



Williamsburg County School District

Employee Handbook

I UNDERSTAND THAT THE DISTRICT'S HANDBOOK AND POLICY MANUAL ARE NOT CONTRACTS.

Name of Employee

School

Signature

Date

Visit the district's website <http://www.wcsd.k12.sc.us> for the most current copies of all Williamsburg County School District policies.

Updated August 2021

Table of Contents

District Leadership Directory	6
General Information	7
Human Resources	9
Finance Office Services.....	23
Selected Board Policies and Regulations	24
Instruction	41
Technology	42

Our Goal:

Each student will achieve the characteristics of the

“The Profile of the South Carolina Graduate”

Profile of the South Carolina Graduate



World Class Knowledge

- Rigorous standards in language arts and math for career and college readiness
- Multiple languages, science, technology, engineering, mathematics (STEM), arts and social sciences

World Class Skills

- Creativity and innovation
- Critical thinking and problem solving
- Collaboration and teamwork
- Communication, information, media and technology
- Knowing how to learn

Life and Career Characteristics

- Integrity
- Self-direction
- Global perspective
- Perseverance
- Work ethic
- Interpersonal skills



Mission

Williamsburg County School District will prepare students for college, careers and citizenship in a global society.

Vision

In partnership with all stakeholders, Williamsburg County School District will ensure a world class education for all students by utilizing a rigorous, innovative curriculum that focuses on creativity, critical thinking and problem solving.

Beliefs

We believe that:

- Knowledge is power.
- Learning occurs in a caring environment.
- All people are worthy of respect.
- The family is the most important influence in the life of an individual.

Accountability

Williamsburg County School District is accountable to the local community, the South Carolina Department of Education, and the United States Department of Education, all of who contribute to the funding of its programs.

Williamsburg County School District operates under the direct supervision and guidance of the South Carolina Department of Education. The superintendent delegates authority to various administrators and principals. Principals are held accountable for all that takes place in their buildings and on their grounds.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

This handbook and its contents are not intended, nor should they be interpreted, to create an expressed or implied contract of employment, but rather should be understood as a brief description of the benefits offered by Williamsburg County School District and an overview of its policies and rules. This handbook supersedes all previous handbooks or other documents that address the same subject matter as the policies and rules contained in this handbook. This handbook and the policies, rules, and benefits to which it refers or contains, may be amended, modified, or discontinued at any time by the District in its discretion.

Equal Employment Opportunity Statement and Policy of Non-discrimination on the Basis of Disability

Williamsburg County School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, or handicap in employment or the provision of services.

The Chief Human Resources Officer has been designated to coordinate compliance with the non-discrimination requirements contained in federal regulations under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the rights provided there under, are available from the Civil Rights Coordinator, the Chief Human Resources Officer.

Additional copies of this handbook can be obtained from the Human Resources Office upon request.

District Leadership Directory

		Extension
Dr. Rose Wilder	Superintendent	6102
Dr. Monica Brewton	Chief Academic Officer	6108
Dr. Ernestine Young	Executive Director of Federal Programs	6121
Dr. Latetia Staggers	Executive Director of Professional Development & Instructional Support	7102
Mrs. Shaunta Mack	Executive Director of Secondary Programs, Policies & Procedures	6147
Ms. Amanda Dorris	Director of Elementary Programs	7103
Mrs. Ruby Faison	Director of Early Childhood & Literacy	6177
Mr. Neilson Hilton	Director of Accountability	6123
Dr. Kenneth Burgess	Ombudsman	6126
Mrs. Jennifer Holliday	Executive Director of Related Arts & Special Funding	6112
Mrs. Senitta Swinton	District Registrar	6149
Mrs. Claire Murdoch	Director of Human Resources – Certified Staff	6128
Ms. Latonya West	Director of Human Resources – Classified Staff	6127
Mrs. Wendy Fulton	Executive Director of Finance	6136
Mr. Michael Barrineau	Executive Director of Facilities & Operations	6133
Mr. Ernest Young	Director of Technology	6184
Mrs. Kelly Burgess	Coordinator for Virtual Learning & Technology Support	6182
Dr. Brian McKnight	Director of Transportation & Student Services	6192
Ms. Thelvane'sa Murphy	Executive Director of Special Services, Policies & Procedures	6167
Mrs. Jennifer Lamb	Coordinator of Health Services	6217
Mrs. Nicole Giles	Director of Food Services	6201
Ms. Debbie Ipock	Public Relations Coordinator	6110
Ms. Valerie Brown	Director of Adult Education	6157
Dr. Myron Davis	Director of Alternative & Virtual Programs	(843) 355-5565

General Information

Williamsburg County School District is privileged to have some of the most outstanding teachers, support staff, and administrators in the country. Our district has a reputation of excellence that is directly related to the expertise, commitment and caring of each and every member of the School District's team of teachers, administrators and support staff.

Williamsburg County School District encompasses a land area of approximately 937 square miles, in Williamsburg County. The School District is primarily a residential and rural area located to the northwest of the city of Columbia, the capital city of South Carolina. The district serves approximately 4,000 students within its three main attendance areas: Greeleyville, Hemingway and Kingstree. The district operates a total of 4 primary/elementary schools, 3 middle schools, 3 high schools, one center for career and technical studies, one charter school, one adult education center and one alternative school.

Williamsburg County School District offers an educational program that challenges and stimulates thinking and problem solving and fosters superior achievement. Our comprehensive educational program focuses on both academic and personal success for all students from early childhood education through grade 12 and including adult and community education programs. A variety of programs are offered to meet the diverse needs of our students.

The warmth of our communities is carried into the schools, where over 700 employees work to serve and support the children. The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and the South Carolina Department of Education accredit our schools.

We are an equal opportunity employer.

Public Information

We spend a portion of our revenue each year on publications and advertisements to keep the general community informed of our academic progress and our spending. The Public Information Office, located at the District Office, fields questions from the media, employees, students, and members of the community. Of particular interest to employees are the annual calendar, which identifies important dates throughout the school year, *The Lamp Newsletter* and the employee information section of "PD 360," the district's employee professional development software system. Our goal is to have open communication. The superintendent is active in the community and meets regularly with principals, teachers and parents.

Inclement Weather Delay Procedures

In the event of a delayed school opening due to inclement weather, personnel will need to report to work per the direction of the superintendent. For example, when there is a one-hour delay, all staff will report one hour later than their usual time. When we have a two-hour delay, staff will report two hours later than their usual time. This eliminates confusion and provides for staff at the schools in time to be ready for the students.

Information about delays and closings will be provided through the local media and through school or site notification procedures.

Human Resources

Teacher Certification

Each teacher must maintain a valid certificate in the field of his employment from the Office of Educator Services at the South Carolina Department of Education. The certificate must be sent to the Human Resources Office to be recorded. This should be done immediately upon receipt of the certificate and/or prior to the beginning of the school session to facilitate payroll preparation. Teachers are paid according to the class and years of experience listed on their South Carolina Teaching Credential in their personnel file. *Certified personnel salaries are determined by the valid certificate from the South Carolina Department of Education.*

The South Carolina Department of Education has a teacher-friendly website, <http://ed.sc.gov/agency/ee/Educator-Services/> that offers add-on information, certificate advancement, renewal information, access to the teacher's individual file, critical teaching needs information, applications for credential, and download forms. This site provides easy, convenient access twenty-four hours a day.

Certified educators who wish to make any changes to their files in the certification office must do so by completing a **Request for Change/Action** form and faxing it to the number listed at the bottom of the page. That form can be accessed at: <https://ed.sc.gov/educators/certification/certification-forms/>

Simply print the form, complete and sign it, and fax it to 803-896-0368.

The Office of Educator Services in the South Carolina Department of Education files teacher certificates numerically, not alphabetically. This means that in letters and telephone calls, the certificate number must be given in order for the department to expedite individual requests pertaining to certificates.

Certificate Renewal Regulations

It is now mandatory that districts renew certificates according to the Guidelines for Teacher Recertification documents provided by the Office of Educator Services in the South Carolina Department of Education. The Certificate Renewal Plan Guidelines and all documents necessary for renewal are located on our web site under the Instruction Division. Click on Certificate Renewal to review the matrix of options for accumulating points and the forms for each option.

Please remember that colleges do not send transcripts automatically. For transcript credit, the individual employee must request the transcript. Request an official college transcript immediately after grades are posted for completing coursework. Request that the transcript go to: Attention: Office of Professional Development, Kingstree, SC 29556. A transcript should not be sent to the State Department of Education for renewal credit.

For the Certificate Renewal Plan, when using Option 1 for renewal, a transcript should also be included as documentation for Option 1.

If the educator does not hold a Master's degree, she/he must take at least 3 hours of graduate credit for 60 of the required 120 renewal credits for renewal.

Renewals

It is the educator's responsibility to make sure that all 120 renewal credits are on file to avoid delay of certificate renewal. Educators should check the expiration date on their certificates. Certificate renewals will begin in January of the educator's expiration year. Educators should submit the completed paperwork and documentation for the total of 120 points. Educators should not turn in packets before the total of 120 points are accumulated. The educator should maintain a file of renewal credits until all points are accumulated and documented.

When the district certification officer reviews the packet and determines validity of the total of 120 points, she will then renew the educator's certificate through the South Carolina Department of Education's Certification Portal System. The district will print a copy for the educator's personnel file. The office responsible for certificate renewals is the Office of Professional Development at 843-355-5571.

Submitting Renewal Credits

An educator who is employed in a position that requires educator certification must maintain verification of having earned a minimum of 120 renewal credits through professional development activities that directly relate to the educator's professional growth and development plan, support the goals of the employing educational entity, and promote student achievement.

Certificate Renewal Plan

The following items will be included in the educator's renewal packet:

1. the educator's professional development plan which lists the educator's goals that directly relate to the professional development and growth of the educator, support the goals of the district or educational entity, and promote student achievement.
2. all completed Renewal Credit Approval and verifications forms for the professional development activities to be used for credit to renew the certificate.
3. verification/documentation of successful completion of the professional activities to be used for re-certification. (Documentation must support each option. The South Carolina Department of Education's Renewal Matrix states the necessary documentation to receive credit. The educator is responsible for consulting the District Five website for these documents. They are located under the Employee Intranet under the Instruction tab.
4. a completed and signed Renewal Credit Computation sheet, and;
5. option sheets for each option used for renewal.

Classification Changes

For certificate upgrades (Bachelor's +18, Masters, etc.), submit via fax the "Request for Change" form to the Department of Education at 803-896-0368. Class changes received before November 1 will be retroactive to July 1.

Those received after November 1 will be dated the date of graduation if received within a 45 day period. It is important that the educator submit the change/action form to the Department of Education within those 45 days.

The Office of Human Resources bases the effective date of upgrade change on the validity date shown on the new certificate. A change in salary cannot be made until a copy of the new certificate is submitted to the Office of Human Resources. The latest teaching certificate must be forwarded to the Office of Human Resources for inclusion in the employee's personnel record.

Name/Address Change

Submit a Request for Change form for a name or address change on your certificate to the Office of Human Resource. We will make the change at the Certificate Portal System site.

Experience Credit

The South Carolina Department of Education grants one year's experience credit for 152 days (or more) of service per school year (190 days). Note that work experience years and service credit years for retirement may not be the same.

Teacher Evaluation

Teachers in their first year of teaching are issued an Induction contract and will be evaluated using the induction model under ADEPT (Assisting, Developing, Evaluating Professional Teaching), the South Carolina system for teacher assistance and evaluation. Induction teachers may also be out-of-state teachers with less than one year of experience, or other out-of-state experienced teachers. Induction teachers will participate in an induction program, which provides continuous guidance and support. It is required that all Induction teachers attend an ADEPT session prior to any observations. The yearlong Induction program includes the assignment of an assistance team with one member being a mentor; monthly meetings, observations, and seminars; semester conferences, and implementation of the ten ADEPT Performance Dimensions of teaching as well as student learning objectives (SLO).

Teachers who have successfully completed the induction program and are recommended for a contract, will progress to annual contract status the next year. Induction teachers who do not successfully complete the year and receive a contract will be placed on an annual contract the next year and evaluated with the Expanded ADEPT formal evaluation instrument.

Annual teachers will be evaluated on the Expanded ADEPT evaluation instrument selected by the South Carolina Department of Education. The yearlong evaluation includes the assignment of evaluators, observations, interviews, formal conferences, and written feedback from the team of evaluators just before the December holiday break and before April 15th. Feedback is given based on the consensus of the team of evaluators regarding the teacher's performance in each of the ten ADEPT performance standards and student growth measures (Student Learning Objectives and Value-Added Measures).

Continuing contract teachers will be evaluated using the ADEPT GBE (Goals-Based Evaluation) informal evaluation instrument. One goal must be accomplished annually in each five-year cycle of the teacher's certificate cycle. Principals have the discretion to evaluate continuing contract teachers with the ADEPT formal SAFE-T evaluation or other method as the South Carolina Department of Education requires.

Paraprofessional (Instructional Assistants) Requirements

According to the Federal No Child Left Behind Act, all instructional paraprofessionals in Title I schools or targeted assistance programs must complete at least one of the following three requirements:

- at least two years of study at an accredited institution of higher education; or
- an associate's degree (or higher); or
- an approved State or local academic assessment that measures the paraprofessional's knowledge of and ability to assist in instruction of the following subjects at the appropriate level:
 - reading, writing, and mathematics; or
 - reading readiness, writing readiness, and mathematics readiness.

Guidelines for Earning a Year's Experience

The State Department of Education grants one year's experience credit for 152 paid days of service per school year for 190 day certified employees. The district uses these criteria as the basis for earning a year's experience for all employees who work at least 80 percent of the day or year according to the following formula:

- 180-186 day employees must have 144 paid days
- 190-195 day employees must have 152 paid days
- 200-205 day employees must have 164 paid days
- 210-215 day employees must have 168 paid days
- 220-day employees must have 176 paid days
- 240-day employees must have 192 paid days

Part-time employees who work less than 80 percent of the day will earn experience for the year according to hours work. (e.g. 0.5 employees may be granted 0.5 year's experience if paid days service has been earned.)

Note: The Human Resources Office tracks work experience. The State Retirement System tracks retirement service credit. Requests to the State Retirement System must be in writing.

Health Certificates

All employees are required to meet the guidelines for the screening and evaluation of tuberculosis according to District policy and South Carolina law. The Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) is authorized to establish guidelines for the evaluation of school employees for tuberculosis as required by the law. The guidelines established by DHEC require that each employee have on file in the Human Resources Office documentation of a PPD tuberculin skin test prior to the first day the employee reports to work.

The required form (DHEC 1420, School Employee Certificate of Evaluation for Tuberculosis) is provided to each employee upon employment with the district. The PPD test can be done at any public health center. All employees are also expected to maintain standards of physical and mental health conducive to the effective and efficient performance of their duties.

Bloodborne Pathogens Plan

The purpose of the Bloodborne Pathogens exposure control plan is to eliminate or minimize employee occupational exposure to blood or certain other body fluids and to comply with the OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Authority) Blood borne Pathogens Standard, 29 CFR 195.530.

The school district is required to perform an exposure determination concerning which employees may be likely to incur occupational exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials. The exposure determination is made without regard to the use of personal protective equipment (i.e. employees are considered to be exposed even if they wear personal protective equipment). Williamsburg County School District has determined that the following job classifications may be expected to incur such occupational exposure, regardless of frequency. This plan requires all new employees in the following categories to receive an inservice within 5 working days of the first day of employment.

- School health nurses
- Designated CPR and first aid responders
- Teachers and Teacher Assistants in all Special Education classes
- Bus drivers for students with handicapping conditions
- Teachers and Teacher Assistants in elementary schools
- Coaches, trainers, and Physical Education (PE) teachers
- Principals, Assistant Principals, and Coordinators of Student Services
- Secretaries
- Custodians
- Cafeteria Workers

The Substitute Teacher Program

When a teacher has to be absent, clear two-way communication and cooperation between the teacher and the substitute is needed for a successful instructional day.

Substitutes are approved by the Human Resources Office and listed in AESOP, the district's substitute program. To the greatest extent possible, substitute teachers should possess the training, maturity and experience to insure that students will receive uninterrupted instruction. The following minimum qualifications are required in order for an applicant to be submitted for approval:

1. A person must be at least 18 years of age.
2. Although a high school diploma from an accredited high school will meet the minimum educational requirements, preference is given to certified teachers and/or those who have college educational experience.
3. All candidates will be required to complete an application available to print at the WCSD website. All candidates must have on file the following documents:
 - a. An acceptable criminal records history check from the S. C. Law Enforcement Division (SLED) in accordance with the requirements for teachers as stated in Law 59-26-40.
 - b. School Employee Certificate of Evaluation for Tuberculosis (DHEC 1420) indicating a negative report
 - c. Reliable references which attest to the acceptability of the candidate's character and dependability.
 - d. Passing scores on the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) test and WorkKeys, available through the Office of Adult Education.

Other Important Facts about Substitute Teaching

1. A willingness to be available for substitute work and to respond on short notice.
2. All Candidates should complete all five substitute modules provided by the district.
3. The site supervisor has the responsibility to evaluate the effectiveness of each substitute teacher employed at his/her site.

It is the responsibility of the teacher and the school staff at large to help substitute teachers. They should have the following materials available to them:

- Class rolls for all groups
- Adequate lesson plans for all groups
- Emergency plans for all groups
- Desk copies of all textbooks/workbooks
- Time schedule of all classes and activities
- Seating chart for all groups
- Names of student assistants for all groups
- Lunchroom procedures clearly explained
- Notice of supervisory responsibilities such as bus duty or ground duty
- Fire, tornado, and bus evacuation drill plans
- Notice of any special situations that exist.

Leave and Absences **(Policies GCC and GDC)**

The continuous presence of employees promotes excellence in the instructional program by ensuring the following:

- uninterrupted continuity of education,
- greater teacher-student contact time,
- appropriate role-model emulation,
- consistent classroom discipline; and
- reduced costs.

Therefore, the board expects employees to be present at work every day. The board recognizes, however, that certain absences are unavoidable. At such times, employees may take leave in accordance with Policies GCC and GDC and the procedures set forth in the accompanying administrative rules (GCC-R and GDC-R).

Granting Leave

Introduction

In order to equably provide a leave policy for all full-time employees of Williamsburg County School District that assures no reduction in benefits, and yet is legally consistent with the provisions set forth in the "Act to Provide Leave for Full-Time Public School Employees" (Section 59-1-400, S. C. Code, 1976), the following provisions are hereby established.

Current Allocation

At the beginning of each contract year, or from the date of employment if hired mid-year, the district will add the total of days the employee can potentially earn to his/her leave balance. All active full-time employees earn 1-1/4 days sick leave on the last day of each full month employed.

A leave day is the same length as the employee's work day. An employee who uses a leave day that has not yet been earned at the time that the employee separates from employment with the District will be required to reimburse the District for that day through a deduction from the employee's final paycheck. If the amount of the employee's final paycheck is insufficient to cover the amount due the District, the employee will be required to write a check to the District for the difference within ten calendar days after the employee's final work day.

Leave Accumulation

An employee who has unused leave days at the end of a fiscal year (June 30) will have those days carried over in accumulated leave up to a maximum of 120 days, to be paid out at retirement (up to 90 days).

Procedures Regarding Absences

An employee will notify his/her immediate supervisor as early as practicable when it is necessary for him/her to be absent. When an employee knows that he/she will be absent for a period longer than three days, he/she should complete and file a request for leave form. The employee signs the leave form upon return to work which is turned in to the supervisor.

An employee who anticipates taking extended sick leave should submit the request for leave to his/her supervisor at least 30 calendar days prior to the effective date of the leave. The employee should contact the Benefits Department for the appropriate request form (FMLA or Extended Personal Illness) and the medical certification form. Any employee returning from an extended leave of absence must present a statement from the attending physician certifying the employee's clearance and ability to resume all of his/her full-time job responsibilities to the Benefits Department prior to returning to work.

Leave pay will not exceed an employee's total amount of earned leave during any 12-month period as defined in FMLA policy.

Sick Leave for Full-Time Employees

Family — A family is an employee's:

- spouse
- son, son-in-law, stepson
- daughter, daughter-in-law, stepdaughter
- mother, mother-in-law, stepmother
- father, father-in-law, stepfather
- brother, brother-in-law, stepbrother
- sister, sister-in-law, stepsister
- grandparents, grandchildren
- guardian, ward or other relative living full-time in the employee's household at the time of illness.

Full-Time Employee — Employees who are employed by the district a minimum of 30 hours per week.

Use of Leave

Sick leave days may be used only for personal illness, family illness if the employee is responsible for providing care, for the birth or adoption of a child or for a death in the family, sickness or personal reasons as designated by the employee.

The district may require a physician's statement from any employee who is absent for more than three consecutive days.

Specifically, the district reserves the right to require that an employee submit a treating physician's statement verifying an illness along with a leave form when the employee has been on sick leave for more than three consecutive working days. The principal or employee's immediate supervisor has the discretion to request such a statement.

Whenever possible, an employee should submit a written request to use leave to the employee's immediate supervisor for approval at least three work days in advance of the anticipated leave. Employees also should seek to secure a substitute in advance of taking leave. It is required that supervisors must pre-approve the use of three or more consecutive leave days.

Personal leave cannot be used during the following periods of the year without written pre-approval from the superintendent:

- the first week of school
- the last week of school
- semester and yearly examination periods
- the day prior to and following a school calendar holiday

Approval for personal leave during these days will be granted for emergencies and unusual circumstances, as determined by the superintendent or her/his designee.

Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993

The district will provide leave to eligible employees pursuant to the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA). FMLA requires employers with more than 50 employees in a 75 mile radius to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to eligible employees for certain family and medical reasons. Eligible employees are entitled to a maximum of 12 weeks of unpaid FMLA leave in a designated 12-month period. The district has designated a 12-month period, defined the district's fiscal year, July 1 through June 30 under the FMLA. The district will require employees taking leave pursuant to the FMLA to concurrently use the employee's accumulated leave days.

In order to be eligible for FMLA leave, an employee must have been employed by the district for a minimum of 12 months and have worked for at least 1250 hours during the 12 month period immediately preceding the period that the FMLA leave will commence. During the 12-week FMLA leave, the district will continue to pay the district's share of the employee's health benefits. In addition, the district will restore the employee to the same or a similar position under the FMLA. For further information on FMLA, see administrative rules GCC-R and GDC-R.

NOTICE: *The State Department of Education grants one year's experience credit for 152 paid days service per school year for 190 day certified employees.*

Return from leave

The district will assign an employee who returns to work the same or similar duties that he/she performed prior to going on leave, if such assignment is in the best interest of the district. If the administration does not consider it to be in the best interest of the district to assign the employee to the position he/she had prior to going on leave or to a similar position, the district will offer the employee a position for which he/she is qualified. The district will place the employee on the payroll at his/her pre-leave salary status

Adjustments in pay

Any employee who is absent from work for any reason and who does not have any leave days available will have his/her salary adjusted to reflect a deduction in annual salary computed at the employee's daily rate. Such adjustment will be made in the pay period in which the absence occurs, or in the next pay period, at the district's discretion.

Termination for misuse of leave/excessive absence

Regular attendance is critical for all district employees. The district may terminate the employment of any employee who fails to comply with the requirements of board policy GCC or GDC and the accompanying administrative rules, who fails to report to work at the expiration of authorized leave, or who is unable to return to work at the end of a period of approved leave. Any employee who makes misrepresentations regarding a leave, and/or who misrepresents the purpose for which leave of absence is requested or obtained also may be terminated.

An employee who is excessively absent, as determined by the district, may be terminated, other than an employee who is on approved leave pursuant to the FMLA. In accordance with the provisions of S.C. Code Ann. Section 59-1-400, the district also will not terminate a full-time employee who is absent with a continuing illness, as documented by a treating physician, for excessive absenteeism so long as the period of absence does not exceed a total of 91 work days.

Any employee who is absent beyond the 12-week period authorized by the FMLA will be required to reimburse the district for all health insurance premiums, unless the employee has: 1) been granted extended leave; and 2) accumulated leave days to cover the absences, in which case the employee will only be required to pay his/her share.

The district is entitled to recover health care premiums paid during the leave if the employee fails to return from leave. However, recovery cannot occur if the employee fails to return because of the continuation, recurrence or onset of a serious health condition or due to circumstances beyond the control of the employee.

The district will not terminate from employment those employees under this policy who have accrued sick leave and who are using it in compliance with this policy. The district will not terminate from employment any such employee during a continuing sick leave of less than 91 workdays.

Any employee who has exhausted all available leave may be subject to termination.

Vacation

The district grants 12-month professional staff a two-week vacation after one year of continuous employment. One of these weeks is determined by the district. The other week must be taken in the months of June or July or as approved by the superintendent or his/her designee.

Military Leave

Leave for employees who are enlisted in the U.S. military reserves will be treated in accordance with applicable state and federal law.

District Approved Professional Leave

The board believes that it is desirable to provide professional leave in order to attract and retain staff to grow professionally and enhance their service to the schools of the district. The district may grant professional leave to an employee for the purpose of attending activities designed to enhance competency or to improve the instructional or other programs offered by the district. Such leave will be handled in accordance with the guidelines set forth in administrative rule GCC-R.

Sabbaticals/Academic Leave

The board is committed to the principle of providing opportunities for the professional of the district's certificated staff. Therefore, an unpaid sabbatical leave of absence may, in the district's discretion, be granted pursuant to the guidelines set forth in administrative rule GCC-R.

Workers' Compensation

Coverage

- The District provides Workers' Compensation insurance to cover all employees.

Reporting Requirements for Each Employee

- Report to a supervisor as soon as possible all injuries or illnesses that occur at work or that are work related. Reports should be filed no later than the end of the day or shift.

Reporting Requirements for Principals and Supervisors

- Submit an Employee Incident Report.
- Employer's First Report of Injury (Form 12-A) and Notice to Provider form.
- Witness Statement (by eyewitnesses and/or others who have knowledge of incident).

Using Specified Providers

Workers' Compensation Insurance will provide medical treatment for employees injured at work because of work. However, district employees must use those providers, physicians, clinics, and others specified by the district. Workers' Compensation will not pay for services rendered by providers not specified by the district, except in emergency situations. Under these circumstances, principals and supervisors are empowered to grant approval for the use of alternate providers. When an employee loses time from work, the district may require that its designated physician examine an employee even though the employee has chosen to seek treatment at his own expense.

Compensation

An injured employee may elect to receive full compensation from the district by using their accrued leave or vacation time. The employee will not receive additional full-time compensation from Workers' Compensation but may be entitled to a reduce payment meeting certain criteria.

Employee Assistance Program

An employee may need help when job performance and reliability suffer because of a personal, medical, or family problem. The district has contracted with the South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department to provide *free, confidential* help for those employees who have personal problems that affect their work performance. A trained professional helps identify the problem and provides services designed to correct it. The following services are provided as needed:

- Counseling and guidance
- Medical or psychological help
- Treatment for alcohol or drug abuse
- Training in personal and social skills designed to help the employee on the job
- Help in matching abilities with job demands
- Referral to other helpful agencies or services

This program is available to every employee and family members ages 16 and above. Participation is voluntary. Confidentiality is guaranteed. If you need this service, please call the South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department at 843-354-5252 for a confidential appointment. Tell the receptionist that you are a Williamsburg County School District employee.

Insurance Coverage and Benefits

Williamsburg County School District offers all employees in a full-time, permanent position, insurance coverage through the state insurance benefits program, which is administered by the South Carolina Public Employee Benefits Authority (PEBA), Employee Insurance Program division.

Insurance options include health, dental, vision and life insurance, long-term disability, and the *Money Plus* pre-tax program. Part-time, certified classroom teachers are eligible for the state health, dental, and vision programs. Other supplemental insurance options, not administered by the State, include life insurance, short-term disability, and cancer.

All new hire employees will attend an orientation appointment to review the benefits available to them including insurance coverage(s), retirement election(s), and leave entitlement. Employees receive an *Insurance Benefits Guide* produced annually. The EIP website includes further information concerning premiums, provider directors, claim forms (if necessary), etc., may be found at www.eip.sc.gov. All employees are encouraged to become familiar with what this website has to offer.

***All elements of the District's health insurance plan, including coverage levels, plan options, and eligibility determinations, are in compliance with the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. Questions regarding coverage or eligibility not answered by the Insurance Benefits Guide should be directed toward the District's Benefits Specialist.**

Health and Dental

Group health insurance options include the State Standard & Savings Health Plans (administered by Blue Cross & Blue Shield of South Carolina). A Tricare supplemental plan is also offered. Blue Cross & Blue Shield of South Carolina also administers the State Dental and Dental Plus Plans. Please refer to the *Insurance Benefits Guide* for more information and current employee premiums.

The employee and employer supplement portions of premiums paid monthly on behalf of employees can be found on the SC Public Employee Benefit Authority website at: <http://www.eip.sc.gov>

Continuation of group health and/or dental coverage is available to all covered employees and/or their dependents if eligibility for coverage is lost due to a qualifying event. This continuation of coverage is provided through COBRA (Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act). Details are outlined in the *Insurance Benefits Guide*.

Life Insurance

Employees who elect health insurance receive an employer-funded basic life insurance policy. Additional life insurance may be purchased through the Optional Life Program. Dependent Life Insurance is also offered for an employee's spouse and eligible dependent children. Additional information may be obtained from the *Insurance Benefits Guide*.

Employees who are members of the PEBA South Carolina Retirement System or the State Optional Retirement Program are provided an in-service death benefit equal in value to their annual salary the year of their death, provided the employee was employed for one year prior to death. This is also employer funded.

Long Term Disability

Employees enrolled in health insurance receive an employer-funded basic long-term disability policy. For additional coverage, eligible employees may purchase a supplemental long-term disability policy. Standard Insurance Company administers these plans. Please refer to the *Insurance Benefits Guide* for more information.

Money Plus Program

Money Plus is an Internal Revenue Service-approved benefits program administered

by WageWorks (Fringe Benefits Management Company). This program offers tax savings through the premium pre-tax feature, medical spending account, health savings account and the dependent care spending account. Please refer to the *Insurance Benefits Guide* for more information.

Public Employee Benefits Authority Retirement System

All state employees must elect one of the retirement options; unless they are in a temporary position, or hold substitute or bus driver only position (not having any additional supplemental work). Employees will contribute 8.16% of their gross income (pre-tax) and the district supplements an additional amount set annually. Please visit the SCRS website for more detailed information at <http://retirement.sc.gov/scrs/default.htm>

The district also pays a percentage to cover the administration costs and the one year annual salary death benefit for employees. These percentages will be established as per legislative changes that are approved.

The two plans to elect from are either the S. C. State Pension Plan (traditional plan) or the Optional Retirement Plan (ORP), electing one of four vendors for contributions to be invested (Metlife, MassMutual, TIAA-CREF, or Valic).

The employer contribution will be a part of the employee's account if they opt for one of the ORP vendors. It is not a part of an employee's account if they opt for the traditional SCRS pension plan because this plan is a guaranteed retirement pension for the rest of one's life or survivor's life, based on the elected payment option at time of retirement.

The pension plan is a defined benefit plan with additional benefits available (disability & survivor), wherein the ORP plan is a contribution plan subject to the stock market changes. More detailed information is important to understand before making a decision about a retirement election but employees only have 30 days from their date of hire to do so or they will be automatically put into the SCRS traditional pension plan.

The orientation appointment with your Benefits Administrator will offer further details and you may also review the retirement website at www.retirement.sc.gov which includes calculations to compare the plans and/or to purchase service time for the traditional plan.

Finance Office Services

Payment of Salaries

All employees are paid semi-monthly, on the fifteenth and thirtieth. As a general rule, if the pay day falls on a holiday, or a weekend, the district will pay employees on the last workday prior to the holiday or weekend. All employees will receive their annual contract salaries each month beginning as follows:

- 240-245 day employees: July 1 – June 30 (24 paychecks)
- 220- 235 day employees: August 15 – July 31 (24 paychecks)
- 190-day employees: August 31 – August 15 (24 paychecks)

Direct Deposit is mandatory in Williamsburg County School District when you are hired. Enrollment in Direct Deposit requires the employee to sign an authorization form specifying the bank to where the deposit will be sent. Required forms are available from the Human Resources Office.

Withholding Tax (Federal and State)

Employees who have not previously filed with the Payroll Office *Withholding Tax Exemption Certificate* form W-4 must do so before being placed on the payroll. Employees who have filed, but have since experienced a change in exemption status, should file new exemption certificates.

Responsibility for accuracy of exemption certificates lies with the employee.

Social Security

As of July 1, 1955, all members of the South Carolina Retirement System were included in the Social Security Program. A copy of each employee's Social Security card must be recorded with Human Resources prior to the employee being placed on the payroll.

Tax-Sheltered Annuity

Payroll deduction is available for employees desiring to participate in a tax-sheltered annuity program or the South Carolina Deferred Compensation Plan. For additional information, contact the Human Resources Office. Employees also have the option of electing deductions for 403b and 401k programs of personal investment.

Selected Board Policies and Regulations For Employees

School Board Policies

The coding and table of contents used for WCSD's School Board Policies is a nationwide code and format established by the National School Boards Association. For example, the policy for File GCK in the National School Boards Association coding refers to "Professional Staff Assignments and Transfers" in school districts across the United States.

Policies designated with the GB prefix apply to all employees. A GC prefix refers to certified employees, and a GD prefix refers to support staff. A copy of all current WCSD's policies is available from the district's Web site at www.wcsd.k12.sc.us

Connect 5

Our district uses a tool called *Connect 5*, a telephone messaging system that helps us get messages to staff, students, and students' parents/guardians quickly by telephone.

Employment Policies for All Employees

For complete details of these policies, please refer to the WCSD website under the tab "Board of Trustees." <http://www.wcsd.k12.sc.us/pages/WCSD>

Staff Transfers — All Employees (Policies GCK and GDK)

Voluntary Transfer

- Individuals who wish to transfer for the next academic year must discuss his/her desire with his/her principal/director (if in a school) or with his/her immediate supervisor (if on the district level).
- The individual must submit a transfer request to the site supervisor and obtain the site supervisor's signature. Transfer forms are typically distributed in early January and are accepted by the Human Resources Office until March 1 of each year.
- Employees on this list are eligible for a transfer.

Involuntary Transfer

Changes in enrollment, curriculum, programs, finances or the consolidation of schools may necessitate involuntary transfers. If, in the opinion of the superintendent, an involuntary transfer would be in the best interest of the district, the district will use the procedure outlined in Policies GCK.

Reduction in Force (Policies GCQA/GCQB and GDQA)

In the event that circumstances mandate a reduction in force, the guidelines listed under Policies GCQA/GCQB and GDQA/GDQB will be followed in determining the personnel to be released. Seniority is not the controlling factor and becomes a factor of consideration only when all other considerations are equal. The controlling factor is the administration's assessment of an employee's overall competence to perform.

Conduct of All Employees

The WCSD's board reaffirms one of the oldest beliefs in education: *One of the best methods of instruction is that of setting a good example.* The board expects all employees to set an example for students that will serve them in their own conduct and behavior; subsequently, this positive conduct will contribute to an appropriate school atmosphere. Policies GBE, GBEA, GBEB, and GBEBB relate to staff conduct and ethics.

To that end, in dress, conduct, and interpersonal relationships, all staff should recognize that students are continuously observing them, and that the staff's actions and demeanor will be reflected in the conduct of the students.

The personal life of an employee will be the concern and warrant the attention of the board only as it may directly prevent the employee from effectively performing assigned functions during duty hours or as it violates local, state, or federal law or contractual agreements.

No employee will commit or attempt to induce students or others to commit an act or acts of immoral conduct which may be harmful to others or bring discredit to the district. If it appears an employee may have violated the law, the district will cooperate with law enforcement agencies.

Employees of the district, while on duty and in the presence of students, will not use profanity, will not use tobacco in any form, and will not consume or be under the influence of intoxicating beverages. Employees will not be involved in drug abuse or drug traffic.

The conduct of all employees will include, but may not be limited to, the following:

- Employees will adhere to all board policies and regulations and to all rules and procedures of the school or building to which the employee is assigned.
- Employees will maintain appropriate and professional relationships with students of the district during and after work hours so as to place the welfare of children as the first priority of the employee and the district.
- Employees will properly use all school properties, equipment, materials, and resources including time and money, and will seek necessary authorization where appropriate.
- Employees will transact all official business with the properly designated authorities of the district.
- Employees will abstain from the use, being under the influence, possession or sale of alcohol or illegal drugs at school or school-related activities.

- Employees will not use physical or verbal abuse with students, staff, parents, or other adults while at school or school-related activities.
- Employees will not be convicted of or plead “no contest” to a felony charge or other serious crime.

Violations of this policy by employees will be grounds for immediate suspension and possible termination of employment. In such cases, the employee will be informed of his/her right to any hearing or due process procedure that may be applicable under law or district policy.

The following list includes some of the actions that are considered misconduct while on duty on or off district premises.

- Possessing, using selling, manufacturing, distributing or dispensing any illegal drugs or alcohol while on duty or off district property
- Fighting or deliberately harming another
- Being absent without approval
- Refusing to follow a supervisor’s instructions and directions
- Failure to adhere to safety and health rules as established by state law and the district
- Destroying school property intentionally
- Using obscene language which is unsuitable in the school setting
- Having any interaction/activity of a sexual nature or intent with a student
- Possessing weapons on school property
- Using school property without proper authorization
- Behaving in any inappropriate manner to the extent of adversely affecting the employee’s ability to perform his/her work
- Harassment, intimidation or bullying of a student or adult

The district will take disciplinary action against employees who fail to comply with the above standards of conduct. Such action could include dismissal.

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT FOR SOUTH CAROLINA EDUCATORS

Pursuant to State Board of Regulation 43-58, the State Board of Education has the legal authority to deny, revoke, or suspend a certificate, or issue a public reprimand, for the following causes:

- incompetence,
- willful neglect of duty,
- willful violation of the rules and regulation of the State Board of Education,
- unprofessional conduct,
- drunkenness,
- cruelty,
- crime against the law of this state or the United States,
- immorality,
- any conduct involving moral turpitude,
- dishonesty,
- evident unfitness for the position for which one is employed,
- sale or possession of narcotics,
- obtaining or attempting to obtain a certificate by fraudulent means or through misrepresentation of material facts,
- failure to comply with the provisions of a contract without the written consent of the local school board,
- test security violation,
- failure to comply with a court order for child support, and
- failure for a second time to complete successfully the formal evaluation process as an annual contract teacher.

The State Board of Education may impose any one of the following disciplinary actions on an educator certificate:

- permanent revocation;
- revocation with the right to reapply after three years,
- suspension for a specified period of time;
- suspension for a specified period of time, upon satisfaction of certain conditions such as drug or alcohol testing, counseling, or treatment; psychiatric testing, counseling, or treatment; or other conditions appropriate to the facts of the case,
- public reprimand.

The process for taking disciplinary action on an educator certificate:

1. The Department of Education may learn of possible grounds for disciplinary action on an educator certificate from a school district superintendent pursuant to State Board of Education Regulation

43-58.1, other states, the media, and individual complaints.

2. Once the Department of Education learns of conduct that may constitute just cause for disciplinary action, the Department will notify the educator of pending disciplinary action and of the educator's right to a hearing. The educator has fifteen days from the receipt of the notice to make a written request for a hearing.
3. If the educator fails to request a hearing within this time frame, he or she will waive the right to a hearing and the State Board may impose disciplinary action based on the information presented by the Department.
4. If the educator requests a hearing, a hearing will be conducted before the Board or a hearing officer, pursuant to State Board of Education Rule BCAF, Procedures for Educator Certification Hearings.

South Carolina educators have had disciplinary action taken on their certificates for

- pursuing a personal, inappropriate relationship with a student;
- touching a student inappropriately;
- engaging in a physical altercation with a student;
- supplying alcohol or drugs to a student;
- using a school computer to view or download pornography;
- sending or receiving prurient e-mails;
- violating test security;
- violating state or federal laws involving drugs or alcohol or other illegal behavior;
- embezzling public funds;
- committing breach of trust; and
- breaching a teaching contract.

Applicants for certification in South Carolina have had their applications for certification denied because they have serious criminal records and, in some cases, failed to fully disclose their criminal records.

Notice of the denial, suspension or revocation of an educator's certificate is sent to all districts in South Carolina and to the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC) Clearinghouse. Notice of a public reprimand is sent only to the school districts.

Code of Expectations for Teachers and Other Professional Staff

The Board sets a code of expectations for teachers and other professional staff that reflects the high standards of Williamsburg County School District. Although every expectation may not be applicable for all staff (i.e., “use an approved, consistent grading system”), many of the standards do apply to all staff members (i.e., “model professionalism in conduct and dress”). Teachers, administrators, and staff members are expected to exhibit the standards, which apply to their positions.

All staff members are required to wear a picture I.D. or district uniform during school hours.

Grievance Procedures — All Employees

The board encourages employees to discuss concerns or complaints informally with their supervisors. Often, the cause of a problem or concern is merely a misunderstanding among the individuals involved. If, at any time, an employee feels that a formal mechanism for raising his/her concern or problem is needed, he/she should follow the procedure below. For a more detailed description of the grievance policy and process, please refer to Policy GBK – Staff Concerns, Complaints/Grievances.

Purpose

In the interest of effective personnel management, the board recognizes the necessity for a procedure providing prompt and effective means of resolving differences that may arise among employees and between employees and administrators. Such procedure will be available to all permanent employees of the district. To fully assure consistency in regard to both horizontal and vertical lines of administrative authority, the district's current table of organization should be rigidly followed in the initial grievance complaint (Level One only).

Any employee complaint or concern that does not meet the definition of a grievance as set forth in this policy will not be processed under this policy. District administration will have the discretion to determine how to handle such employee concerns or complaints.

Definition

A disagreement involving the work situation in which an individual or group of individuals believes that an injustice has been done because of lack of policy, or because of a policy that is unfair, deviation from or misapplication of interpretation of a policy. The development of a new salary schedule is not a grievance.

The board does not consider actions which are subject to the Teachers Employment and Dismissal Act, S. C. Code, 1976, as amended, Section 59-25-45, et seq. and employment decisions implemented under the district's reduction in force policy to be grievances under this procedure.

Definition of Supervisor

The term “supervisor” means any person having the authority to recommend employment, transfer, suspend, layoff, recall, promote, discharge, assign, reward, or discipline an employee or any person having the responsibility for directing or reviewing the work of an employee.

Definition of Day

A “day” is any day on which the administrative office is open.

Grievance Procedure

The stated purpose of this procedure is to settle personnel grievances at a level as close as possible to their point of origin. Proceedings should be kept informal and confidential, whenever possible, with the objective of resolving the matter at the lowest possible administrative level.

It is important that grievances be settled as quickly as possible; therefore, there will be no extension of the prescribed time for moving through the grievance procedure except upon a compelling showing of good cause. Any request for an extension of time will be to the district chief human resource services officer, whose decision about the request for extension will be final.

Level One

Step 1

Any employee having a grievance will first orally discuss such grievance with his/her immediate supervisor within 5 working days of the incident/issue resulting in the grievance.

Step 2

If discussion at Step 1 does not resolve the matter to the satisfaction of the employee, such employee will have the right to present the grievance in writing to the building principal or site supervisor. This must be done within 5 working days after completing Step 1 above. Failure to do so will mean that the grievance no longer exists. The written grievance will consist of a concise statement of the facts upon which the grievance is based and a reference to the specific provision of the policy in question. A copy of such grievance will be filed with the district chief human resources officer. The employee will have the right to include in the appeal a request for a hearing before the building principal or site supervisor. Such a hearing will be conducted within 5 working days after the principal's or site supervisor's receipt of such request, and the aggrieved employee will be advised in writing of the time, place and date of such hearing.

The building principal or site supervisor will take action on the grievance within 5 working days after the receipt thereof or, if a hearing is requested, within 5 working

days after the conclusion of said hearing. The action taken and the reasons for the action will be reduced to writing by the building principal or site supervisor and copies sent to the grievant and the district chief human resources officer.

Level Two

Step 1

If the decision of the building principal or site supervisor does not resolve the grievance to the satisfaction of the employee, or if no decision is made within the allotted time, the grievant may appeal in writing to the district chief human resources officer. Failure to file such appeal within 5 working days from the grievant's receipt of the written memorandum of the principal's or site supervisor's decision will be deemed a waiver of the right of appeal. The employee will have the right to include in the appeal a request for a hearing before the chief human resources officer. Such a hearing will be conducted within 5 working days after the chief human resources officer's receipt of such request, and the aggrieved employee will be advised in writing of the time, place and date of such hearing.

The chief human resources officer will take action on the grievance within 5 working days after the receipt thereof or, if a hearing is requested, within 5 working days after the conclusion of said hearing. The decision and the reasons thereof will be reduced to writing and copies sent to the grievant and the building principal or site supervisor.

If the decision of the chief human resources officer does not resolve the grievance to the satisfaction of the employee, or if no decision is made within the allotted time, the grievant may appeal in writing to the superintendent and in the appeal may request that the superintendent schedule a hearing on the matter. Failure to file such an appeal within 5 working days from the grievant's receipt of the written memorandum of the chief human resources officer's decision will be deemed a waiver of the right of appeal.

If the employee requests to be heard by the superintendent, the superintendent will schedule a hearing within 5 working days after receipt of the appeal.

The superintendent will render a decision on the matter within 5 working days after receipt of the appeal or, if a hearing is requested, within 5 working days after the conclusion of said hearing. The decision and the reasons thereof will be reduced to writing and copies sent to the grievant and the building principal or site supervisor and the Chief Human Resources Officer.

Level Three

Step 1

If the action taken by the superintendent does not resolve the grievance to the satisfaction of the grievant, he/she may request in writing that the superintendent notify the board of trustees of the grievant's wish to be heard by the board. Any such request must include a brief statement of the questions to be presented to the board, including

specific reference to the applicable policy or policies. Failure to file such a request with the superintendent within 5 working days after receipt of the superintendent's decision on the grievance will cause the decision of the superintendent to become the final judgment in the matter.

Upon receiving the grievant's request to be heard by the board, the superintendent will, at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the board, deliver in executive session to the board the grievant's request to be heard together with copies of all correspondence and decisions from Levels One and Two. After examining these materials, the board may or may not grant the request.

Written notice of the board's decision on whether to grant the request will be rendered within 10 calendar days of the board's receipt of the request. If the board decides to hear the matter, it will, if at all possible, make every effort to schedule the hearing at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the board; the grievant will be given written notice of the date, time and place of such a hearing. Copies of the board's decision will be sent to the grievant, superintendent and building principal or site supervisor and the chief human resources officer.

Step 2

Grievance hearings before the board will be non-adversarial and as informal as possible. Any hearing by the board will be held in executive session unless it is requested in writing by the grievant that it be held in public session. The hearing will proceed with the grievant presenting his/her position first, followed by a response from the district administration. The grievant will not have the right to call witnesses during his/her presentation, but will be permitted to provide witness statements and any other documents for the board's consideration. Following the presentations, the board will deliberate upon the matter in executive session and will then make a decision on the grievance in open session. The board's decision will also be sent in writing to the grievant and to the superintendent within 5 working days following the grievance hearing.

General Provisions

All notices to be given under this procedure by the district administration should be served by certified mail, return receipt requested.

At Level One/Step 1 there will be no representation. At Level One/Step 2 the grievant may be represented by a colleague or friend also employed by the district. At Level Two the grievant may have representation of his/her choosing exclusive of legal counsel. At Level Three the grievant and administration may be formally represented for the first time by legal counsel. Such a counselor must be admitted to the practice of law in South Carolina and a member in good standing of the South Carolina State Bar. The district will not provide counsel for the grievant. If the grievant chooses to be represented by legal counsel at Level Three, written notice to the superintendent of that intent must be given not later than 10 calendar days prior to the scheduled date of the hearing before the board. Failure to give such notice could result in postponement of the hearing.

No person will be the object of administration reprisal, sanction or penalty of any kind for either activating or participating in the grievance procedure.

Any grievance involving potential violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) should be referred to the Americans with Disabilities Act coordinator.

Dismissal of Support Staff

The selection, employment, and dismissal of support staff are the responsibilities of the Superintendent; provided, the positions are within the budgetary provisions. However, he may delegate any portion of these responsibilities to other administrative personnel, including principals, provided, he retains the right of disapproval.

The Superintendent or his designee may dismiss any support staff for “good and just cause” during the term of employment provided the employee is afforded a pre-termination opportunity for a hearing before the superintendent or his designee. It is the supervisor’s responsibility to investigate any incident, action, or charge against an employee to determine if grounds for dismissal exist.

The supervisor contacts the chief human resources officer to share the results of this investigation. In cases of concern for safety of staff or students or the disruption of the orderly operation of school, the employee may be suspended immediately with pay by the chief human resources officer.

If the recommendation for dismissal is justified, the chief human resources officer suspends the employee, with or without pay, until the pre-termination hearing is conducted.

A pre-termination hearing is conducted with significant evidence presented by those involved to the Superintendent or his designee. This hearing occurs even if employee fails to attend. The employee receives written notice of the decision rendered regarding dismissal.

Drug-Free Workplace

The school district is committed to providing a drug and alcohol free learning environment and workplace. Drug and alcohol abuse at school or in connection with school-sponsored activities on or off school grounds threatens the health and safety of our students and our employees and adversely affects the educational mission of the schools.

Policy GBEC is adopted to comply with Section 44-57-30 of the Code of Laws of South Carolina. The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of any drug by any employee is prohibited on or in the workplace.

“Drug” means any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, or any other controlled substance as defined by Article 3, Chapter 53 of Title 44 of the Code of Laws of South Carolina, i.e., Section 44-57-5, etc.

“Workplace” means the site for the performance of work done in connection with the

employee's job responsibilities. That includes any school building or any school premises and any school-owned vehicle or any other school-approved vehicle used to transport students to and from school or school activities. It also includes off-school property during any school-sponsored or school-approved activity, event or function such as a field trip or athletic event, where students are under the jurisdiction of the school district where work is performed.

As a condition of employment in the district, each employee will notify his or her supervisor of his or her conviction of any criminal drug statute for a violation occurring in the workplace as defined above. The employee must notify the supervisor no later than five calendar days after such conviction. Also as a condition of employment in the district, each employee must abide by the terms of this policy respecting a drug-free workplace.

An employee who violates the terms of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, suspension, non-renewal, or termination of employment at the discretion of the Board of Trustees. The Board will take such action against violators in accordance with district policies and regulations as well as applicable state and federal laws.

The Superintendent directs the administration to establish a drug-free awareness program in the district to include information on the dangers of drug abuse in the workplace, the district's policy on a drug-free workplace, and any drug counseling available to employees as well as any available rehabilitation and employee assistance programs.

Smoking and Use of Tobacco Products by Adults/Staff

Through Policy GBED the district does prohibits the use of tobacco products in any district building or vehicle or on any district grounds. This "tobacco-free" designation applies not only to normal school/office hours, but also to any extracurricular, before or after school or even unscheduled activity or event.

The board directs the administration to ensure that signs designating a tobacco free campus are conspicuously displayed. The principal of each school is responsible for the display of these signs.

The district will make educational materials and/or referral networks related to the harmful effects of tobacco use or cessation products available to all employees as appropriate.

Violation of this policy could lead to disciplinary action or the district may subject employees who violate the provisions of this policy to sanctions that include, but are not limited to, verbal or written reprimand and referral to appropriate community and statewide programs.

Fair Labor Standards Act

The following information establishes "work-time" rules for district employees who are covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). Covered employees are those in the

following personnel classifications. The length of the workday for each position is listed on the individual's *Letter of Assurance*.

- . Custodian
- . Food Service Operator
- . Office Support
- . Food Service Cashier
- . Graphic Artist
- . Teacher Assistant
- . Food Service Manager
- . Maintenance Personnel
- . Warehouse-Courier

Ten important things you should know about FLSA policies:

1. "Overtime" is defined as hours worked in excess of 40 hours during the workweek. Overtime is prohibited unless there exists an emergency situation as certified by the respective school principal or supervisor who may authorize overtime work only with the consent of an assistant superintendent or the superintendent.
2. Hours worked includes all time that an employee is required to be on duty, or any additional time the employee is required or permitted to work by his or her immediate supervisor. All work performed in excess of 40 hours by a covered employee during a workweek must have prior approval as specified above.
3. "Unauthorized work" is defined as hours worked by an employee without the supervisor's permission or contrary to his or her instructions. The District will observe a "no-work rule" for covered employees during non-work hours unless there is prior approval. School principals and supervisors are responsible for insuring compliance with the "no-work rule."
4. An employee required to work more than eight hours in a day may be given "time off within the workweek." The employee may be given an hour-for-hour time off for that time over eight hours. Time off must be given during the *same* workweek to keep an employee from working more than 40 hours in a workweek.
5. "Compensatory time off" refers to hours during which an employee normally works, but which are not worked. These hours do not affect the employee's pay. Compensatory time off may be given at a rate not less than one and one-half hours for each hour worked over 40 hours in a workweek provided:
 - an agreement or understanding between the district and employee exists before performance of the work, and
 - the employee had not accrued compensatory time in excess of the limit prescribed by the FLSA (240 hours; $160 \times 1.5 = 240$). An employee who has earned compensatory time off authorized under paragraph nine and who has requested the use of such compensatory time, will be permitted to use such time within a reasonable period after making the request if the use of the compensatory time does not unduly disrupt the operations of the school, office, or function.
6. Overtime pay is another form of compensation for hours worked in excess of 40 hours in a work week. It is computed at one and one-half times the regular

hourly pay rate. Overtime pay must be paid at the following times:

- The employee has accrued more than 240 compensatory time off hours.
- The employee has accrued overtime and employment ceases.

7. Compensatory time off records must be maintained. The principal or supervisor of covered employees subject to overtime will maintain and preserve the following records:
 - The number of compensatory hours earned each workweek by each employee.
 - The number of compensatory hours used each workweek by each employee.
8. Signing in/out is *required* of all personnel in the above classifications. Employees may not sign in more than seven minutes prior to the beginning of work time nor more than seven minutes after the end of work time.
9. Lunch period is the time an employee is completely relieved from duty for the purpose of eating. This time period must be at least 30 minutes in length and is not considered a part of "hours worked." Employees must not count this time as work time. Breaks are not required by the FLSA, but if given and are not more than 20 minutes in length, this time is considered to be a part of the "hours worked."
10. The following records information will be maintained by the District for at least three years:
 - Personal information, including employee's name, home address, occupation, sex, and Birth date (if under 19 years of age).
 - Hour and day workweek begins.

The following records will be maintained for at least two years:

- Total hours worked each workday and workweek.
- Total daily or weekly straight-time earnings.
- Regular hourly pay rate for any week when overtime is worked.
- Total overtime pay for each workweek.
- Deductions from or additions to wages.
- Total wages paid each pay period.
- Date of payment and pay period covered.

Sexual Discrimination and Harassment of Employees

Sexual Harassment (Policy GBAA)

The following procedures are intended to:

- discourage employees from sexually harassing any other employee of the district,
- promote a harassment-free work environment,
- remedy in a speedy manner any consequences of sexual harassment,
- establish on-going education and awareness of the problem of sexual harassment; and
- provide information about how to pursue claims of sexual harassment.

Definition of Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical conduct or other verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature under the following circumstances:

- is made as an employment condition so that submission to such conduct is a term or condition of employment,
- has an employment consequence, so that submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for employment decisions affecting an individual employee, or
- is offensive job interference, so that such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an employee's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

Sexual harassment may include but is not limited to: verbal harassment, including epithets, sexually offensive comments or slurs; physical harassment, physical interference with movement or work, or visual harassment such as sexually offensive cartoons, drawings or posters. Sexual harassment is prohibited against members of the same sex as well as against members of the opposite sex.

Behavior Prohibited of Administrators/Supervisors

- No administrator/supervisor may condition any employment, employee benefit, or continued employment on the employee's acquiescence to any of the sexual behavior defined above.
- No administrator/supervisor may retaliate against any employee because that employee has opposed a practice prohibited by *Title VII* of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the South Carolina Human Affairs Law, or has filed a complaint, testified, assisted or participated in any manner in an investigation, proceeding or hearing conducted by an authorized investigative agency.
- No administrator/supervisor will tolerate the creation of a sexually hostile or offensive work environment by any subordinate employee who engages in sexual harassment.
- No administrator/supervisor will destroy evidence relevant to a sexual harassment investigation.

Behavior Prohibited of All Employees

- No administrator, supervisor or any other employee of this district will create a sexually hostile or offensive work environment for any other employee by engaging in any sexual harassment.

- No administrator, supervisor or any other employee will assist any individual in doing any act, which constitutes sexual harassment against any other employee.

Obligations of Administrators/Supervisors

• Preventive Action

- > A copy of the District's *Sexual Harassment Policy and this Administrative Rule* will be available to all employees.
- > All administrators/supervisors will give a copy of the *Policy and Administrative Rule* to any new employee within one week of their employment.
- > A copy of the *Policy and Administrative Rule* will be posted on employee bulletin boards and addressed in other written communication distributed to employees.
- > On an annual basis, administrators/supervisors will review with all employees the nature of sexual harassment, the procedures for registering a complaint about sexual harassment and the redress that is available. This will include information about assistance with claims of sexual harassment offered by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the South Carolina Human Affairs Commission.
- > The human resources office will make available information from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the South Carolina Human Affairs Commission about filing claims of sexual harassment with these entities.
- > All administrators/supervisors will attend training sessions on sexual harassment which will cover the kinds of acts that constitute sexual harassment, the District's serious commitment to eliminating and avoiding sexual harassment in the workplace, the penalties for engaging in harassment, and the procedures for reporting incidents of sexual harassment.

• Investigative/Corrective Action

- > Any employee who feels that he or she has been the object of sexual harassment is encouraged to file and may file a complaint with his or her immediate supervisor (except for situations covered in the following paragraph).
- > Under no circumstances will an employee be required to first report allegations of harassment to an administrator/supervisor if that person is the individual who is accused of the harassment. In such cases, the employee will contact the chief human resources officer.
- > All administrators/supervisors will initiate an investigation of any incident of alleged sexual harassment reported to them or observed by them. Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the investigation. Only those who have an immediate need to know may

- be provided the identity of the complainant.
- > All administrators/supervisors will immediately report in writing the results of any investigation of sexual harassment, including corrective or disciplinary action taken, to the chief human resources officer and to the complaining employee.
 - > All administrators/supervisors will, at minimum, issue a written reprimand to any employee determined to have sexually harassed any other employee. Administrators/supervisors will take whatever other disciplinary action he or she determines is warranted, up to and including termination.
 - > Under no circumstances will an administrator/supervisor retaliate in any way against an employee who has provided information as a witness to an incident of sexual harassment.
 - > All administrators/supervisors will follow up within one month and of any reported incident of sexual harassment to determine whether the victim has been subjected to any further sexual harassment.

Obligations of All Employees

- All employees will report to their immediate supervisor any conduct on the part of non-employees, such as sales representatives or service vendors, which is believed to constitute sexual harassment.
- All employees will cooperate with and maintain the confidentiality of any investigation of alleged acts of sexual harassment conducted by the District or by an appropriate State or Federal agency.
- No employee of this District will take any action to discourage any other employee from reporting alleged sexual harassment.

Staff Conflict of Interest — Nepotism **(Policy GBEA Staff Ethics and Conflict of Interest)**

South Carolina law Section 59-25-5 provides that no board member's immediate family member may be employed as a teacher without the written consent of the board of trustees.

No employee who is an immediate family member (spouse, parent, child, sibling) of a board member/superintendent is eligible for position promotion during the tenure of such board member/superintendent.

When a board member's immediate family member is being recommended for any position in the district, the board member shall disclose this to the other board members and rescue himself/herself from the vote to hire that employee.

An individual who is a candidate for employment in the district shall, upon offer of employment, disclose that he/she has an immediate family member who is an employee of the district.

The district will not place an employee in a position wherein an employee will exercise

direct administrative or supervisory authority over a member of his/her immediate family. Supervisory authority includes principal and assistant principal in a school. Neither a board member nor an employee may participate in an action relating to the discipline of his/her immediate family member. This rule applies to all levels and categories of certified, administrative and support staff employees in the school district.

This prohibition of employment and/or promotion does not apply to individuals employed and/or promoted prior to the passage of this policy.

State ethics law

A public school employee is under the jurisdiction of the "Ethical Conduct of Public Officials and Employees," Section 8-13-700, et seq. S.C. Code of Laws, and is subject to the rules of conduct of the statute. Such rules include the following.

A public employee must do the following:

- may not use his/her position or office for personal financial gain (Section 8-13-700)
- must report the receipt of anything of value worth \$25 or more under certain circumstances (Section 8-13-75)
- may not receive compensation to influence action (Section 8-13-705)
- may not receive additional monies as payment for advice or assistance given in the course of their employment (Section 8-13-720)
- may not receive anything of value for speaking before a public or private group if the employee is acting in an official capacity (Section 8-13-715)
- may not use government personnel, equipment or materials in an election campaign (Section 8-13-765)
- may not use or disclose confidential information gained in the course of employment (Section 8-13-725)
- may not cause the employment, appointment, promotion, transfer or advancement of a family member to a state or local office or position in which the public official, public member or public employee supervises or manages (Section 8-13-750)
- may not participate in an action relating to the discipline of the public official's, public member's or public employee's family member (Section 8-13-750)
- may not serve as a member or employee of a governmental regulatory commission that regulates any business with which the employee is associated (Section 8-13-730)
- may not represent another person before a governmental entity (Section 8-13-740)
- may not have an economic interest in a contract if the employee is authorized to perform an official function relating to the contract (Section 8-13-775)
- may not use or disclose confidential information in any way that would affect his/her economic interest (Section 8-13-725)

In cases where an employee is required to take action or make a decision which affects himself/herself or other individuals, the employee will take such steps as the Ethics Commission will prescribe to remove him/herself from the potential conflict of interest (Section 8-13-700).

The superintendent must file an annual statement of economic interest with the State

Ethics Commission (Section 8-13-115).

NOTE- Legal references:

S. C. Code, 1976, as amended:

Section 8-13-700, et seq. - *State ethics law.*

Section 59-15-5 - *No employee may serve on the county board of education.*

Section 59-19-300 - *A board member may not receive pay as a teacher in same district where he/she serves on the board of trustees.*

Section 59-31-590 - *A teacher may not have pecuniary interest in textbook selection.*

Section 59-25-5 - *Employment of teachers related to board members or serving as board members.*

Instruction

Records and Reports

Employees should give careful study and attention to records and reports. Most of these reports will deal with attendance, grading, and financial matters; therefore, accuracy is paramount. Confidentiality of records is to be maintained at all times; it must not be breached in any form of oral or written communication.

Student Progress

Utmost care must always be exercised in evaluating the work of each student. Individual capabilities must be considered. Instructional objectives based on South Carolina State Standards must always be flexible enough to award an acceptable level of individual performance. However, it is imperative that parents are made aware of individual performance and involved in their child's achievement.

Almost as important as the evaluation process is the communication with a student and his parents concerning his progress or lack of progress. No progress report with a failing grade should be received by a parent without having received prior communication from the teacher. Maintaining lines of open communication with parents to keep them apprised of the achievements of their children is second only to the teaching process itself. Teachers should maintain a communication log of parent contact and copies of correspondence with parents.

Summer School

Summer school programs are provided for students to earn high school credits. The faculty for summer school programs is employed on a separate contract for the specific summer assignment. Teachers interested in being employed for summer school need to submit a letter of interest to the Office of Instruction.

Copyright

On January 1, 1978, the United States revised the copyright law and Public Law 94-553 became effective. According to the statute, anyone who violates any of the exclusive rights of a copyright owner has infringed on the copyright and thus is liable for actual damages up to \$50,000 for each violation.

Section 56 of RL 9-553 identifies the five fundamental rights given to copyright owners - the exclusive rights of reproduction, adaptation, publication, performance, and display. Section 57 provides fair use limitations on exclusive right. The section reads as follows:

“Notwithstanding the provisions of Section 56, fair use of copyrighted work, including such use by reproduction in copies or phonorecords or by any other means specified by that section, for purposes such as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching (including multiple copies for classroom use), scholarship, or research, is not an

infringement of copyright. In determining whether the use made of a work in any particular case is a fair use the factors to be considered will include:

- the purpose and character of the use, including whether such use is of a commercial nature or is for nonprofit educational purposes;
- the nature of the copyrighted work;
- the amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole;
- the effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work.”

In an effort to offer some guidance to users in determining when the principles of the fair use doctrine apply, representatives of educator, author, and publisher organizations met and agreed to guidelines that state the minimum standards of educational fair use with respect to books and periodicals. Representatives of music publishers and music teachers developed guidelines that state minimum standards of educational fair use of music. A committee representing 19 organizations of publishers, librarians, media producers, educators, broadcasters, writers and others concerned with off-air recording developed guidelines for off-air copying.

Copies of these three sets of guidelines are available in each school's media center.

Technology

Use of Technology Resources in Instruction

Internet Access

Internet access is available to students and teachers in Williamsburg County School District. The Board of Trustees believes the Internet offers vast, diverse, and unique resources to both students and teachers. The district's goal in providing this service to teachers and students is to promote educational excellence in schools by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication.

With access to computers and people all over the world also comes the availability of material that may not be considered to be of educational value in the context of the school setting. The district shall take precautions to restrict access to controversial materials. The district will establish guidelines, which detail the responsibilities of staff and students using the Internet. In addition, the district will prepare and require an Internet use agreement for each student user of this resource. The parent/guardian must sign the agreement if the student user is under age 18.

Internet Use

The Internet is an electronic highway connecting thousands of computers around the globe and millions of individual subscribers. Internet access is coordinated through a

complex association of government agencies and regional and state networks.

In addition, the smooth operation of the network relies upon the proper conduct of the end users who must adhere to strict guidelines. These guidelines are provided so the user is aware of the responsibilities he/she must assume. In general, this requires efficient, ethical, and legal utilization of the network resources. If a WCSD user violates any of these provisions, his/her access will be terminated and future access could be denied. Signatures affixed to the *Internet Use Agreement* document are legally binding and indicate the signed parties have read the terms and conditions carefully and understand their significance.

Terms and Conditions

Acceptable Use

WCSD's purpose for using the Internet is to support research and education in and among academic institutions by providing access to unique resources and the opportunity for collaborative work. Student use of an account must be in support of education and research and consistent with the educational objectives of WCSD. Use of another organization's network or computing resource must comply with the rules appropriate for that network. All public domain software and shareware must be registered. Transmission of any material in violation of any federal or state regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material, or material protected by trade secret. Use for commercial activities is generally not acceptable. Use for product advertisement or political lobbying is prohibited.

Privileges

Faculty and staff must be aware of acceptable use policies. The use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right. Violations of these guidelines may result in the loss of Internet access privileges and appropriate discipline and/or legal procedures consistent with existing policies and procedures of WCSD. The school principal or site supervisor will deem what is inappropriate use and his/her decision is final.

Network Etiquette

The user is expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. When appropriate, violations may be subject to the WCSD student discipline policy. Etiquette rules include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The user must be polite. Do not use abusive language in messages to others.
- Appropriate language must be used. No swearing, use of vulgarities or any other inappropriate language is allowed. Illegal activities are strictly forbidden.
- The user must not reveal his/her personal address or phone number or those of others.
- Note the electronic mail (E-mail) is not guaranteed to be private. People who operate the system have access to all mail. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities may be reported to the proper authorities.
- The network must not be used in such a way that would cause disruption of the use of the network by other users.

- All communications and information accessible via the network should be assumed to be private property.

Responsibility

Williamsburg County School District makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed implied, for the service it is providing. WCSD will not be responsible for any damages the user incurs. This includes loss of data resulting from delays, non-delivery, missed delivery, or service interruptions caused by its own negligence or the user's errors or omissions. Use of any information obtained via the Internet is at the user's own risk.

Williamsburg County School District specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy, quality, or cost of information, goods, or services obtained through the Internet. *There exists no expectation of privacy. The District has the right of access to the system including any file content of any electronic mail for any reason.*

Security

Security on any computer system is a high priority, especially when the system involves many users. If the user feels he/she can identify a security problem on the Internet, he/she must notify a school staff member, a system administrator, or the district Internet coordinator. The user must not demonstrate the problem to other users. The user must not use another individual's account without written permission from that individual. Attempts to log on to the Internet as a system administrator will result in cancellation of user privileges. Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access to the Internet.

Vandalism

Vandalism will result in cancellation of privileges. Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data of another user, Internet, or other networks that are connected to the Internet. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses. All acts of vandalism will be dealt with according to the WCSD's student discipline policy.

ELECTRONIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS (NETWORKS) Acceptable Use Procedures and Guidelines

I. Network

- A. All use of the systems must be in support of education and research or District-approved extra curricular activities and consistent with the mission of the District. The District reserves the right to prioritize use and access to the system.
- B. Any use of the system must be in conformity to state and federal law, network provider policies and licenses, and District policy. Use of the system for commercial solicitation is prohibited. The superintendent or designee must approve use of the system for charitable purposes in advance.
- C. The system constitutes public facilities and may not be used to support or oppose political candidates or ballot measures.

- D. No use of the system shall serve to disrupt the operation of the system by others; system components, including hardware or software, shall not be destroyed, modified or abused in any way.
- E. Malicious use of the system to harass other users or gain unauthorized access to any computer or computing system and/or damage the components of a computer or computing system is prohibited.
- F. Users are responsible for the appropriateness and content of material they store, transmit, or publish on the system. Hate mail, harassment, discriminatory remarks, or other antisocial behaviors are expressly prohibited.
- G. No e-mail of any nature may be sent school-wide or district-wide without prior approval of the appropriate administrator.
- H. District employees are prohibited from forwarding e-mails that are not in "support and research of District approved extra-curricular activities."
- I. Use of the system to access, store, or distribute obscene or pornographic materials is prohibited.

II. Security

- A. System accounts are to be used only by the authorized owner of the account for the authorized purpose. Users may not share their password with another person or leave an open file or session unattended or unsupervised. Account owners are ultimately responsible for all activity under their accounts.
- B. Users shall not seek information on, or obtain copies of, or modify files, other data, or passwords belonging to other users, or misrepresent other users on the system, or attempt to gain unauthorized access to the system.
- C. Communications may not be encrypted so as to avoid security review.
- D. Users should change passwords regularly and avoid easily guessed passwords.

III. Personal Security

- A. Personal information such as addresses and telephone numbers should remain confidential when communicating on the system. Students should never reveal such information without permission from their parents.
- B. Students will never make appointments to meet people in person whom they have contacted on the system without parental permission.
- C. Students will notify their teacher or other adult whenever they come across information or messages that are dangerous, inappropriate or make them feel uncomfortable.

IV. Copyright

- A. The unauthorized installation, use, storage or distribution of copyrighted software or materials on District computers is prohibited.

V. General Use

- A. Diligent effort must be made to conserve system resources. For example, users should frequently delete E-mail and unused files.
- B. No person shall have access to the system without having received appropriate training. A signed "Individual User Access Informed Consent" form must be on file with the District. Students under the age of 18 must have the approval of a parent or guardian. This form must be signed yearly.
- C. Nothing in these regulations is intended to preclude the supervised use of the system while under the direction of a teacher or approved user acting in conformity with District policy and procedure.
- D. From time to time, the District will make a determination on whether specific uses of the system are consistent with the regulations stated above. Under prescribed circumstances, non-student or staff use may be permitted, provided such individuals demonstrate that their use furthers the purpose and goals of the District. For security and administrative purposes, the District reserves the right for authorized personnel to review system use and file content including, without limitation, the content of any electronic mail.

The District reserves the right to remove a user account on the system to prevent further unauthorized activity.

Violation of any of the conditions of use is cause for disciplinary action.

Forwarding/Sending Electronic Mail (e-mail)

All employees will follow these e-mail directives:

1. Williamsburg County School District employees are prohibited from forwarding e-mails not in "support and research of District approved extra-curricular activities."
2. No e-mail of any nature may be sent school-wide or district-wide without prior approval of the appropriate administrator.

All principals and building supervisors are encouraged to review the Technology guidelines section of this Personnel Handbook.

District Web Site

The district Web Site at www.wcsd.k12.sc.us provides a means to promote the district to the community and the public as a whole. It also provides timely information pertinent to staff members of Williamsburg County School District. All staff members should check the web site on a regular basis to insure access to any new or changed information.

Cell Phone Usage

The use of cell phones in classrooms is prohibited except during a teacher or teacher assistant's planning or break time. Cell phones should be left off while teachers or teacher assistants are engaged in instruction or when students are in the room, unless prior permission has been obtained from the principal due to an emergency situation.

Social Media

To that end, in dress, conduct, including conduct communicated or performed in person, and electronically, and interpersonal relationships, all staff should recognize that they are being continuously observed by students, other employees, parents, and community members, and that their actions and demeanor may impair their effectiveness as an employee.

The personal life of an employee, including the employee's personal use of non-District issued electronic equipment outside of working hours (such as through social networking sites and personal portrayal on the Internet), will be the concern of and warrant the attention of the Board if it impairs the employee's ability to effectively perform his/her job responsibilities or if it violates local, State, or federal law or contractual agreements. Unprofessional conduct may subject the employee to disciplinary actions consistent with State law, federal law, and/or Board policy.

All employees shall maintain a professional relationship with students at all times, both inside and outside of school. No employee may engage in inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature with a student at any time. This includes any action or conduct communicated or performed in person, in writing, or electronically through such means as a telephone, cell phone, computer, personal data assistant, or other telecommunication device, including text messaging, and social networking.

Guidelines for Employees:

- Employees should conduct work related business during working hours. Employees should not access social networking sites, conduct Internet searches that are not related to District business, or engage in the inappropriate use of other electronic forms of communication during working hours.
- Employees should understand that all conduct, including conduct exhibited through the Internet and electronic communications such as social networking sites, can quickly become headline news.
- Employees should assume nothing is confidential on the Internet
- Employees should accept that if they put information about themselves online for others to view, others may very well do that, in addition to sharing or using that information in ways that the employee never intended.
- Employees who engage in such activity must accept responsibility for how the personal information they share is used or misused, should it affect their ability to perform their job responsibilities.

- Employees should assume any communications will be viewed by students or their parents and should conduct themselves accordingly.
- Employees should be cautious in their comments and use of photographs. Specifically, employees should avoid the use of, among other things, profanity, sexually inappropriate statements, derogatory comments about students, and/or inappropriate photographs of the employee.
- If the administration learns of a concern with an employee's communication by way of such things, including, but not limited to, e-mail, texting, Twittering, or social networking sites, that may possibly impair the employee's ability to effectively perform his or her job responsibilities, the administration should conduct an appropriate investigation. The District administration should immediately preserve any evidence regarding the employee's electronic communication at issue. Documentation of any disruption that results from the employee's communication should also be maintained.
- Employees should not involve any District students in social networking activities, or provide students with access to their social networking activities through the Internet. Employees should not "friend" District students on the Internet or through social networking sites, either by allowing student access to the employee's site, or the employee accessing the student's site.
- Employees should not share or post on the Internet or on personal social networking sites student information, including student photographs, student work, or student activities without the prior approval of the school administration and the student's parent. This prohibition does not apply to sharing student work or photographs through District approved means that are related to instruction.