessments of students. Pertinent information in these records must be readily available to appropriate school personnel; be accessible to a student's parents, legal guardian, or the student in accordance with law; and yet be guarded as confidential information. This includes sharing addresses and telephone numbers. Information that is divulged to community members about school activities should also protect the confidentiality of student information. (Policy 2125/7315, Policy 4700)

Safety Procedures

Employees can help prevent injury to themselves and others by observing general safety rules:

- Practice regular and thorough hand washing.
- Remove hazards.
- Immediately report any unsafe condition or absence of safety equipment to a supervisor.
- Immediately report any accident (experienced or witnessed) to a supervisor.
- Immediately report suspected cases of communicable diseases or conditions.

Employees should also be familiar with the blood-borne pathogens control procedures policy and the communicable disease policy. All personnel should wear gloves when anticipating contact with blood, body fluids, mucous membranes, and/or contaminated surfaces. Hands or exposed skin should be washed with soap and running water as soon as possible after any possible contact with blood or body fluids, and the exposure incident should be reported to a principal or site supervisor. More information can be found at: Occupational Safety and Health Administration Website. The school system can provide safety training tailored to an employee's job assignment. (Policy 4230, Policy 7262)

Technology Acceptable Use

All internet users are expected to behave legally, responsibly, and ethically when using the internet. Unacceptable uses of the internet include but are not limited to: violating copyright laws; plagiarism; illegally copying software; accessing confidential records without authorization; publishing, accessing, or sending profane or obscene material; communicating threats; or using another person's password without permission. Employees should not use chat rooms for social conversations while at work.

No right of privacy exists in the use of school technology. School system administrators or individuals designated by the superintendent may review files, monitor all communications, and intercept e-mail messages to maintain system integrity and to ensure compliance with board policy and applicable laws and regulations. School system personnel shall monitor the online activities of individuals who access the internet via a school-owned computer.

Employees are to maintain an appropriate relationship with students at all times. Employees are encouraged to block students from viewing personal information on employee personal websites or online networking profiles in order to prevent the possibility that students could view materials that are not age-appropriate. If an employee creates and /or posts inappropriate content on a website or profile and it has a negative impact on the employee's ability to perform their job as it relates to working with students, the employee will be subject to discipline up to and including dismissal. This applies to all employees, volunteers, and student teachers (interns) working in the school system. (Policy 3225/4312/7320, Policy 7335)

Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) Requirement

To protect the confidentiality, integrity, and security of Carteret County Public Schools (CCPS) data and information systems, all employees are required to use multi-factor authentication (MFA) when accessing school system resources.

Employees must use a personal cellular device or smartphone with an approved authenticator application (e.g., Google Authenticator) installed; or a hardware security token purchased by the employee and approved in advance by the CCPS Technology Services Support Team.

Employees who elect to use a hardware token in lieu of a personal device do so at their own expense. Employees who choose to use a personal device for MFA purposes are responsible for maintaining that device in working order and ensuring it remains accessible for authentication purposes during work hours.

Employees must safeguard their authentication device or token and must not share access credentials, codes, or authentication methods with any other individual. Lost, stolen, or malfunctioning devices or tokens used for MFA must be reported to CCPS Technology Services Support immediately so that access can be secured and an alternative authentication method can be arranged.

Emergency Notification System

Carteret County Public Schools (CCPS) uses two notification platforms to communicate with staff: RAVE Mobile Safety, provided through the North Carolina General Assembly's school safety initiative, and Infinite Campus Messaging. All employees will be enrolled in both the RAVE Mobile Safety and Infinite Campus Messaging notification systems using contact information provided to the district for notification purposes. Employees may not opt out of receiving RAVE emergency alerts, as timely receipt of this information is essential to staff and student safety.

RAVE Mobile Safety is used strictly for school-based emergencies, including but not limited to:

- Active shooter or lockdown notifications
- Medical emergencies or other life-safety events
- Other critical, time-sensitive safety events requiring immediate staff awareness

Infinite Campus Messaging is used for routine and operational communications at the school or district level, including but not limited to:

- Severe weather closures or delays
- General school or district announcements
- Other non-emergency operational notifications

Video and Audio Recordings by Employees

Employees should be careful when making any video or audio recording in the workplace. An employee must receive prior permission from their principal to make a recording of students or employees in a classroom or at a school-sponsored event. The principal shall grant permission only for a legitimate educational purpose, provided the employee informs the principal of the purpose of the recording; who will have access to the recording; and how the recording will be retained. In no instance will a school system employee make a video or voice recording of a student without prior parental consent unless the recording will be used for one of the following purposes: a safety demonstration; an academic or extracurricular activity; classroom instruction; photo identification cards; security or surveillance of buildings, grounds or school transportation.

An employee may make an audio recording of a meeting or hearing addressing that employee's formal grievance, performance evaluation, misconduct, disciplinary action, termination, or nonrenewal. The employee must provide prior notice of the intent to record the meeting or hearing, and the recordings must be made openly with all parties aware of the recording.

Employees are prohibited from making covert or surreptitious recordings of other individuals on school property or during school-sponsored activities.
(Policy 7325)

Security Cameras

To maintain a safe learning and working environment, the school district utilizes video security cameras across the district property. These cameras capture video footage; they do not record audio except for some bus cameras. Camera placement is limited to common interior locations (such as lobbies, hallways, gymnasiums, and building entrances/exits), exterior locations (including parking lots and school grounds), and school buses. Cameras will never be installed in areas where employees or students have a reasonable expectation of privacy, including restrooms, locker rooms, nurses' offices, or lactation rooms.
(Policy 7325)

Use of School Mail and Fax Machines

School mail may not be used to distribute advertisements for commercial enterprises, campaign literature for a political candidate, or entirely personal correspondence. If it is determined that a communication violates regulations, the employee sending or receiving the communication will be reminded of this regulation and may be reprimanded or disciplined. Fax machines are intended for conducting school system business. In general, they should not be used for personal business on a regular basis. Fax machines should not be used to communicate indecent language, pictures, or symbols or to disparage anyone's religion, gender, age, national or ethnic origin, or disability. As a general rule, student record information that is confidential under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and personnel records that are confidential under state law should not be sent by fax unless sent securely. The school system reserves the right to read all messages created, received, or sent over its fax machines.

Use of School System Property

Property belonging to the Carteret County Public School System must be used carefully and responsibly. Wasteful or improper use of school equipment and materials may be cause for dismissal. Employees who fail to use reasonable care in the protection of school system property may be held financially responsible for its loss or damage. (Policy 7300, Policy 9200)

Use of School Vehicles

Employees who drive a school system vehicle may need a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) with certain endorsements. Employees should check with their supervisor if in doubt. If a driver's license is required for a job, the employee must report to his or her immediate supervisor any traffic violation for which he or she has been convicted, **even if the violation occurs on off-duty time or in a personal vehicle.** Such employees must also notify their supervisor immediately if their license is suspended, revoked, or canceled. Employees who drive a school-owned vehicle or work in certain safety-sensitive areas are subject to random testing for drug and alcohol use. (Policy 7241, Policy 7300)

Reduction in Work Force

From time to time, employee positions may be lost due to district reorganization, decreased enrollment, or decreased funding. At such times, the order in which professional employees are released will be determined based on school board policy and the definitions and procedures established in G.S. 115C-325. The primary consideration for a reduction in force is the continuance of a high-quality educational program that is consistent with the mission of the school system. (Policy7920, Policy 7921)

PAY AND BENEFITS

Pay Days

All teachers and other certified ten-month employees are paid on the last working day of the month. Other employees are paid bi-weekly on Fridays. State and local funds for disbursing payrolls are not available in the school system's bank accounts until payday. Therefore, it is not possible to deliver paychecks before scheduled pay dates.

Overtime

Classified employees may not work overtime without the express approval of his or her supervisor. Employees shall monitor their hours and request approval prior to extending their allotted hours. Except in emergencies, all overtime work must be approved in writing by the superintendent or designee. An employee's supervisor may adjust daily work schedules to prevent employees from working more than their allocated hours. (Policy 7500)

Compensatory Time

In lieu of overtime, some classified employees may receive compensatory time off at a rate of not less than one and one-half hours for each hour worked. Employees must use compensatory time within the pay period in which it is earned. No accrual of compensatory time is allowed. (Policy 7500)

Supplements

Licensed employees (excluding principals and administrators) receive a local supplement based upon a percentage of their basic salary set annually by the Board of Education. Half is paid with the regular November paycheck and half with the regular May paycheck. Classified employees receive a local supplement based upon a percentage of their base salary set by the Board of Education on an annual basis. This supplement is paid each November. (Policy 7600)

Substitute Pay

Substitute teachers are paid based on their level of training and certification. When a teacher uses extended sick leave, state law requires $50 to be deducted from the teacher's check if a substitute is hired. State law also requires a deduction of the full cost for a substitute when a teacher uses personal leave without providing a reason for the absence. There is no pay deduction for sick leave. (Policy 7430)

Direct Deposit

All paychecks are directly deposited into a bank account. To access a deposit history, go to the finance website and access Timekeeper. https://linq.carteretk12.org/Default.aspx

Deductions

Deductions are automatically withdrawn from employee pay for FICA taxes and state and federal income taxes. Employees eligible for membership in the retirement system have 6 percent deducted for retirement, which is sheltered from state and federal income taxes. Payroll deductions also will be made if employees select family medical or dental insurance, additional life insurance, or any of the flexible benefits. (Policy 7560, Policy 7620)

Health Insurance

All permanent employees employed for 30 or more hours per week are eligible for health insurance through the NC State Health Plan. Links to more specific information, including plan coverage and rate comparisons, can be found at the State Health Plan's website, https://www.shpnc.org/. At that site, employees can also locate doctors and access employee wellness information. Call the State Plan at 1-888-234-2416 for more information.

School Bus Driver Requirements

Teacher assistants and certain classified employee positions serve as the school bus drivers in Carteret County Public Schools. Unless provided an exemption by the Superintendent or their designee, teacher assistants/certain classified employees must successfully complete or be in the process of completing classroom requirements leading to the obtainment of a Certified Driver's License (CDL) with school bus endorsement within 90 days of their employment. Teacher assistants/certain classified employees must also successfully complete road experience training conducted by a North Carolina Department of Public Instruction Trainer as soon as scheduling permits or within one year of employment.

Once a CDL is obtained, teacher assistants/certain classified employees must maintain the bus endorsement throughout the duration of their employment unless granted an exception by the Superintendent or designee. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action. Pursuant to federal and state law, school bus drivers are subject to random testing for drugs and alcohol. (Policy 7241, Regulation 7105-R)

Optional Insurance

The district offers additional optional benefits, including cancer, dental, vision, and other supplemental insurance plans, through a third-party vendor. Information regarding these plans is disseminated at the beginning of the school year.

Disability Insurance

The state provides a disability income plan at no cost for full-time regular employees. To be eligible for short-term benefits, employees must have one year of contributing service to the Retirement System when the disability begins and must be disabled for more than 60 consecutive calendar days. The plan provides 50 percent of the employee's basic salary, up to $3,000 a month, for one year. Employees with five or more years of service with the school system are eligible for long-term benefits after the short-term benefits expire. Long-term benefits are 65 percent of the employee's basic monthly salary, up to $3,900, reduced by the benefits received from other plans. Benefits are payable until the disability ceases, or the employee is eligible for full retirement benefits. (BEPM 4.5)

Workers' Compensation

Employees must immediately report any occupational injuries or illnesses to their supervisor. All employees are covered under workers' compensation laws when accidentally injured or having contracted an occupational disease during the course and scope of employment. Qualifying individuals may receive payment for medical expenses and partial income. It is the employee's responsibility to claim compensation. Employees must immediately report any occupational injuries or illnesses to a supervisor and lead secretary. (BEPM 9.2)

Episode of Violence

Any permanent full-time employee who suffers an injury or disability while engaged in the course of his or her employment can receive full salary if the injury or disability arose from an episode of violence, as defined by General Statute 115C-338, and the employee did not participate or provoke the violence. Salary compensation continues for one year, the continuation of the disability, or the time during which the employee is unable to engage in their employment because of the injury, whichever period is shortest. While receiving the benefit, an employee is not eligible to receive workers' compensation income benefits. However, the employee may receive medical, hospital, drug, and related expense payments from workers' compensation. The employee is not required to use paid leave for absences due to an episode of violence. (BEPM 9.3)

Retirement

Retirement is based on years of service to the state as designated in North Carolina General Statutes. Employees who leave the school system can withdraw personal contributions in a lump sum payment, plus interest in some cases, but less tax and penalties. A link to the state manual is one of many documents that can be located on the finance page of the school system's website. (Policy 7910)

HOLIDAYS AND LEAVE

Holidays

School employees receive the same number of holidays as state employees, but not necessarily on the same days. Paid holidays include New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday, Easter Monday, Memorial Day, Independence Day (12-month employees), Labor Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving (two days), and Christmas (two or three days). An employee may be absent for no more than two days in a school year for bona fide religious holidays not scheduled as vacations or holidays in the school calendar. The employee's principal or supervisor must approve the absence in advance. (BEPM 2.1.1)

Closings or Delays

Weather conditions, power outages, and other emergencies can make it necessary to alter the schedule of the regular school day. When school schedules must be changed, the announcement will be made using Infinite Campus Messaging, the rapid notification system, and the school system's email and social media. The information will be posted on the school system's website at www.carteretcountyschools.org. Information will also be provided to local television stations TV7, TV9, TV12, and area radio stations.

Sick Leave

Employees earn one day of sick leave for each month of employment. Sick leave may be accrued indefinitely.

Sick leave may be used for personal illness, injury, pregnancy, or medical appointments, and for the illness or death of an immediate family member. Employees should provide as much advance notice as is reasonably possible. Employees are not paid for unused sick leave when they leave the school system, and this leave is forfeited unless they either return to employment or retire within five years of resignation or dismissal.

Upon retirement, accumulated earned sick leave is converted into retirement credits, with each 20 sick leave days equaling one month's service. Another month is allowed for any part of 20 days that is left over. Classroom teachers who have exhausted their earned sick leave may, with certain restrictions, receive up to 20 days of extended sick leave for personal illness, injury, or disability. (BEPM 4.1, BEPM 4.2)

Shared Leave

Extended illness can cause financial hardship when an employee's sick leave and annual leave are exhausted. Under certain circumstances, employees can "share" (that is, donate) excess leave time to another employee. An employee who needs leave donations must gain prior approval from the Department of Human Resources.

Non-family members can donate annual or sick leave to non-family members, with two restrictions: (1) a non-family member shall not donate more than five annual or sick leave days per year to anyone non-family member, and (2) the combined total of annual or sick leave donated to a recipient from non-family members shall not exceed 20 days per year.

The recipient of leave donations must have exhausted all available accumulated paid leave. In addition, donors must be aware that sick leave provides an income safety net while they are employed, and that, upon retirement, their sick leave balances yield an additional month of service credit for every 20 days, plus one additional month if there is a remainder. (BEPM 4.3)

Annual (Vacation) Leave

Annual vacation leave accrued monthly is based on the length of state service as follows:

Yrs. Service	Days Earned
0 to 5 years	1.17
5 but less than 10 years	1.42
10 but less than 15 years	1.67
15 but less than 20 years	1.92
20 years or more	2.17

For ten-month employees, the first 10 days of annual leave are scheduled in the school calendar and must be taken as scheduled. Classroom teachers, media coordinators, and TAs who require a substitute may not take annual leave at any time that students are scheduled to be in attendance except for catastrophic illness or leave for new parents. Instructional personnel who do not require a substitute may, with their supervisor's approval, take annual leave on any day school is in session. Annual leave will not be granted on mandatory staff development workdays.

Annual leave may be accumulated without any applicable maximum until June 30 of each calendar year. On June 30 or upon the employee's separation from service with the district, accumulated annual vacation leave in excess of 30 days will be converted to sick leave so that only 30 days shall carry forward or be paid to the employee in a lump sum at separation. (BEPM 3.1)

Educational / Professional Leave

Long-term leave must be approved by the superintendent and is subject to approval by the Board of Education. Such leaves are granted for a term of no more than one year except in extraordinary circumstances. Long-term leaves without pay may be granted for:

• Further education, graduate work, or professional activities to enhance employee skills in a field related to an employee's position. This type of leave may not be used to explore other career opportunities.

• Travel for professional growth and short-term paid leave may be granted for up to 15 days if approved by the principal and superintendent. The leave must enhance an individual's educational knowledge or professional growth. Written leave requests should be submitted to the superintendent or designee, with a copy to the school principal or supervisor. Typically, at least 30 working days' notice should be provided. (BEPM 6.1/6.2, Policy 7510)

Family Medical Leave Act

Family and medical leave provides up to 12 weeks of leave per school year (July 1 – June 30) for the:

- birth or adoption of a child or placement of a foster child;
- care of a sick spouse, child, or parent; or
- care for the employee's own serious medical condition lasting 5 or more consecutive days.

To be eligible, the employee must have been employed by the school system for 12 months and for at least 1,250 hours during the 12 months immediately preceding the leave. An application form can be downloaded from the Human Resources' website (Employee Forms). (BEPM 8.2, Policy 7520)

Parental Leave

Paid Leave - Effective July 1, 2023, a permanent probationary, or time-limited full-time employee who becomes a parent to a child under the age of 18 years by birth, adoption or placement in foster care may take up to eight weeks of paid leave after giving birth to a child; or up to four weeks of paid leave after adoption or placement in foster care. A part-time employee may take a prorated amount of paid leave after giving birth not to exceed four weeks, or in the case of adoption or placement in foster care not to exceed two weeks. To be eligible, the employee must have been employed by the school system for 12 months and for at least 1,040 hours during the 12 months immediately preceding the leave. Paid parental leave may be used only once for a qualifying event within a 12-month period. Paid parental leave shall run concurrently with Family Medical Leave. The employee may use any authorized leave or leave without pay to cover any additional absence while on FMLA. (BEPM 8.1)

Unpaid Leave - All full-time permanent or part-time permanent employees may take a leave of absence without pay for up to one calendar year from the date of birth or adoption to care for a newborn child or newly adopted child. (BEPM 8.1.6)

On June 30, personal leave accumulated in excess of 5 days is converted into sick leave so a maximum of 5 days of personal leave are carried forward. Upon retirement, any personal leave remaining shall be converted into sick leave. (BEPM 8.1)

Personal Leave

Teachers may earn two days of personal leave each year and can accumulate up to five days. Personal days may be used in whole or half-day units on student or professional days. Requests to use personal leave should be made at least five days in advance. Teachers do not have to provide a reason for taking personal leave. However, failure to provide a reason for the absence shall result in a deduction from a teacher's pay for the full cost of a substitute pursuant to state law. Personal leave normally is not granted on the day before or after a holiday or on required teacher workdays.

On June 30, personal leave accumulated in excess of 5 days is converted into sick leave so a maximum of 5 days of personal leave are carried forward. Upon retirement, any personal leave remaining shall be converted into sick leave. (BEPM 5.1, Policy 7510)

Court Appearances

Employees who are a party or witness in a case that arises from their employment with the school system will be granted leave with full pay to attend the proceedings. If subpoenaed as a witness in a case that is not related to employment with the school system, the employee will not be granted leave with pay unless they are responding to subpoenas for civic responsibilities, such as a witness to a crime. Employees must surrender any fees received to the school system. If an employee is a party (plaintiff or defendant) in a case that is not related to employment with the school system, he or she may request a personal day, annual leave day (except instructional employees) or leave without pay. (BEPM 7.3)

Jury Duty

Employees receive temporary leave with full pay if called for jury duty. (BEPM 7.2)

Military Leave

Employees may have temporary leave with full pay for up to 15 days if they are called for annual training with a military reserve or National Guard unit. If called to active duty, they will receive leave without pay and credit for such service. If military pay is less than the employee's regular pay, the employee will receive differential pay while on active military duty. (BEPM 10.2, Policy 7530)

Leave Without Pay

Employees may be granted a leave of absence without pay for reasons such as personal illness in excess of sick leave, family leave (beyond that provided in board policy), and professional leave. Other reasons may be granted at the superintendent's discretion. Such leaves are typically reserved for exigent circumstances and not for additional vacation leave. Except in the case of an emergency, an employee who desires a leave of absence without pay shall provide at least 60 days' notice and shall submit a request in writing to the assistant superintendent of human resources. (BEPM 9.6, Policy 7510)

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

Job Openings and Transfers

Applications are accepted using an online application system. The school system's list of vacancies is updated regularly on the school system's website at Carteret County Schools: Employment Opportunities and on the NC DPI website, which is Applicant Tracking. Employees may transfer into positions or subject areas for which applicants are highly qualified. To qualify for a transfer, applicants should have an Employee Transfer Request Form signed by their principal and submitted to the Department of Human Resources starting February 15th. Transfer requests will be approved during the period between March 1st and the date occurring two weeks prior to the first student day of the next school year. The Department of Human Resources will notify the principal(s) of the school(s) to which the applicant has requested a transfer. Principals may schedule interviews with transfer applicants any time after a transfer request has been submitted. The principal may request an interview at their discretion. Transfers during the year require the same form but shall only take place upon the hiring for every vacancy that may occur from the chain of events. (Policy 7100, Policy 7440, Regulation 7440)

Staff Development

Staff development opportunities are offered both system-wide and at the school level.

• System-wide workshops are offered on new curricula, multicultural differences, teaching methodology, technology, and other topics.
• Each school offers at least 10 hours of staff development workshops (one unit of credit) on professional days or beyond the school day designed to meet the needs identified in the school improvement plan.
• Other community agencies may offer programs that carry staff development credit. Information about workshop opportunities is sent to all principals.
(Policy 1610/7800)

National Board Teacher Certification

National Board Certification is offered by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. The certification process is based on high and rigorous standards that evaluate teaching practices through performance-based assessments. This process consists of four components and may be completed in one school year or over several years. Attaining National Board Certification is an honor that also results in increased pay for classroom teachers. Further information can be found at: https://www.dpi.nc.gov/educators/national-board-certification

Professional Development Plan

At the beginning of the evaluation year, teachers must develop or revise a web-based professional development plan based on a self-assessment and other data. Specific goals, strategies, resources, assessment strategies, and target dates for completion of each goal are included in the plan. (Policy 7811)

Evaluation

As a general rule, the Carteret County Public School System uses evaluation instruments approved by the State Board of Education for licensed personnel. Local instruments may be used to supplement the state instrument or for positions for which there is no state instrument. All personnel may be evaluated at any time as deemed appropriate by their immediate supervisor, department head, or superintendent. (Policy 7810; Policy 7815)

LICENSURE

Initially Licensed and Certified Personnel in their First Year with the District

Teachers who hold an initial license and who are in their first year of employment with Carteret County Public Schools are observed formally a minimum of three times each year by the principal or assistant principal and once by a mentor/peer teacher. The mentor/peer observation should occur in conjunction with one of the principal's or assistant principal's evaluations.

Career Licensed and Experienced Instructional Personnel with a Continuing License

Career personnel and instructional personnel with a continuing license are formally evaluated once every five years. A teacher rated below proficient in any function will be comprehensively evaluated annually until their performance in all functions is proficient or above. Career teachers and teachers with a continuing license will be observed every year.

All observations between evaluations may be used in evaluating performance. **Career teachers forfeit career status when they work less than full-time.**

License Renewal

License renewal is the employee's responsibility. **Failure to comply with requirements resulting in an expired license is a sufficient reason for employee dismissal.** Renewal requires the completion of 8 credits for a North Carolina Continuing Professional license. Elementary school certified staff must complete 3 content, 3 literacy, and 2 general. High school, middle school, and other certified staff must complete 4 content and 4 general. Expired licenses, when validated by the employer, require 8 CEUs to meet renewal requirements. Current policy provides that a unit of credit is equal to one-quarter hour or two-thirds of a semester hour of IHE credit, or ten clock hours of professional development. Employees should fill out the attendance and certificate of credit forms available at each workshop. Prior approval from the school administrator or supervisor is required for license renewal credit offered outside the school system. Upon completion of the workshop or course, the official paperwork must be submitted to ensure that it is properly posted. Employees need to keep a list of workshops attended with a copy of their license.

Questions about the status of a license should be directed to the licensure specialist at 252-728-4583, ext. 160175. (Policy 7130, Regulation 7130)

ETHICS

Carteret County Schools requires that all employees act ethically in the performance of their job duties and responsibilities. Certified staff are to abide by the requirements of the Code of Ethics for North Carolina Educators (NCSBE Policy EVAL-014), the Standards of Professional Conduct for North Carolina Educators (16 NCAC 06C.0602), and the Testing Code of Ethics (16 NCAC 06D.0311).

Code of Ethics for North Carolina Educators

The purpose of this Code of Ethics is to define Standards of Professional Conduct for North Carolina Educators.

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

I. **Commitment to the Student**. The educator shall:

   A. Protect students from conditions within the educator's control that circumvent learning or are detrimental to the health and safety of students.

   B. Maintain an appropriate relationship with students in all settings. The educator shall not encourage, solicit, or engage in a sexual or romantic relationship with students, nor touch a student in an inappropriate way for personal gratification, with intent to harm, or out of anger.

   C. Evaluate students and assigns grades based upon the students' demonstrated competencies and performance.

   D. Discipline students justly and fairly and not deliberately embarrass or humiliate them.

   E. Hold in confidence information learned in professional practice except for professional reasons or in compliance with pertinent regulations or statutes.

   F. Refuse to accept significant gifts, favors, or additional compensation that might influence or appear to influence professional decisions or actions.

II. **Commitment to the School and School System**

III. **Commitment to the Profession.** The educator shall:

A. Utilize available resources to provide a classroom climate conducive to learning and to promote learning to the maximum extent.

B. Acknowledge the diverse views of students, parents and legal guardians, and colleagues as they work collaboratively to shape educational goals, policies, and decisions. The educator shall not proselytize or espouse personal viewpoints that are outside the scope of professional practice.

C. Sign a contract in good faith and does not abandon contracted professional duties without a substantive reason.

D. Participate actively in professional decision-making processes and support the expression of professional opinions and judgments by colleagues in decision-making processes or due process proceedings.

E. When acting in an administrative capacity:

1. Act fairly, consistently, and prudently in the exercise of authority with colleagues, subordinates, students, and parents and legal guardians.

2. Evaluate the work of other educators using appropriate procedures and established statutes and regulations.

3. Protect the rights of others in the educational setting, and not retaliate, coerce, or intentionally intimidate others in the exercise of rights protected by law.

4. Recommend persons for employment, promotion, or transfer according to their professional qualifications, the needs and policies of the public school unit, and according to the law.

F. Provide accurate credentials and information regarding licensure or employment and not knowingly assist others in providing untruthful information.

G. Take action to remedy an observed violation of the Code of Ethics and promotes understanding of the principles of professional ethics.

H. Pursue growth and development in the practice of the profession and use that knowledge in improving the educational opportunities, experiences, and performance of students and colleagues.

Adopted by the State Board of Education on June 5, 1997. Revised May 2, 2024

The Standards of Professional Conduct for North Carolina Educators

16 NCAC 6C.0602 – The Standards of Professional Conduct for North Carolina Educators

This Rule establishes uniform Standards of Professional Conduct ("Standards") for professional educators in North Carolina, which apply to all persons who hold a professional educator license issued pursuant to this Subchapter and Chapter 115C, Article 17E of the General Statutes. These Standards shall be the basis for reviewing the performance of professional educators by the State Board of Education ("SBE"). Violation of these Standards shall be grounds for disciplinary sanctions against a professional educator's license as provided in this Section.

(1) Generally Recognized Professional Standards. The educator shall adhere to and practice the professional standards of all federal, state, and local governing bodies with public education oversight.

(2) Conduct with Students. The educator shall treat all students with respect and maintain appropriate professional boundaries with all students, regardless of whether that student is directly under the care or supervision of the educator. Specifically, the educator shall not engage in any of the following conduct toward or in the presence of a student:
(a) Use of profane, vulgar, or demeaning language.
(b) Intentional or reckless exposure of students to profane, vulgar, or sexually explicit material except as part of age-appropriate classroom instruction or other pedagogical practice.
(c) Solicitation, encouragement, or consummation of a romantic, physical, or sexual relationship with a student in any form, whether written, verbal, or physical. As used in this context,

"solicitation" or "encouragement" shall include engaging in a pattern of flirtatious behavior; efforts to gain access to, or time alone with, a student with no clear educational or school-related objective; provision of individualized or specialized treatment, including tangible or monetary gifts, to a student that does not comply with generally recognized professional standards for educators; or any other behavior that could be perceived by a rational observer as excessively personal or intimate in the context of the educator-student relationship.

(d) Solicitation, encouragement, or consummation of sexual contact with a student.

(e) Sexual harassment, as defined in 34 C.F.R. 106.30(a).

(f) Child abuse, as defined in G.S. 14-318.2 or G.S. 14-318.4.

(3) Alcohol and Controlled Substances. The educator shall not be under the influence of, possess, use, or consume an alcoholic beverage or a controlled substance, as defined in G.S. 90-95, on school premises, at a school-sponsored activity, or when otherwise discharging the educator's professional duties, unless the educator has a prescription from a licensed medical professional authorizing such use. The educator shall not furnish alcoholic beverages or controlled substances to a student, except for the administration of medication prescribed by a licensed medical professional in accordance with the educator's professional duties.

(4) Honesty. The educator shall not engage in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation in the performance of the educator's professional duties, including the following:

(a) statements or representations of professional qualifications;

(b) application or recommendation for professional employment, promotion, or licensure;

(c) applications or recommendations for college or university admission, scholarship, grant, academic award, or similar benefit;

(d) statements or representations of completion of college or staff development credit;

(e) evaluation or grading of students or school personnel;

(f) submission of financial or program compliance reports submitted to state, federal, or other governmental agencies;

(g) submission of information in the course of an official inquiry by the SBE or the educator's employing PSU into allegations of professional misconduct, provided that an educator shall be given adequate notice of the allegations and may be represented by legal counsel; and

(h) submission of information in the course of an investigation into school related criminal activity by a law enforcement agency, child protective services, or any other agency with the authority to investigate, provided that an educator may decline to provide information to law enforcement if such evidence could incriminate the educator in violation of the educator's rights under the United States Constitution or North Carolina Constitution.

(5) Compliance with Criminal Laws. The educator shall not violate the criminal laws of this State, the United States, or any other state or territory under the jurisdiction of the United States.

(6) Proper Remunerative Conduct. The educator shall not solicit current students or parents of students to purchase equipment, supplies, or services from the educator in a private remunerative capacity. An educator shall not tutor for remuneration students currently assigned to the educator's classes, unless approved by the local superintendent. An educator shall not accept any compensation, benefit, or thing of value other than the educator's regular compensation for the performance of any service that the educator is required to render in the course and scope of the educator's employment. This Rule shall not restrict performance of any overtime or supplemental services at the request of the PSU, nor shall it restrict the acceptance of gifts from students, parents, or other persons in recognition or appreciation of the educator's professional service, provided the gift is given and received freely, openly, and without expectation of favor or advantage to the donor in return.

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

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

(9) Required Reports. The educator shall make all reports required by Chapter 115C of the General Statutes.

(10) Public Funds and Property. The educator shall not misuse public funds or property or any funds

belonging to an organization affiliated with the school or PSU. The educator shall account for funds collected from students, colleagues, parents, or legal guardians of students. The educator shall not submit fraudulent requests for reimbursement, expenses, or pay.

(11) Scope of Professional Practice. The educator shall not perform any professional duty or function for which licensure is required by this Chapter or by Chapter 115C of the General Statutes during any period in which the educator's license is suspended or revoked.

(12) Abuse of Authority. The educator shall not directly or indirectly use or threaten to use any official authority or influence in any manner that discourages, restrains, coerces, interferes with, or discriminates against any subordinate or any licensee who in good faith reports or otherwise brings to the attention of a PSU, the SBE, or any other public agency authorized to take remedial action, any facts or information relative to the actual or suspected violation of any law or rule regulating the duties of persons serving in the public school system, including those established by this Section.

History Note: *Authority G.S. 115C-12(9); 115C-270.5; 115C-307;*
Eff. May 1, 1998;
Temporary Amendment Eff. June 6, 2024.
Readopted Eff. July 1, 2025

Testing Code of Ethics

16 NCAC 06D .0311 TESTING CODE OF ETHICS

(a) This Rule shall apply to all public school unit (PSU) employees or agents while they are administering the Annual Testing Program defined in Rule .0307(c) of this Section.

(b) The PSU shall develop local policies and procedures to ensure maximum test security in coordination with the policies and procedures developed by the test publisher.

(c) The PSU shall require all testing coordinators, school test coordinators, test administrators, and proctors to be trained as required in Rule .0308 of this Section.

(d) The PSU shall designate the personnel who are authorized to have access to secure test materials. "Access" to test materials by school personnel means handling the materials but does not include reviewing tests or analyzing test items.

(1) Persons who have access to secure test materials shall not use those materials for any purpose other than test administration.

(2) No person shall copy, reproduce, or paraphrase the test materials without the express written consent of the test publisher.

(e) The principal shall store test materials in a locked facility to which only the principal has access. The principal shall not allow anyone access to the test materials except as necessary for administration.

(f) When PSU personnel discover loss of materials, failure to account for materials, or any evidence of unauthorized access to the materials, they shall report the discovery without delay to the principal, school test coordinator, school system (LEA) test coordinator, or charter school director.

(g) PSUs shall ensure that test coordinators:

(1) plan and implement training for school test coordinators, test administrators, and proctors;

(2) ensure each school test coordinator and test administrator is trained in accordance with Rule .0308 of this Section; and

(3) in conjunction with program administrators, ensure test accommodations to students entitled to testing accommodations as defined in 16 NCAC 06G .0315; are documented and provided.

(h) The principal or the principal's designee shall serve as the school test coordinator.

(i) The principal shall ensure the school test coordinator maintains test security and accountability of test materials, including taking the following actions:

(1) before each test administration, the school test coordinator shall count and distribute test materials;

(2) after each test administration, the school test coordinator shall without delay collect, count, and return all test materials to the locked storage facility;

(3) establishes procedures to assure all students participating in the Annual Testing Program have an equal opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge on the test; and

(4) identifies and trains personnel, proctors, and backup personnel for test administrations.

(j) Teachers may help students improve test-taking skills by:
(1) helping students become familiar with test formats using curricular content;
(2) teaching students test-taking strategies and providing practice sessions;
(3) helping students learn ways of preparing to take tests; and
(4) using resource materials such as test questions from test item banks and linking documents in instruction and test preparation.

(k) With respect to test administration, PSUs shall:
(1) assure each school establishes procedures to ensure all test administrators comply with test publisher guidelines;
(2) inform the local board of education of any breach of this code of ethics; and
(3) inform test coordinators and principals of their responsibilities.

(l) The school test coordinator shall:
(1) assure school personnel know the content of rules in this Section and local testing policies;
(2) implement the school system and local testing policies and procedures to assure all students participating in the Annual Testing Program have an equal opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge on the test;
(3) ensure proctors are trained; and
(4) ensure all violations of rules in this Section and local testing policies are reported to the school system (LEA) test coordinator.

(m) Test administrators shall:
(1) administer tests according to the directions in the assessment guide and any subsequent updates developed by the test publisher;
(2) administer tests to all students enrolled in a grade or course that requires a test in the Annual Testing Program;
(3) report all violations of rules in this Section and local testing policies to the school test coordinator; and

(n) Proctors shall serve as additional monitors to help the test administrator assure that students have an equal opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge on the test.

(o) Scoring. The school system test coordinator shall:
(1) ensure each test is scored according to the procedures and guidelines defined for the test by the test publisher;
(2) maintain quality control during the entire scoring process, which consists of handling and editing documents, scanning answer documents, and producing electronic files and reports. Quality control shall address scoring accuracy and scoring consistency.
(3) maintain security of tests and data files at all times, including;
(A) protecting the confidentiality of students at all times when publicizing test results; and
(B) maintaining test security of answer keys and item-specific scoring rubrics.

(p) Educators shall use test scores as one piece of information to be interpreted together with other scores and indicators when determining a student's grade. The PSU shall ensure that school personnel analyze and report test data within the limitations described in this Paragraph.
(1) Educators shall maintain the confidentiality of individual students. PSU personnel shall not publicize test scores or any written material containing personally identifiable information from the student's educational records except as permitted under the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, 20 U.S.C. 1232g, and regulations adopted pursuant thereto.
(2) Staff development relating to testing must enable school personnel to respond knowledgeably to questions related to testing, including the tests, scores, scoring procedures, and other interpretive materials.

(q) Unethical testing practices include the following practices:
(1) encouraging students to be absent the day of testing;
(2) encouraging students not to do their best;
(3) using secure test items or modified secure test items for instruction;
(4) changing student responses at any time;
(5) interpreting, explaining, or paraphrasing the test directions or the test items;
(6) classifying students for the purpose of avoiding State testing;
(7) not testing all students enrolled in a grade or course that requires a test in the Annual Testing Program;
(8) failing to provide required accommodations during testing to students entitled to testing accommodations as defined in 16 NCAC 06G .0315;

(9) modifying scoring programs including answer keys, equating files, and lookup tables;
(10) modifying student records for the purpose of raising test scores;
(11) using a single test score to place a student in a grade or a course; and
(12) providing inaccurate test results and interpretations to the public.

(r) In the event of a violation of this Rule, the State Board of Education may impose any one or more of the following sanctions:
(1) withhold any monetary incentive awards;
(2) file a civil action against the person or persons responsible for the violation for copyright infringement or for any other available cause of action;
(3) seek criminal prosecution of the person or persons responsible for the violation; and
(4) in accordance with the provisions of 16 NCAC 06C .0312, suspend or revoke the professional license of the person or persons responsible for the violation.

History Note: Authority G.S. 115C-12(9); 115C-174.11; 115C-174.12; 115C-218.85(a)(3);
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