

**Suwannee County  
School District  
Employee Handbook  
2023-2024**



# **A Publication of the Department of Human Resources**

**William Brothers**  
**Director of Human Resources**  
**(386) 647-4633**  
**[william.brothers@suwannee.k12.fl.us](mailto:william.brothers@suwannee.k12.fl.us)**

**Sarah Chauncey**  
**Personnel Specialist**  
**(386) 647-4634**  
**[sarah.chauncey@suwannee.k12.fl.us](mailto:sarah.chauncey@suwannee.k12.fl.us)**

**Erin Vogel**  
**Personnel Specialist**  
**(386) 647-4641**  
**[erin.vogel@suwannee.k12.fl.us](mailto:erin.vogel@suwannee.k12.fl.us)**

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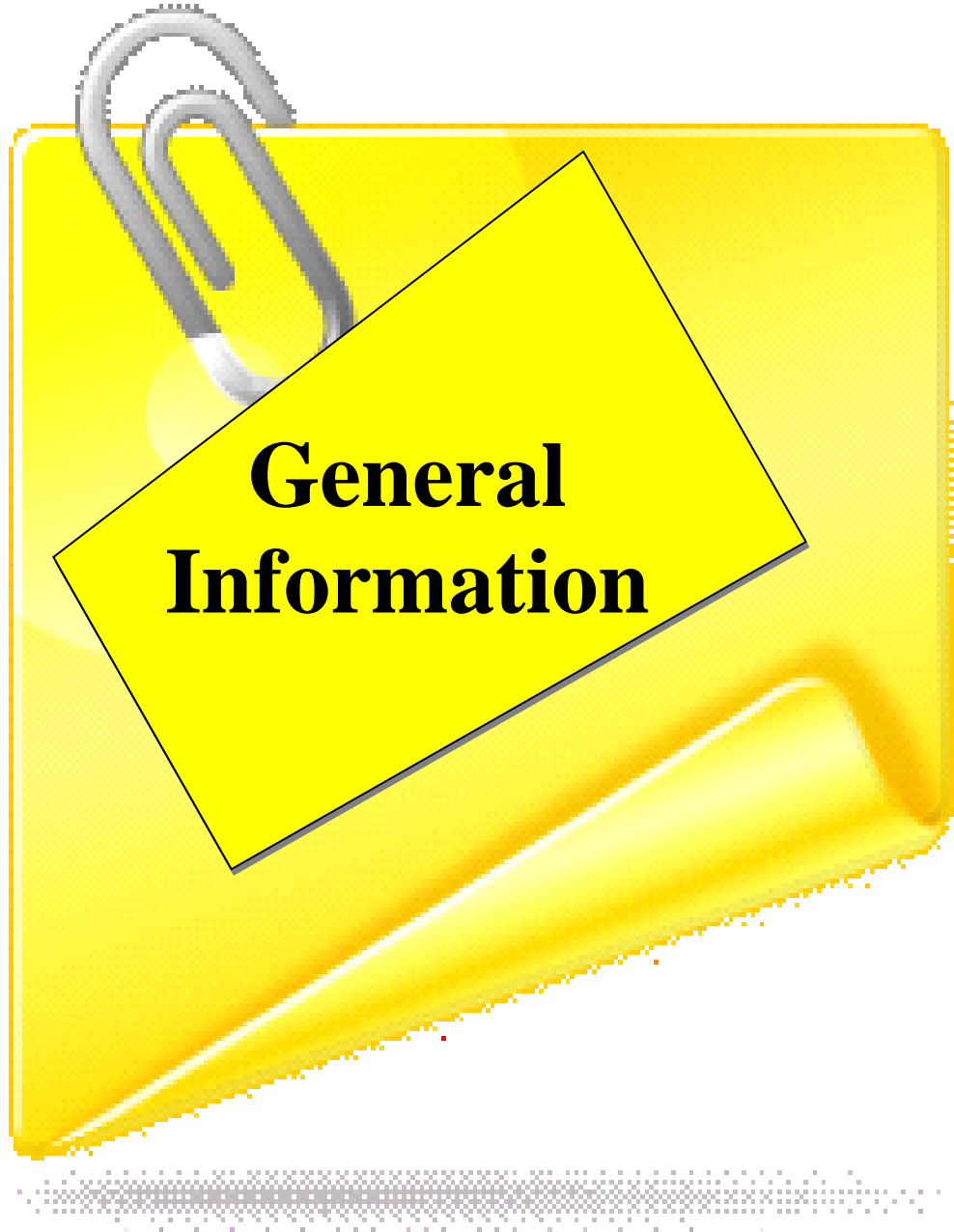


# Welcome to Suwannee County School District

Each employee contributes directly to the successful educational program for the children of Suwannee County as well as the organization's growth and success. We hope that you will take pride in being a member of our team of educational professionals. Please remember that you represent the Suwannee County School District while in the community as well as at school.

This handbook describes some of the expectations of our employees and outlines the policies, programs, and benefits available to eligible employees. Employees are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the contents of this handbook, for it will answer many common questions concerning employment with the Suwannee County School District. However, the handbook cannot anticipate every situation or answer every question about employment. As a result, the employee should consult with his/her worksite supervisor or the Human Resources Department regarding any questions not answered in the handbook.

The information, policies, and benefits described here are subject to change. All such changes will be communicated through official notices, and revised information may supersede, modify, or eliminate existing policies. The employee handbook is not a contract of employment or a legal document. It is, however, the responsibility of the employee to read and comply with the procedures contained in this handbook and any revisions made to it. A copy of the handbook can be found on the web site.



# ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION

## Suwannee County School District

### 2023-2024

#### Superintendent

Ted L. Roush  
(386) 647-4600

[ted.roush@suwannee.k12.fl.us](mailto:ted.roush@suwannee.k12.fl.us)

#### School Board

District 1	Jerry Taylor
District 2	Norman Crawford
District 3	Tim Alcorn
District 4	Ed daSilva
District 5	Ronald White

BOARD MEETINGS take place the fourth Tuesday of each month at 6:00 p.m. in the Board Room at the District Office. The February and October board meetings are held in Branford on the fourth Tuesday at 6:00 p.m.

#### District Administrators

Malcolm Hines	Assistant Superintendent of Administration
Jennifer Barrs	Assistant Superintendent of Instruction
Marsha Brown	Chief Financial Officer
Tammy Boggus	Director of Curriculum and Instruction
William Brothers	Director of Human Resources
Ethan Butts	Director of Facilities
Jeff Lee	Coordinator of Food Service
Ronnie Gray	Director of School Safety & Other Administrative Service
Mary Keen	Director of Career, Technical, & Adult Education
Kelly Waters	Director of Student Services
Angie Stuckey	Director of School Choice
Jimmy Wilkerson	Director of Transportation
Josh Williams	Director of Information Technology

# Suwannee County School District

**Suwannee County School District**  
**1740 Ohio Avenue, South**  
**Live Oak, FL 32064**  
**(386) 647-4600**

<u>School</u>	<u>Phone / Fax</u>	<u>Principal</u>	<u>Center #</u>	<u>Grades</u>
Branford Elementary 26801 SR 247 Branford 32008	386/935-5700 FAX: 386/935-6311	Dee Dee McManaway Melinda Ahrens, AP	0089	PK-5
Branford High 405 NE Reynolds St. Branford 32008	386/935-5600 FAX: 386/935-3867	Terry Huddleston Donnie Harrison, AP Cara Disken, AP	0091	6-12
RIVEROAK Technical College 415 Pinewood Dr., SW Live Oak 32064	386/647-4200 FAX: 386/364-4698	Mary Keen	0012	Vocational / Adult
Suwannee Pineview Elementary 1748 S. Ohio / MLK Jr. Ave Live Oak 32064	386/647-4400 FAX: 386/330-1215	Amy Boggus Jennifer Wooley, AP	0060	2-3
Suwannee High 1314 Pine Ave., SW Live Oak, FL 32064	386/647-4000 FAX: 386/330-1215	Carl Manna Kevin Lewis, AP Keith Cherry, AP Mileydi Perez, AP	0043	9-12
Suwannee Springcrest Elementary 1419 Walker Ave., SW Live Oak 32064	386/647-4700 FAX: 386/364-2680	Jennifer Beach Stephenie Busch, AP	0042	4-5
Suwannee Middle 1730 Walker Ave., SW Live Oak 32064	386/647-4500 FAX: 386/208-1474	Laura Williams Perry Davis, AP Traci Green AP	0051	6-8
Suwannee Riverside Elementary 1625 Walker Ave., SW Live Oak 32064	386/647-4300 FAX: 386/364-2667	Marsha Tedder Lisa Garrison, AP Adrienne Taylor, AP	0011	PK-1
Suwannee Virtual School 415 Pinewood Dr., SW Live Oak, FL 32064	386/647-4243	Lisa Garbett, Coordinator	7023	K-12
Suwannee Opportunity School 415 Pinewood Dr., SW Live Oak, FL 32064	386/647-4243	Brooke Cox-Knowles, Coordinator	0063	K-12





# **Suwannee County School District**

## **Mission Statement**

Suwannee County School District will educate all students in a safe and supportive learning environment that will develop life-long learners and productive citizens.

## **Vision**

Suwannee County School District will be a system of excellence ensuring all students are prepared for personal success.

## **Suwannee County School District Employee Workplace Safety Program**

The Suwannee County School Board is committed to providing employees with a safe and healthful workplace. It is the policy of the Suwannee County School District that employees report unsafe conditions and do not perform work tasks if the work is considered unsafe. Employees must report all accidents, injuries, and unsafe conditions to their supervisors. No such report will result in retaliation, penalty or other disincentive.

Workplace safety and health orientation begins prior to the first day of initial employment or job transfer. Each employee has access to a copy of the safety manual through the website.

Supervisors will ask questions of employees and answer employees' questions to ensure knowledge and understanding of safety rules, policies and job-specific procedures described in our workplace safety program manual. All employees will be instructed by their supervisors that compliance with the safety rules described in the workplace safety manual is required.

## **Suwannee County School District Employee Wellness Program**

The Suwannee County School District Wellness Committee is committed to promoting healthier lifestyles for our employees. Please visit the Wellness website for information on wellness events, fitness partners and incentives for living healthier. In addition, the Suwannee County School District has teamed up with Humana Vitality to implement a wellness and rewards program for everyone – no matter your age or health status. It will put you on the path to healthier living whether you're a fitness buff, just working on losing a few pounds, or training for your first 5K race. It will also help you quit smoking, lower your blood pressure, and eat healthier. For more information, refer to the Employee Benefits Guide on the District website, under Staff Resources.



## **PERSONAL DATA CHANGE**

All employees are expected to use their legal names in dealing with the Board and other professional agencies. Employees' mailing addresses, telephone numbers, number and names of dependents, name changes due to marriage or divorce, individual to be contacted in the event of an emergency, educational accomplishments, and other such information should be accurate and current at all times. It is the responsibility of each employee to promptly notify the worksite secretary of any changes in status. The secretary will prepare a written personnel status form indicating the changes or will direct the employee to the appropriate resource. When changes in personal data occur, new forms (such as W-4 forms, retirement forms, insurance, a copy of the new social security card, and driver license) are required.

## **VOLUNTARY TRANSFERS**

When an employee is voluntarily transferred to another school site or location in the district, the employee initiates the process. The releasing supervisor or principal signs the transfer form to acknowledge approval of the transfer. The receiving principal or administrator signs the transfer form accepting the employee. The accepting principal or administrator then completes an employee status form and sends all paperwork to the Human Resources Department. The Superintendent and Suwannee County School Board must approve the transfer.

## **INVOLUNTARY TRANSFERS**

Involuntary transfers, between schools may be made to provide a more adequate instructional program. Such involuntary transfers shall be limited to no more than two (2) transfers that involve a change to a different grade or broad subject area within a five (5) year period. Changing back to an area or grade taught during the last five (5) years would not be considered a different grade or broad subject area. Written notice of such transfers will be given to the teachers concerned as soon as possible. When a reduction in the number of teachers in a school is necessary, all volunteers shall be given first consideration for transfer. The Superintendent and Suwannee County School Board must approve the involuntary transfer.

## **ORIENTATION**

All new employees are expected to attend an orientation workshop, which is usually scheduled prior to preplanning. When a substitute employee is hired in a regular full-time position, this person becomes eligible for benefits and is invited to attend orientation. Mid-year appointees should complete the online training modules required for their position and attend the next scheduled orientation program, if they continue employment. Each principal/site supervisor shall conduct appropriate orientation activities for any employee hired after the first day of pre-planning.

## **OATH OF LOYALTY**

Florida law requires that all employees sign an Oath of Loyalty. This form is a part of your employment-processing package and should be completed along with your other personnel papers at the time of employment.

## IMMIGRATION LAW COMPLIANCE

Suwannee County School District complies with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 and is committed to employing only United States Citizens and aliens who are authorized to work in the United States. As a condition of employment, each new employee must properly complete, sign, and date the first section of the Immigration and Naturalization Service Form I-9. Before commencing work, newly rehired employees must also complete the form if they have not previously filed an I-9 with the Personnel Department, if their previous I-9 is not more than three (3) years old.

## FINGERPRINTING

Florida law requires that all school board employees and substitutes be fingerprinted. It is the responsibility of the applicant to pay the processing fee that is established by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE). Fingerprints are taken in the personnel office and sent to FDLE and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) for processing.

If the fingerprint report for an instructional/administrative employee filing for initial certification indicates a criminal history or if the applicant acknowledges a criminal history, the applicant's records shall be referred to the Bureau of Educator Standards for review and determination of eligibility for certification. If the applicant fails to provide the necessary documentation requested by the Bureau of Educator Standards within 90 days after the date of receipt of the certified mail request, the statement of eligibility and pending application shall become invalid.

Effective July 1, 2004, school districts are required to conduct national criminal history checks every five years on their current employees. The District shall assume the expense for this requirement.

## SELF-REPORTING RULE

All employees are required to comply with the "Self-Reporting Rule" for arrests and convictions. The "Rule" requires employees to self-report to the Director of Human Resources within 48 hours any arrests/charges involving the abuse of a child or the sale and/or possession of a controlled substance. In addition, the employee is required to report any conviction, finding of guilt, withholding of adjudication commitment to a pretrial diversion program, or entering of a plea of guilty or Nolo Contendere **for any criminal offense** other than a minor traffic violation within 48 hours after the final judgment. Bus drivers are required to report a DUI or alcohol related arrest by the next shift.

## CODE OF ETHICS

The code of ethics governs professionalism through integrity and consists of those principles of professional conduct that govern the education profession in Florida. The State Board of Education approved the principles of professional conduct on July 21, 1992 (Rule 6B-1.006, FAC). Violation of any of the principles of professional conduct shall subject the individual to sanctions against the certificate, which may include revocation or suspension of the individual educator's certificate, or the other penalties as provided by law. All employees are encouraged to read, understand and become familiar with these principles (Rule 6B-1.00, FAC). Certified employees may become ineligible for employment should they commit any of the felonies or misdemeanors listed in FS. 1012.315 (\*Note – current employees who have committed one of these felonies in the past will also be disqualified from employment.)

## **PROFESSIONALISM**

Each employee (bus driver, food service or maintenance worker, classroom aide or teacher, administrator and all other classifications of employees) is expected to demonstrate professional and appropriate behavior. Each employee is expected to abide by school and Suwannee County School District rules, and state and federal laws. Because employees of a school system serve as role models for students, employees are held to the highest standard of conduct (Adams vs. Turlington). In a school district such as ours, the community holds school personnel as examples for children.

## **OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT**

Outside employment or "moonlighting" on the part of an employee shall not violate the moral standards of the community, or the Code of Ethics of the Education Profession in Florida. Under no conditions shall outside employment conflict with the employee's performance of his/her professional duties or with the extracurricular activities related to his/her position.

Suwannee County School District employees shall not conduct a private enterprise on school time. District equipment or supplies, including technology, computers, and other equipment such as copiers, facsimile machines and cell phones, may not be used for a private business or personal gain of the employee, or for the benefit of private, "for profit", or "not for profit" organizations, unless expressly authorized by the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee.

## **EMPLOYEE RELATIONS**

The employer believes that the work conditions, wages, and benefits that are offered to its employees are competitive with those offered by other school districts in this region. If employees have concerns about work conditions or compensation, they are encouraged to voice these concerns openly and directly to their immediate supervisors.

If employees prefer to exercise the right to be represented by a collective bargaining agent, the school board will respect that choice.

## **GRIEVANCE**

If an employee has a complaint, which he/she believes may become the basis for a grievance, the employee shall discuss the complaint, in an informal manner with his/her immediate supervisor. If the problem is not resolved, the employee may file a formal grievance. Procedures for filling a grievance are contained in the collective bargaining agreement and SCSB Policy 6.50.

The purpose of the grievance procedure is to resolve at the lowest possible level and in the most expedient and impartial manner, any dispute between members of the bargaining unit and management, concerning the terms of the contract. Employees are encouraged to read the collective bargaining agreement and may refer to the grievance procedure/form in the contract should it become necessary.

## **PUPIL SUPERVISION**

Proper supervision of a pupil shall be provided while the student is under the immediate control of the school. Supervision shall be maintained on the school grounds, in classrooms, on the bus, in pupil occupied areas of buildings, on field trips, during any extracurricular activity, at school-sponsored functions, and at any other school related sponsored activity.

Any employee who has responsibility for the supervision of pupils in the performance of their normal duties, or who is assigned duty requiring the supervision of pupils needs to be diligent in supervising each child. Obviously we want each child to be safe. An employee who fails to provide such student supervision by failing to report for duty or by leaving his/her post of duty without being properly relieved of such duty shall be deemed guilty of neglect of duty. Any person charged with such neglect of duty shall be subjected to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA**

All employees are expected to serve as positive ambassadors for our schools and to remember they are role models to students in this community. Because readers of social media networks may view the employee as a representative of the schools and the District, it is in the employee's best interest to observe the following rules when referring to the District, its schools, students, programs, activities, employees, volunteers and communities on any social media networks:

It is in the employee's best interest when using any social media network or electronic communication (including texting) and postings, displays, or communications on any social media network, to comply with all state and federal laws and any applicable District policies. Following Florida Administrative Code 6B-1.001 and 6B-1.006, it is in the employee's best interest to be respectful and professional in all communications (by word, image, or other means).

Employees should not use their District e-mail address for communications on public social media networks that have not been approved by the District. Employees must make clear that any views expressed are the employee's alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of the District. Employees may not act as a spokesperson for the District or post comments as a representative of the District, except as authorized by the Superintendent or designee.

Employees may not disclose information on any social media network that is protected by law, confidential or proprietary to the District, its students, or employees or that is protected by data privacy laws.

Employees may not use or post District, school or departmental logos on any social media network without permission from the Superintendent or designee.

This policy will continually evolve as new technologies and social networking tools emerge. It is each employee's responsibility to be familiar with this policy. This policy is guided by the principle of personal responsibility and accountability, what you write is ultimately your responsibility. This policy is not intended to restrict participation but rather to provide both a caution and guidance for employees who choose to engage in online activities

## **CHILD ABUSE**

Each school district employee is considered a "mandated reporter." All employees have an affirmative duty to report all cases of actual or **suspected** cases of child abuse or neglect, and shall have immunity from liability if such cases are reported in good faith. The failure of an employee to report suspected cases of child abuse shall subject the employee to disciplinary measures.

## **CLEAN INDOOR AIR ACT**

Suwannee County School District supports the Clean Indoor Air Act, which prohibits the use of all tobacco products in classrooms; pupil occupied areas, the gymnasium or auditoriums of the Suwannee County School District by any person.

## **POSSESSION OF WEAPONS**

No person except law enforcement, security officers and other legally identified individuals as special deputies, may have in his/her possession any weapon, illegal substance, or dangerous substance while on school property or at school events. However, district employees may possess a securely encased concealed firearm in their vehicle in accordance with F.S. 790.25 (5).

## **PROFANE OR OBSCENE LANGUAGE**

Under no conditions shall any School Board employee be permitted to use profane or obscene language in his/her relationship with students. Any employee who uses profane or obscene language while speaking to, communicating with, or in the presence of students shall be deemed guilty of misconduct.

## **ALCOHOL & DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE**

No employee or student shall manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess, or use in or on the work place, or be under the influence of any alcoholic substance, any intoxicating or auditory, visual, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, or any other controlled substance, in the work place, as defined by Federal Law or Florida Statute Ch. 893, or any counterfeit of such drugs or substances, all being collectively referred to as drugs.

Alcohol beverages in any form, drugs and controlled substances (except as defined by School Board policy 6.45 and 6.46) are barred from all school property, buildings, and functions sponsored by the public schools of Suwannee County.

The appropriate use of legally prescribed drugs and nonprescription medication is not prohibited. However, it is the employee's responsibility to inform the physician of the employee's job duties and to ask the prescribing physician to determine whether or not the prescribed drug may impair the employee's job performance. It is the employee's responsibility to remove himself/herself from service if unfit for duty. An employee in a safety sensitive position must obtain a written release from the prescribing physician if he/she has prescribed any substance that carries a warning label indicating that mental functioning, motor skills or judgment may be adversely affected. The release must state that the employee is able to perform safety sensitive functions.

"Workplace" is defined as the site for the performance of work done in connection with the duties of an employee of the School Board. That term includes any place where the work of the school district is performed, including a school building or other school premises; any school-owned vehicle or any other school-approved vehicle used to transport students to and from school or school activities, off-school property during any school-sponsored or school-approved activity, event or function, such as a field trip, workshop or athletic event.

Each job offer is contingent on a negative drug test. When reasonable suspicion exists, employees may be required to submit to a drug test. Refusal to test or positive results are grounds for termination. Random drug testing is required for transportation personnel.

## **DRUG-FREE EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE**

The District shall offer assistance and information on drug abuse in order to maintain an alcohol and a drug-free workplace. Employee assistance will be available through the Human Resources Department or referral to a program which will provide assistance.

## **TOBACCO USE IN DISTRICT FACILITIES**

All uses of tobacco products in any form including, but not limited to, synthetic tobacco, use of electronic cigarettes or similar devices, and/or vaping in any form are prohibited in any District-owned facility or vehicle.

## **BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS EXPOSURE PLAN**

Universal precautions will be observed by all employees to prevent contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials. Annual training will be provided to employees who are employed in an identified occupational exposure position. The Principal/Supervisor is responsible for monitoring this process and ensuring that universal precautions are observed. Employees who have been identified as working in occupations that expose them to blood or other potentially infectious materials will be offered the Hepatitis B vaccine at no cost to the employee. Vaccines will be given through an agreement with the Suwannee County Health Unit.

## **DISCRIMINATION**

The Suwannee County School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies:

Ronnie Gray, Director of School Safety and Other Administrative Services  
Address: 1740 Ohio Avenue, South, Live Oak, FL 32064  
Telephone: (386) 647-4644

## **REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS IN EMPLOYMENT**

In accordance with the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) of 1990, an employee may request reasonable accommodations when he/she meets the criteria of a disability as defined by ADA. ADA has a three-part definition of disability. Under ADA, an individual with a disability has:

- A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity;
- A record of such an impairment; or
- Is regarded as having such impairment.

Employees desiring reasonable accommodations in employment may contact the Human Resources office.

Reasonable Accommodations shall be provided that will not impose undue hardship to the school or district. Reasonable accommodations can involve the following:



- a. Modifications or adjustments to a job application process that enable or qualify an applicant with a disability to be considered for the position such qualified applicant desires; or
- b. Modifications or adjustments to the work environment or to the manner or circumstances under which the position held or desired is customarily performed, that enable a qualified individual with a disability to perform the essential functions of that position; or
- c. Modifications/adjustments enabling employees with disabilities to enjoy equal benefits and privileges of employment as are enjoyed by other similarly situated employees without disabilities (i.e. making existing facilities readily accessible and usable by individuals with disabilities, job restructuring, etc.).

## **PROBATIONARY PERIOD**

First year instructional employees are on a probationary contract for the first year. The probationary period is intended to give new employees the opportunity to demonstrate his/her ability to achieve a satisfactory level of performance and to determine whether the new position meets his/her expectations. Upon satisfactory completion of the probationary period, the person may be recommended as an annual status.

Educational Support Personnel (ESP) are on a probationary contract for three (3) years. Following the 3 year probationary period, the ESP moves to continuing status.

During the initial 97 days of employment, either the non-instructional employee and/or the employer may end the employment relationship without a breach of contract and without cause.

During the probationary period, new employees are eligible for those benefits that are required by law, such as workers' compensation insurance and social security. They may also be eligible for other employer-provided benefits, subject to the terms and conditions of each benefit program. Employees should read the information for each specific benefit program for the details on eligibility requirements.

## **EXPERIENCE VERIFICATION**

Each year of experience to be counted for salary purposes must meet the criteria prescribed by law. Experience credit may not exceed the limits established by the board or the terms of a negotiated agreement. All experience verification must be:

- a. Provided on Experience Verification Form or on business stationery by former employers or by a notarized affidavit(s),
- b. Specify the date(s) of employment, job title, and whether the position was full-time or part-time employment,
- c. The number of hours worked per week must be included for part-time employment,
- d. Self-employed experience (i.e. family business) must be verified by an individual knowledgeable of the applicant's service.

Certificated employees (i.e. teachers, administrators) who have worked **in a public school system** and have applicable experience will receive 100% experience credit for salary purposes.

**No experience credit is approved for substitute or part-time teaching** experience unless the service was rendered under contract in excess of one-half the days (99 days) or hours (785 hours) required for a year of service in a full-time position.

Instructional personnel will be paid according to their highest degree earned, in accordance with the master contract. However, for personnel hired after 2011 to qualify for an advanced degree payment, the advanced degree must be in an academic subject area that is on their teaching certificate.

During the year of initial employment, the HR office will process the experience verification paperwork and authorize the employee's salary. As experience verifications are received in the Human Resources Office, new salary authorizations are made retroactive to the employee's effective date of hire. Additional salary for experience that is documented after the first year of employment shall not be retroactive.

## **SEXUAL HARRASSMENT**

The Suwannee County School District forbids sexual harassment in any form, whether by an administrator, teacher, any other adult, or any student on school property or at any school related activity. Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other inappropriate oral, written or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- a. Such conduct is made either explicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment;
- b. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individuals; or
- c. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonable interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating hostile or offensive working environment.

Persons who allege sexual harassment may report such actions to a principal, administrator or other responsible person within the school/work site where the action occurred. All complaints shall be reported to the Director of Human Resources and investigated as promptly as practicable. Filing a Complaint of sexual harassment will not reflect upon the individual's status, future employment, work assignments, future grades or extracurricular activities. A substantiated charge of sexual harassment shall subject the individual to disciplinary actions. Employees are encouraged to read the sexual harassment policy.

## **BULLYING**

It is the policy of the Suwannee County School District that all of its students and school employees have an educational setting that is safe, secure and free from harassment and bullying of any kind (SCSB Policy 5.101). The District will not tolerate bullying and harassment of any type. Conduct that constitutes bullying and harassment is prohibited.

Bullying includes cyberbullying and means systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students or employees. It is further defined as unwanted and repeated written, verbal, or physical behavior, including any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, by a student or adult, that is severe or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment; cause discomfort or humiliation; or unreasonably interfere with the individual's school performance or participation; and may involve but is not limited to:

- a. teasing,
- b. social exclusion,
- c. threat,
- d. intimidation,

- e. stalking (including cyberstalking),
- f. physical violence,
- g. theft,
- h. sexual, religious, or racial/ethnic harassment,
- i. public humiliation, or
- j. destruction of property.

The term *bullying* shall include cyberbullying whether or not specifically stated.

Harassment means any threatening, insulting or dehumanizing gesture, use of data or computer software, or written, verbal or physical conduct directed against a student or school employee that:

- a. places a student or school employee in reasonable fear or harm to his/her person or damage to his/her property;
- b. has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits; or
- c. has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of a school.

Bullying and harassment also include:

- a. retaliation against a student or school employee by another student or school employee for asserting or alleging an act of bullying or harassment; reporting an act of bullying or harassment that is not made in good faith is considered retaliation;
- b. perpetuation of conduct listed in the definition of bullying or harassment by an individual or group with intent to demean, dehumanize, embarrass, or cause emotional or physical harm to a student or school employee by
  - 1. incitement or coercion;
  - 2. accessing or knowingly and willingly causing or providing access to data or computer software through a computer, computer system, or computer network within the scope of the District school system;
  - 3. acting in a manner that has an effect substantially similar to the effect of bullying or harassment.

## **REPORTING MISCONDUCT**

All employees shall be responsible for reporting misconduct by School Board employees that affects the health, safety or welfare of a student. Reports should be made to immediate supervisor, or by using the following procedures.

## SUWANNEE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

### Reporting of Wrongdoing

The employees of the Suwannee County School District have a number of options and methods of reporting wrongdoing in the workplace. An employee may report the wrongdoing verbally or in written form to the following:

- A. Any school level administrator or administrative supervisor
- B. Equity Coordinator – Ronnie Gray . . . . 386-647-4644
- C. Any district level administrator including the Superintendent and

School Board Members

- D. The Collective Risk Management Team:

Jennifer Barrs -647-4635 .....	District Administrator Rep.
Kecia Robinson – 647-4638.....	District Administrator Rep.
Carl Manna – 647-4035 .....	School Level Administrator Rep.
Theda Roper– 647-4701 .....	UTSC Representative
Robyne Edwards – 647-4435.....	Teacher Representative
Sharon Braun – 647-4128 .....	Transportation Representative
Dana Tidwell – 647-4604 .....	School Related Representative

- E. Employee Protection Line®

Call (800) 576-5262 and enter the organizations code number (30079 for Suwannee) without giving your name.

## **FLORIDA CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS**

*(for instructors and administrators)*

### **APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION**

The certification office will assist you with the certification process. For an initial certificate, you must:

- a. Complete an application form CG-10 online. <http://www.fdoe.org/edcert/apply.asp>
- b. Pay processing fees of \$75.00 per subject/endorsement requested.
- c. Submit an official transcript that reflects a bachelor's or higher degree from an accredited or approved institution.
- d. Submit a fingerprint report that has been processed, submitted by the school district to DOE, and cleared.

For additional information, contact Haley Radford at (386) 647-4627 or visit the Bureau of Educator Certification web site at <http://www.fldoe.org/edcert/>.

### **INITIAL CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS**

For a five (5) year non-renewable temporary certificate, you must:

- a. Complete all application process requirements.
- b. Hold a Bachelor's degree or higher.
- c. Demonstrate mastery of subject area knowledge or meet subject specialization with a 2.5 GPA for a requested.
- d. Submit a fingerprint report that has been processed, submitted by the school district to DOE, and cleared.

### **PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATE REQUIREMENTS**

For a five year Professional Certificate, you must:

- a. Complete the application process (apply online <http://www.fldoe.org/edcert/apply.asp>)
- b. Hold at least a bachelor's degree
- c. Demonstrate Mastery of Subject Area Knowledge for a requested subject
- d. Demonstrate Mastery of General Knowledge
- e. Demonstrate Mastery of Professional Preparation and Education Competence
- f. Fingerprint report that has been processed, submitted to DOE and cleared

## EMPLOYMENT CATEGORIES

In order to clarify the definition of employment classifications so that employees understand their employment status and benefit eligibility, each employee is designated as either NONEXEMPT or EXEMPT from federal and state wage and hour laws. **Overtime work must be authorized in advance by the worksite supervisor in order to receive compensation.**

**NONEXEMPT** employees are entitled to overtime pay under the specific provisions of federal and state law. If there is a bargaining agreement or contract, the employer is obligated to follow the terms of the agreement. Examples of job types classified under this category include: bus drivers, food service workers, custodial workers, aides, clerical workers, secretarial staff, bookkeepers, clerks, skilled laborers.

**EXEMPT** employees are excluded from minimum wage and overtime specific provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act. Examples of job types classified under this category include: teachers, directors, supervisors, principals, administrators, attorneys, and other employees designated as professionals. These employees do **not** have to be paid overtime when they work more than 40 hours in a workweek.

In addition to the above, each employee will belong to one other employment category:

**TEMPORARY** employees are those who are hired as interim replacements, to temporarily supplement the work force, or to assist in the completion of a specific project. Employment assignments in this category are of a limited duration. Employment beyond any initially stated period does not in any way imply a change in employment status. Temporary employees retain that status unless and until notified of a change. While temporary employees receive all legally mandated benefits (such as workers' compensation insurance and social security), they are ineligible for the entire employer's other benefit program. Substitute employees are an example.

**PROBATIONARY** employees are those whose performance is evaluated to determine whether further employment in a specific position or with the organization is appropriate. Employees who satisfactorily complete the probationary period will be notified of their new employment classification.

**REGULAR FULL-TIME** employees are those who are not in a temporary or probationary status and who are regularly scheduled to work the organization's full-time schedule. Generally, they are eligible for the employer's benefit package, subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of each benefit program.

**REGULAR PART-TIME** employees are those who are not assigned to a temporary or probationary status and who are regularly scheduled to work less than the full-time work schedule. Regular part-time employees are eligible for some benefits sponsored by the employer, subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of each benefit program.

## **PERFORMANCE EVALUATION**

The performance of each employee is the key to the overall success of the Suwannee County School District in carrying out its mission, goals, and programs. Each employee of the School District shall receive at least one annual evaluation by his / her immediate administrative supervisor. The purpose of the evaluation shall be to improve the services of personnel in all departments.

Supervisors and employees are strongly encouraged to discuss job performance and goals on an informal, day-to-day basis so the employee can better understand what the job requires as well as what the supervisor expects of him/her in their job. The success of the school system depends upon the combined efforts of employees, managers, supervisors, and administrative staff. The performance evaluation system is designed to provide both supervisors and employees the opportunity to discuss job tasks, identify and correct weaknesses, encourage and recognize strengths, and discuss positive, purposeful approaches for meeting goals that would improve student performance, job performance, and the quality of service provided. Job descriptions and evaluation forms are available on First Class.

## **TERMINATION**

When an employee resigns or retires from the Suwannee County School District, a letter of intent must be provided to the principal or administrator, with a copy to the Human Resources Department for Board acceptance. In the interest of better personnel management, it is important to know the reason employees leave their job and how they feel our programs and services might be improved. If you decide to leave the Suwannee County School District, you are encouraged to have a personal exit interview with your supervisor. The Department of Education requires an exit form to be completed by each teacher and submitted to the personnel department, which in turn, submits the exit information to DOE.

## **ACCESS TO PERSONNEL FILES**

Personnel files are the property of the employer. Access to the information contained in the personnel file of each employee is open to public inspection, with the exception of those restrictions set forth in F.S. 1012.31 and 119. With reasonable advance notice, an employee may review material in a personnel file in the personnel offices and in the presence of the individual appointed by the employer to maintain the file. Information exempt from public inspection consists of the following:

- a. Complaints or material relating to an on-going investigation.
- b. Performance evaluations prepared before July 01, 1983.
- c. Current performance evaluations and the evaluations from the previous year.
- d. Derogatory material to an employee until 10 days after the employee has been notified pursuant to Chapter 119 Florida Statutes.
- e. Payroll deduction records.
- f. Medical records, including psychiatric, psychological, and/or mental health counseling.
- g. District employees' name and home address relating to HRS, Law Enforcement, active firefighter; court justice; appeal, circuit or county judge.
- h. Any information revealing undercover personnel of a criminal justice agency, law enforcement personnel and HRS.
- i. References prior to employment that are marked confidential.
- j. Confidential information can be shared with another person or agency when required by law and when the employee gives written consent for release of information. It is the employee's responsibility to let us know if they are exempt.

## Notification of Social Security Number Collection and Use

In compliance with Florida Statute 119.071(5), Suwannee County School Board issues this notification regarding the purpose of the collection and use of an individual's Social Security Number.

The Suwannee County School Board recognizes that an individual's social security number is a unique form of identification that can be utilized to obtain sensitive information regarding that particular individual. However, as required by Florida Statute 1008.386, the Board must request that each student enrolled in the district provide his or her social security number and must use the Social Security Number in the management information system.

The Board further recognizes that under certain circumstances, both as an employer and an education institution, the collection of social security numbers is necessary to be able to properly perform its duties and functions and to ensure that such duties and functions are performed accurately and efficiently. Due to the sensitive nature of an individual's social security number, the Board will secure Social Security Numbers from unauthorized access and will never release them to unauthorized parties. Each student and employee will be issued a unique identification number for reporting purposes unless otherwise prescribed by law.

The Suwannee County School Board collects your social security number only for the following purposes:

Purpose	Statutory Authority	Mandated, Authorized or Business Imperative
Identification and verification – Identity management	Sec. 119.071(5)(a)(2)(a)(III), Fla. Stat. 1008.386, Fla. Stat.	Mandated
Benefit processing	Sec. 6109, I.R.C.	Mandated
Data collection, reconciliation, and tracking	Sec. 6109, I.R.C.	Mandated
Tax reporting	Sec. 6109, I.R.C.	Mandated
Criminal background checks	Sec. 119.071(5)(a)(2)(a)(III), Fla. Stat.	Business Imperative
Billing and payments	Sec. 6109, I.R.C.	Mandated
Payroll administration	Sec. 6109, I.R.C.	Mandated
Garnishments	Sec. 6109, I.R.C.	Mandated
State and federal educational and employment reporting	Sec. 6109, I.R.C.	Mandated
Financial aid programs	Sec. 6109, I.R.C.	Mandated
Vendor applications	Sec. 6109, I.R.C.	Mandated
Independent contractors	Sec. 6109, I.R.C.	Mandated
Employment applications	Sec. 6109, I.R.C.	Mandated
Student admissions - Student record management	Sec. 119.071(5)(a)(2)(a)(III), Fla. Stat. 1008.386, Fla. Stat.	Business Imperative
Volunteer applications	Not applicable	Authorized - SCSB Policy 6.78*

Additionally, Federal Legislation relating to the Hope Tax Credit requires that all postsecondary institutions report the Social Security Number of all postsecondary students to the Internal Revenue Service. This IRS requirement makes it necessary for RIVEROAK Technical College (RTC) to collect the Social Security Number of every postsecondary student enrolled. A student may refuse to disclose his/her Social Security Number to RTC, but refusing to comply with the federal requirement may result in fines established by the Internal Revenue Services.

All Social Security Numbers are protected by federal regulations and are never released to unauthorized parties.



# **Employee Benefits**

## **BENEFITS**

Eligible employees of the Suwannee County School District are provided a wide range of benefits. A number of the programs, such as social security, workers' compensation, state retirement, disability, and unemployment insurance cover all employees in the manner prescribed by law. Benefit eligibility is dependent upon a variety of factors, including employee classification. Some benefit programs require contributions from the employee. Your supervisor can identify the programs for which you are eligible. Details of many of these programs can be found elsewhere in the employee handbook.

The following benefits are available to eligible employees:

Auto Mileage	Insurance
Credit Union	COBRA
Holidays	Workers' Compensation
Annual Leave/Vacation	Unemployment Compensation
Sick Leave Benefit Pay	Training Opportunities
Sick Leave Bank	Critical Teacher Shortage
Uniform and Uniform Maintenance	Direct Deposit
Retirement/Drop Program	Employee Assistance
Terminal Leave Pay	Employee Leave Sell Back Option

## **AUTO MILEAGE**

Reimbursement is provided to employees for authorized travel when approved by the employee's supervisor, superintendent and/or the School Board. Law establishes rates for travel. No reimbursement is given for travel between the employee's home and workstation.

In-district travel is computed in accordance with the district mileage schedule, or the odometer reading from the point of departure to point of destination. Out-of-district travel is established by official state road maps. When employees are traveling extended distances in a county car, a fuel or credit card from the district office should be checked-out for use. Persons traveling to the same meeting are encouraged to travel together.

Reimbursement may be requested for taxi, and ferry fares; bridge, road, and tunnel tolls; storage and parking fees; communication expense and convention registration fees when properly supported by receipts. No reimbursement may be authorized for gratuities.

## **UNIFORM AND UNIFORM MAINTENANCE**

The School Board appropriates funds for the purchase and maintenance of specialized clothing, footwear, uniforms and protective paraphernalia for certain categories of employees (i.e. food service

workers, bus drivers, custodians, etc.) because of required regulations and daily exposure to hazardous working conditions.

## **RETIREMENT**

All new employees in regularly established positions automatically become members of the Florida Retirement System (FRS) and are covered by Federal Social Security. The district contributes to the Florida Retirement System fund as provided by law. The district matches your social security contributions. The State offers a choice of two retirement options; the pension plan or the investment plan. You will have five months from the date you are first employed by an FRS employer to make your selection. When an employee is ready to retire, he/she should contact the benefits office. Employees may receive federal social security benefits in addition to state retirement.

Eligible employees may apply for enrollment in the Deferred Retirement Option Program (DROP) with the Division of Retirement. Contact the FRS Benefits Office for information.

Employees may also participate in the Board approved tax shelter annuity programs [403(b), 457 and 401(k)]. The employee may select from several companies approved by the Board. The contributions to an annuity must be payroll deducted.

In order to obtain FRS information, please either create a LOG IN or use the toll free MyFRS Financial Guidance Line: 1-866-446-9377 (TTY: 1-888-429-2160) 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET, Monday –Friday (except holidays). You can speak to an unbiased Ernst & Young financial planner for help in choosing your FRS retirement plan using MyFRS.com, and personal financial planning. Also, get detailed information about the Pension Plan, Investment Plan, enrolling your Personal Identification Number (PIN), and more. Creating a LOG IN to MyFRS.com allows you to manage your FRS retirement benefits, learn about risks, compare the two FRS retirement plans, and forecast your retirement income (including Social Security). Use your PIN the first time you access your account and create a personal User ID and password. You can also get a PIN or password reminder from MyFRS.com or the MyFRS Financial Guidance Line.

## **TERMINAL LEAVE PAY**

Upon retirement from the district, any employee or his/her beneficiary, if service is terminated by death, shall receive terminal leave pay for accumulated sick leave up to the maximum allowed by law. Employees transferring to other districts or terminating for reasons other than retirement have the option of receiving terminal leave pay for accumulated sick leave earned in Suwannee County based on policy or transferring their sick leave balance to another district. The employee shall indicate his/her preference by submitting a request to the Board in writing during his/her last month of employment.

## **INSURANCE**

Full-time employees are provided an opportunity to participate in Board approved insurance plans that offer a variety of covered services. Employees are encouraged to select the benefit package that best meet their family's needs. The board authorizes pre-tax payroll deductions as well as makes a contribution to each full time employee who selects health insurance coverage. You will also receive a package describing available insurance plan coverage after the Board has approved your employment.

If you are an eligible employee, you can enroll in benefits on the first of the month following 30 days of employment, the date you become benefit eligible due to a change in status, or the date of a Qualifying Event. You can also enroll or change benefits during our annual Open Enrollment period each year.

### **Availability of Summary Health Information**

As an employee of SCSB, the health benefits available to you represent a significant component of your compensation package. They also provide important protection for you and your family in the case of illness or injury.

Your plan offers a series of health coverage options. Choosing a health coverage option is an important decision. To help you make an informed choice, a Summary of Benefits and Coverage (“SBC”) is available, which summarizes important information about any health coverage option in a standard format, to help you compare across options.

The SBC and SBC Glossary is available on LaunchPad. To view these documents, please log in to LaunchPad and add the Staff Resources app. If you have trouble, please contact the IT Department at (386) 647-4109 or email Help Desk via FirstClass.

Other important insurance information is also available in this location, including Marketplace Notice and COBRA Continuation Coverage Rights.

Paper copies of these documents are available, free of charge, by calling Teri Jones at (386) 647-4616 to request them.

### **COBRA**

The Federal Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) gives employees and their qualified beneficiaries the opportunity to continue certain insurance coverage under an employer-sponsored plan when a "qualifying event" would normally result in the loss of eligibility. Some common qualifying events are resignation, termination of employment, or death of an employee; a reduction in an employee's hours or a leave of absence; an employee's divorce or legal separation; and when a dependent child no longer meets eligibility requirements. It is the employee's responsibility to notify the School Board, in writing, should there be a qualifying event that will result in loss of coverage. Under COBRA, the employee or beneficiary pays full cost of coverage at the employer's group rates plus an administration fee. Please refer to the *General Notice of COBRA Continuation Coverage Rights* on page 35 for important information regarding COBRA.

### **WORKERS' COMPENSATION INSURANCE**

Suwannee County School District provides comprehensive workers' compensation insurance program at no cost to employees. This program covers any injury or illness sustained in the course of employment that requires medical treatment. Any employee who sustains a work-related injury or illness should inform his or her supervisor immediately. No matter how minor an on-the-job injury may appear, it is important that it be reported immediately. This will enable an eligible employee to qualify for coverage as quickly as possible. When a case is turned over to workers' compensation, the insurance carrier, in accordance with Florida Statute, will determine eligibility and benefits available. Medical expenses and travel for doctor appointments are assumed by workers' compensation.

## **UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION**

Unemployment compensation provides temporary income payments to make up a part of the wages lost to workers who lose their jobs through no fault of their own, and who are able and available for work. It is a temporary income to help individuals absorb some of the shock of unemployment. Employees may be eligible for unemployment compensation benefits if they:

- Are terminated or partially unemployed through no fault of their own; and
- Are able to work and available for work; and are registered for and seeking employment.

To qualify for benefits the employee must file a claim, have the necessary wage credits, and not be subject to any of the disqualification's provided for in the law. Ten-month employees are not eligible for unemployment compensation during the summer. Employees interested in requesting unemployment compensations should contact the Florida Department of Labor and Employment Security, Division of Unemployment, at (352) 376-4691 or 336-2215.

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

A variety of training activities are provided throughout the year so employees will have the opportunity to keep abreast of changes in the field of education. The inservice programs are designed to help employees improve student performance, their job performance, foster personal growth and development, as well as assist employees in meeting professional regulations and standards. Using <http://navplus.nefec.org>, employees may also search for inservice opportunities and track his/her own inservice records. Each school has a designated Professional Development Council (PDC) representative who serves as liaison between the personnel department and the school. Credit for participation in inservice activities is granted in accordance with the Board's approved Master Inservice Plan for and State Board of Education regulations.

The Department of Curriculum and Instruction disseminates information concerning inservice training activities to each school, as well as keeps track of all employees' inservice points for certification purposes.

## **RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION**

(A) Applicants who are graduates from Suwannee County School District and return to the District and are hired in teacher vacancies as first time teachers in fiscal year 2018-2019 or thereafter shall be eligible for a tuition reimbursement of \$1,500 per year for a maximum of four years with the total reimbursement amount not to exceed \$6,000. This reimbursement will be paid in June upon the completion of each school year. An employee who is not recommended back for an instructional position will only be eligible for tuition reimbursement of \$750 per year.

(B) Effective July 1, 2019, employees who subsequently retire from Suwannee County School District and have a minimum of 20 years of service with the Suwannee County School District shall have the Board contribution to health insurance that is equivalent to current employees, less the employee's Florida Retirement System health insurance subsidy, for a maximum of five years or until they are eligible for Medicare, whichever comes first. Eligibility for this insurance contribution shall be that the employee separates from service from Suwannee County School District and immediately begins receiving retirement benefits from the Florida Retirement System.

# Employee Leave



## LEAVE REQUESTS

Any absence shall be covered by leave duty authorized and granted. Leave may be with or without pay as provided by law and regulations of School Board Policy. Leave requests shall be in writing on the forms prescribed by the Board. The employee is responsible for completing the

appropriate paperwork requesting leave. All requests for leave, except for sickness and emergencies, must be requested and approved by the supervisor, Board or Superintendent in advance.

## **PERSONAL LEAVE**

The School Board allows six (6) days of personal leave with pay for all employees for each fiscal year for personal reasons, including emergencies. These days are non-cumulative and are charged to sick leave. All personal leave, except emergencies, must be requested and approved in advance.

## **LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

A leave of absence is permission granted by the Board, or allowed under its adopted policies for an employee to be absent from duty for a specified period of time, with the right to return to employment upon the expiration of the leave. Employees returning from leave will retain full credit for years of service credited to them prior to the leave.

If the employee is on an approved leave of absence for a full contracted year and the employee wishes to return to work the following year, the employee must notify the principal/supervisor in writing of their intent by the time frame specified. Failure of the employee to notify the principal/supervisor of his/her intent to return to employment may result in termination of employment

.

## **ABSENCE WITHOUT LEAVE**

Any employee who is willfully absent from duty without leave shall interrupt continuity of service, and shall forfeit compensation for the time of the absence and his/her employment shall be subject to termination by the Board.

## **SICK LEAVE**

The School Board grants eligible employee's sick leave for periods of temporary absence due to illness or injury. Instructional employees, hired on a full-time basis, are entitled to four (4) days of sick leave as of the first working day and will then earn one (1) day per month credited at the end of the month for a total of 10 sick leave days.

School related and administrative employees, employed on a full-time basis, will earn four (4) days of sick leave at the end of the first month of employment, and shall earn one (1) day per month credited at the end of the month for a total of 9 days for 9 month employees, 10 days for 10 month employees, 11 days for 11 month employees, and 12 days for 12 month employees.

Teachers and paraprofessionals who expect to be absent from duty on student contact days shall notify ESS to arrange a substitute through Frontline as soon as possible.

All other employees should notify their direct supervisor/principal the evening immediately preceding the day of absence, if possible.

Where an absence is due to an emergency, the employee shall notify their supervisor at the earliest possible moment. The notice of absence shall always be in advance unless conditions beyond the control of the employee make such advance notice impossible. The employee must complete the sick leave form within five (5) working days of his/her return to duty. The sick leave form will be used as documentation to certify that the facts are true and correct, and that the claim is valid and legal. A false claim for sick leave shall be deemed cause for termination.

## **SICK LEAVE BANK**

The Sick Leave Bank was established to provide employees emergency sick leave for illness or injury beyond that available under provisions governing sick leave. Participation is voluntary and open to any full-time employee who has worked a full year with the school system and has accrued a minimum of seven sick days. Enrollment in the sick leave bank will be accepted during September 1 through September 15 of each school year. Employees must wait thirty (30) days after initial enrollment before being eligible to withdraw days from the sick leave bank. Participating employees are required to contribute one (1) sick leave day during the enrollment period, and one (1) sick leave day each time the bank is depleted to 10 days.

The employee must make application to the Sick Leave Bank in order to receive benefits. All requests for withdrawal of days from the Sick Leave Bank shall be addressed to the Sick Leave Bank Committee on the official form provided for this purpose and forwarded to the Finance Office.

Any leave withdrawn must be used for the employee's personal illness, accident, or injury. A limit of 45 days is placed on any one (1), accident, illness, injury, or resulting complications. The number of hours shall be equal to the hours that make up an employee's workday. Approval for sick leave from the Bank will not be granted unless the employee's accumulated sick leave and other leave has been exhausted, and the request is for absences totaling ten (10) continuous days or more. A participating employee is not required to replace the days he/she uses, except as a regular contributing member. Any leave donated by a participating employee will not be returned when the employee chooses to no longer participate in the Sick Leave Bank. If the membership falls below 10 the bank will automatically be dissolved. The remaining leave days will be equally proportioned to the remaining members.

## **EMPLOYEE LEAVE SELL BACK OPTION**

The Employee Leave Sell Back Option was established to reward employees by being able to sell back accumulated leave time at specified intervals during the fiscal year, tied to an attendance incentive. Employees can sell back up to 5 days of sick leave time, twice per year, at 80 % of the daily rate of pay, at the time application for payment is made to the district.

For eligibility guidelines please refer to the Collective Bargaining Agreement, which can be found on the district website under staff resources.

## **USE OF SICK LEAVE BY FAMILY MEMBERS OR EMPLOYEES**

Any district employee may authorize the use of his/her sick leave as follows:

- A. As provided by an existing Sick Leave Bank provision.
- B. All accumulated days by his or her spouse, child, parent, or sibling who is also a district employee.
- C. All accumulated days less 5 days, by another District employee who meets the requirements.

Sick leave donated as provided in Section B and Section C cannot be used until all his or her sick leave has been depleted; excluding sick leave from any existing Sick Leave Bank, if the recipient participates in a Sick Leave Bank.

An employee who donates sick leave to another employee, other than a family member as specified in B, must maintain a minimum of five (5) sick days in their own district account.

Any recipient of donated sick leave, other than a family member as specified in B and C must provide medical documentation from the treating physician of the illness or injury for which the leave of absence is requested.

Any unused sick leave shall be returned to the donor.

Donated sick leave shall have no terminal pay value.

In the event of an employee's death, his or her sick leave may be transferred to his or family member.

### **ILLNESS-IN-LINE-OF-DUTY LEAVE**

Any full-time regular employee shall be entitled to illness or injury-in-line-of-duty leave for a period not to exceed ten (10) school days when he has to be absent from work because of a personal injury received in the discharge of his duties or because of illness from any contagious or infectious disease contracted in the performance of his / her duties. Illness-in-the-line-of-duty leave is intended to deal with the illnesses normally known as childhood diseases; such as, mumps, measles, and chicken pox. This leave does not include normal adult illnesses such as colds and influenza. This leave is non-cumulative.

### **ANNUAL LEAVE/ VACATION**

Annual Leave or vacation time off with pay is available to 12-month employees only. The amount of annual leave employees receive each year increases with the length of their employment. Annual leave accrues at the close of each month, in accordance with the maximum allowed, and may not exceed 60 days for a carryover at the end of the fiscal year.

To use annual leave, the employee must get advance approval from his/her administrative supervisor, and it shall be scheduled as to cause a minimum disruption of the school program. Upon termination, retirement, or participation in the Deferred Retirement Option Program, an employee may receive a lump sum payment for accrued annual leave. If service is terminated by death, this benefit shall be paid to the employee's beneficiary.

### **HOLIDAYS**

All ten (10) and eleven (11) months instructional personnel will be provided six (6) paid holidays as identified on the school calendar. 12 month personnel shall receive the same holidays, plus any additional holidays listed on the school calendar for the summer months. In addition, two (2) days each school year shall be provided for each teacher for religious holidays not otherwise provided in the school calendar. Such days shall be non-cumulative and shall be charged to sick leave provided the employee is a member of the religious faith for which the holiday was established.



## PROFESSIONAL LEAVE

Employees may be granted professional leave under the following classifications:

**a. Extended professional leave**

Extended professional leave is leave in excess of 30 days. Extended professional leave for professional study may be granted by the Board upon recommendation of the Superintendent, for a period not to exceed one year to any member of the instructional staff who possesses Professional Service or Continuing Contract status or any member of the Superintendent's administrative staff, who has served continuously and satisfactorily for a period of five years in the school system. Such leave shall be without pay. The request for extended professional leave shall be in writing and in the district office at least 30 days prior to the last day of the post school conference. Upon return to work the employee is required to submit documentation of credits earned while on leave. Failure to submit the required documentation will invalidate the leave of absence, and may result in termination of employment.

**b. Pre/Post school planning leave to complete summer coursework**

When professional or certificated personnel request professional leave for any part of the pre-school or post-school planning period, the Board may grant professional leave with pay for a period not to exceed five (5) days provided that the teacher is attending class or taking examinations in course work related to the area(s) for which the teacher is responsible and that satisfactory evidence of such attendance or examination has been signed by the dean of the college or his/her representative.

**c. Leave for professional meetings, conferences, or conventions**

Professional leave with pay may be granted to any member of the instructional, supervisory, or administrative staff who finds it necessary to attend a professional meeting, conference or convention, or who may be assigned by the Superintendent to be absent for professional reasons provided such request is made on the authorized form within the time frame specified by Board policy. A non-instructional employee may be granted professional leave to improve his/her job effectiveness, provided the Superintendent recommends such leave and approved by the Board.

**d. Sabbatical Leave**

For the encouragement of continued professional development and resulting improvement in the quality and level of experience of the teaching staff, sabbatical leaves for periods not less than (1) semester nor to exceed one (1) school year shall be granted by the Board.

Any certified teacher who has satisfactorily completed (7) consecutive years of teaching in the School District may apply for Sabbatical leave.

A sabbatical leave may be granted to permit a certified teacher to engage in study or research.

A certified teacher who requests a sabbatical leave for study will be expected to enroll as a full-time student carrying a full load (full-time student as determined by the institution attended) of academic work at an institution of higher education approved by the appropriate accrediting agency.

The applications for sabbatical leave, including a plan for study, must be submitted to the Superintendent or designee during the period from February 1<sup>st</sup> to February 28<sup>th</sup> preceding the school year for which the leave is granted. Applicants will be notified not later than March 20<sup>th</sup> as

to the disposition of their application. A teacher receiving permission to take a sabbatical leave shall inform the Superintendent in writing of his/her intention to either accept or decline such leave. Such notification shall be given not later than fifteen (15) days after the applicant has been notified of approval of his/her request for leave.

Not more than (1) percent of the certified teachers represented by the Union in this Agreement may be granted sabbatical leave during any one school year.

## **MILITARY LEAVE**

Employees are allowed to use military leave when they are required to serve in the armed forces, or because of membership in the reserves. Compensation allowed for military leave during peacetime shall not exceed 240 hours. When an employee enters voluntarily into any branch of the armed forces for temporary or an extended period of service, military leave shall be granted at the School Board's discretion. Compensation allowed for military leave for voluntary state duty shall be calculated based on the difference between military pay and School Board salary.

Eligible employees whose spouse, son, daughter or parent is on covered active duty or call to covered active duty status may use their 12-week leave entitlement to address certain qualifying exigencies. Qualifying exigencies may include attending certain military events, arranging for alternative childcare, addressing certain financial and legal arrangements, attending certain counseling sessions, and attending post-deployment reintegration briefings.

FMLA also includes a special leave entitlement that permits eligible employees to take up to 26 weeks of leave to care for a covered service member during a single 12-month period. A covered service member is:

(1) a current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation or therapy, is otherwise in outpatient status, or is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list, for a serious injury or illness\*; or (2) a veteran who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable at any time during the five-year period prior to the first date the eligible employee takes FMLA leave to care for the covered veteran, and who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy for a serious injury or illness.\*

**\*The FMLA definitions of "serious injury or illness" for current service members and veterans are distinct from the FMLA definition of "serious health condition".**

## **JURY DUTY AND WITNESS LEAVE**

Employees are encouraged to fulfill their civic responsibilities by serving jury and witness duty when required. The employees shall make application for temporary duty. When the litigation or court action is of a personal nature, a request for personal leave shall be made. The original or a copy of the subpoena/summons must be attached to the application for leave. The employee shall receive his/her regular salary. All applications for jury duty and witness leave must be endorsed by the principal or supervisor.

## FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE

The Family Medical Leave Act of 1993 entitles eligible/qualified employees up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave per year for one (1) of the following reasons:

- for incapacity due to pregnancy, prenatal medical care or child birth;
  - to care for the employee's child after birth, or placement for adoption or foster care;
  - to care for the employee's spouse, son, daughter or parent, who has a serious health condition;
- or
- for a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee's job.

To be eligible, an employee must have worked a full contract year (July through June) or must have worked for at least 1,250 hours during a 12-month period (July through June). An employee who wishes to take Family Medical Leave must provide the supervisor with at least thirty (30) calendar days advance notice before the leave begins; or due to an emergency, a change in circumstances, or lack of knowledge, the notice of intent to take Family Medical Leave must be given as soon as possible and practical.

Under Family Medical Leave, the Board's contribution for health insurance will continue to be paid, however, an employee on such leave will not earn retirement credit for any month(s) during which no salary is paid. If an employee desires, he/she may purchase retirement credit for the Family Medical Leave taken, provided the individual is in compliance with FRS laws. Eligible employees desiring such leave must complete the Family Medical Leave form and submit it for Board approval.

At the discretion of the Board, and in accordance with Board policy, employees are allowed to use their accumulated sick leave, and/or Family Medical Leave for the purpose of parenting. The request for parenting leave should be made in advance and shall not exceed one (1) year. A physician's statement is required with the application for leave.

## TEMPORARY DUTY ELSEWHERE

Any employee may be granted temporary duty when officially assigned short-term professional duties away from the regular job site. Employees granted temporary duty shall receive their regular pay and may be allowed expenses as provided by law and Board Policy. A request for temporary duty is subject to the approval of the employee's immediate supervisor. A leave form for temporary duty is required. When taking students on a field trip, a leave form and field trip request form are required to be completed **in advance**. TDE's need to be planned in advance and require approval of the employee's immediate supervisor and district staff.



## Appendices

## **Availability of Summary Health Information**

As an employee of SCSB, the health benefits available to you represent a significant component of your compensation package. They also provide important protection for you and your family in the case of illness or injury.

Your plan offers a series of health coverage options. Choosing a health coverage option is an important decision. To help you make an informed choice, a Summary of Benefits and Coverage (“SBC”) is available, which summarizes important information about any health coverage option in a standard format, to help you compare across options.

The SBC and SBC Glossary is available on LaunchPad. To view these documents, please log in to LaunchPad and add the Staff Resources app. If you have trouble, please contact the IT Department at (386) 647-4109 or email Help Desk via FirstClass.

Other important insurance information is also available in this location, including Marketplace Notice and COBRA Continuation Coverage Rights.

Paper copies of these documents are available, free of charge, by calling Teri Jones at (386) 647-4616 to request them.