



*empowering our children to succeed*

**BARTOW COUNTY  
SCHOOL SYSTEM**

***Employee Handbook***

**June 2020**



## BARTOW COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

### *Vision, Mission, Collective Commitments*

#### **OUR VISION**

The Bartow County School System will be a high functioning professional learning community that will graduate all students career and college ready, prepared to contribute to their community.

#### **OUR MISSION**

The Bartow County School System collaboratively engages all students and staff in relevant learning experiences and empowers them to succeed.

#### **OUR COLLECTIVE COMMITMENTS**

We are committed to providing a quality education to all students which is essential to the prosperity of our community.

We are committed to providing a safe, secure, and supportive learning environment.

We are committed to hiring, developing, and supporting high quality educators.

We are committed to academic excellence through the collaborative investment of faculty, staff, students, parents, and community.

We are glad you are a part of the Bartow County School System! Congratulations on being a part of a team that values its students, parents, staff, and community!

The Human Resources Department is committed to *quality service, fairness, and equal opportunity in all hiring practices, employee support, and community service.*

The information in this handbook is designed to provide clear and defined information to you, our team member. It contains information about protocols, policies, and rules that support the Bartow County School System. The information here is a resource for our employees; you are encouraged to familiarize yourself with system policies, school procedures, and other requirements specific to your position. Please feel free to contact your administration or the Human Resources Department at 770-606-5800 should you have any questions or need assistance.

We extend a special thank you for being a valued part of the team that is focused on excellence and empowering our students to succeed!

Sincerely,

*Macy M. Defnall*

Chief Human Resources Officer

# Table of Contents

	<i>Page</i>
<i>Bartow County School System Vision, Mission, and Commitments Statements</i> .....	<i>Inside Cover</i>
<i>Bartow County School System Beliefs and Goals</i> .....	<i>Inside Cover</i>
<i>Disclaimer</i> .....	<i>Introduction</i>
<b><u>Section 1 – Employee Workplace</u></b>	
<i>Accidents and Emergencies</i> .....	1
<i>Alcohol and Controlled Substance Testing</i> .....	1
<i>Americans with Disabilities Act</i> .....	1
<i>Attendance</i> .....	1
<i>Communicable Diseases</i> .....	1
<i>Complaints and Grievances</i> .....	1
<i>Dress Code</i> .....	2
<i>Employee Computer and Internet Use</i> .....	2
<i>Equal Employment Opportunity</i> .....	2
<i>Ethics</i> .....	3-6
<i>Identification Badges and Security</i> .....	7
<i>Non-School Employment</i> .....	7
<i>School Assignment for Children of Employees</i> .....	7
<i>Sexual Harassment</i> .....	7
<i>Solicitation by Staff Members</i> .....	7
<i>Solicitation on School Property</i> .....	8
<i>Staff Conflict of Interest</i> .....	8
<i>Telephone Use</i> .....	8
<i>Violence in the Workplace</i> .....	8
<i>Weapons</i> .....	8
<i>Workday and Work Week</i> .....	8
<b><u>Section 2 – Employment</u></b>	
<i>Annual Performance Evaluation</i> .....	9
<i>Assignment</i> .....	9
<i>At-will Employment</i> .....	9
<i>Criminal Background Checks</i> .....	9
<i>Changes in Personal Information</i> .....	9
<i>Certification Qualifications and Duties</i> .....	9
<i>Drug Free Workplace/Testing Policy</i> .....	9-11
<i>Dual Pay</i> .....	12
<i>Fair Dismissal - Grounds for termination or suspension</i> .....	12
.....	12
<i>Hiring</i> .....	12
<i>Job Abandonment</i> .....	12
<i>New Hire Teacher Orientation</i> .....	12
<i>Personnel Records</i> .....	12
<i>Personnel Transfer</i> .....	12
<i>Professional Development</i> .....	13
<i>Professional Publishing</i> .....	13
<i>Reduction in Force</i> .....	13
.....	13
<i>Re-Employment</i> .....	13
<i>Resignations</i> .....	13
<i>Staff Political Activities</i> .....	13

Substitute Teachers..... 13  
Tobacco Products ..... 13  
Work Calendars..... 13  
Workers' Compensation ..... 13

**Sections 3 - Compensation**

Contracts..... 14  
Deductions ..... 14  
Direct Deposit..... 14  
Extended Day/Year ..... 14  
Jury Duty Pay ..... 14  
Overtime ..... 14  
Pay Schedule ..... 14  
Salary ..... 14  
Suspension/Termination ..... 14  
Teaching Experience ..... 14  
Tutoring..... 14  
Unsatisfactory Annual Evaluations..... 14

**Section 4 – Benefits**

Benefits ..... 15  
Benefit Deductions ..... 15  
Benefit Eligibility ..... 15

**Section 5 – Employee Leave**

Administrative Personnel Professional Leave ..... 16  
Bereavement..... 16  
Dual Pay Involving Leave ..... 16  
Family and Medical Leave Act..... 16  
Holidays for Employees..... 16  
Jury and Witness Duty..... 16  
Contracted Employee Leave..... 16  
Medical Leave of Absence..... 17  
Military Leave ..... 17  
Personal Leave ..... 17  
School Closings..... 17  
.....17  
Short Term Leave of Absence for Family Illness ..... 17  
Sick Leave..... 17  
Student Teacher Leave..... 17  
Vacation Leave..... 18  
Voting..... 18  
Contact Information..... 19

## GENERAL INFORMATION

*This handbook is designed to answer frequently asked questions concerning policies, procedures, benefits, work rules, and other areas of concern to employees of the Bartow County School System. The information in this handbook does not create or amend any contract or condition of employment. The Bartow County Board of Education has the right to adopt new policies and procedures and to modify, amend, or eliminate any of its existing policies and procedures. Any changes will take priority over the information stated here even if the changes have not been reprinted or substituted into the handbook. Local schools may institute additional procedures relating to normal school operations, but those may not conflict with the Board Policy or items specified in this handbook.*

For additional information or if you have questions, please refer to the Board of Education Policy Manual, which can be found at the district's web site ([www.bartow.k12.ga.us](http://www.bartow.k12.ga.us) – **About BCSS – Board of Education – Eboard Policy**) or contact the Human Resources Department at: **Bartow County School System, 65 Gilreath Road NW, Cartersville, GA 30120; 770-606-5800.**

## **Section I – Employee Workplace**

### **Accidents and Emergencies**

All employees share in the responsibility of maintaining a safe working environment. Each employee should report safety concerns to their supervisor so corrective action may be taken. In the event of a workplace accident, employees must report the injury to their supervisor immediately and complete all necessary paperwork as required. A failure to report an accident could negatively impact necessary medical attention and injury claims.

### **Alcohol and Controlled Substance Testing**

The health and well-being of the students and employees depend on the unimpaired judgment, physical dexterity, reflex action, and unimpaired senses of sight and hearing of employees engaged in safety sensitive functions. The goal of this Board and the Bartow County School System is, therefore, to provide our employees and students with an environment which promotes health and safety. This Board will not tolerate unauthorized use, abuse, possession or sale of alcohol or controlled substances by its employees. Additionally, we will provide information on other assistance available to our employees to help them understand their responsibilities in achieving an alcohol and controlled substances free environment. Non-compliance with this policy or violation of the regulations may result in severe disciplinary action up to and including suspension or termination of employment. *Reference Policy: GAMA – Drug Free Workplace*

### **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**

The Bartow County Board of Education will not discriminate against any qualified employee because of a disability. Employees must be able to perform the essential duties and responsibilities of the job. Reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with a disability will be provided, as defined by ADA guidelines.

### **Attendance**

For an organization to achieve its desired goals, good attendance and punctuality are necessary. Therefore, regular and prompt attendance is expected and required of all employees. Employees who will be late or absent should notify their supervisor as soon as possible so a replacement, if applicable, may be obtained for their time out. Individuals schools and departments will specify reporting processes and guidelines applicable to the location. Employees are responsible for reporting their absence to the principal/assistant principal or his/her designee **BEFORE 7:00 AM** and certified staff must utilize the approved substitute teacher list to cover their duties during said absence.

Employees may not leave their work locations prior to the end of the workday without specific permission of their administrator or department head. This includes all field trips. Unapproved employee absences which are for three consecutive days or more may result in termination for job abandonment. Sign in/sign out procedures must be followed at each job site and according to administrative guidelines. Attendance records are subject to review at any time. A doctor's note may be requested by the supervisor at any time and for any reason for sick leave absences. *Reference Policy: GARH – Employee Leave and Absences*

### **Communicable Diseases**

The health and safety of employees in the Bartow County School System are tantamount to providing a quality education program. The Board of Education and School System recognizes the responsibility to protect the health of its employees as well as to uphold their individual rights. While regular work attendance is emphasized, the Board of Education encourages employees who have contagious diseases to remain out of work until such time the disease is no longer readily communicable. The decision to require the removal of an employee requires a written medical statement under several provisions to award applicable leave as well as continued employment if a disease is defined in this category and poses a health risk to the employee and those he/she for which contact may happen in the work setting. *Reference Policy: GANA – Infectious Diseases*

### **Complaints and Grievances**

The Board of Education sets forth policy for personnel to have a right to present and resolve complaints relating to certain matters affecting the employment relationship at the lowest organizational level possible. The Board of Education encourages all employees to resolve their complaints informally in a spirit of collegiality where possible. Policy and procedure are available where such efforts fail or, where for any other reason, the certificated employee desires to pursue this procedure. Contact the Human Resources Department if you have concerns regarding your grievance and its resolution at your organizational level. *Reference Policy: GAE – Complaints and Grievances*

**Dress Code**

All staff members are expected to dress in a professional manner. Items not considered professional dress include but are not limited to: Jeans, wind suits, leggings, tank tops, sleeveless garments under 2 inches in width at the shoulder, flip flops, purple, blue, green or other non-standard hair color, hats, or warmups. Jeans and/or hats may be worn only on permitted days as approved by administration. Sports shorts are not appropriate professional dress, except for physical education teachers in activity classes only. **Reference Administrative Regulation: GBRL-R – Employee Dress Code**

**Employee Computer and Internet Use**

The Bartow County School System provides computers, networks, and internet access to support the educational mission of the school system and to enhance the curriculum and learning opportunities for students and school system staff. Employees are to utilize the school system's computers, networks and internet services for school system related purposes and performance of job duties. Incidental personal use of school system computers is permitted if such use does not interfere with the employee's job duties and performance, with system operations, or other system users. "Incidental personal use..." is defined as use by an individual employee for occasional personal communications. Employees are reminded that such personal use must comply with this policy and all other applicable policies, procedures, and rules. **Reference Policy: IFBGC – Employee Computer and Internet Use**

**Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)**

No person shall be denied employment, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination in any program or activity, based on gender, race, religion, belief, national origin, age, disability, or ethnic group. Inquiries concerning the system implementation of the federal or state nondiscrimination laws as well as system policies and regulations and the rights provided hereunder may be addressed to the individuals listed below at:

**Reference Policy: GAAA- Equal Opportunity Employment**

**Bartow County School System  
P. O. Box 200007  
Cartersville, GA 30120  
770-606-5800**

Facilities Accessibility	Director of Maintenance and Construction
Title VI, VII, IX, ADEA, Employee Issues, ADA, Personnel Issues, Section 504	Chief Human Resources Officer
Title IX, Student Issues	Director of Administrative Services
Title VI, Student Issues	Executive Director of Exceptional Education
Student Program Accessibility, Section 504, ADA, Public law 101-476 (IDEA)	Executive Director of Exceptional Education



## **Ethics**

All employees must adhere to the high standards and expectations determined by the Bartow County Board of Education and those described in the Georgia Professional Standards Commission Code of Ethics. As public employees expected to uphold the public trust, employees should not use their positions or professional relationships for personal gain. Any misstatement or omission of required information may be reason for dismissal or non-employment. The Bartow County Board of Education recognizes teaching as a profession that is accompanied by certain rights, responsibilities and privileges. Therefore, the Bartow County Board of Education accepts and approves the Code of Ethics adopted by the Professional Standards Commission as a measure of conduct for all employees, certified, classified, and contracted services of the Bartow County School System. Further, the school system utilizes these ethical principles for all employees, certified or classified. **Reference Policy: GBU – Professional Personnel Ethics**

## **CODE OF ETHICS FOR EDUCATORS**

### **Introduction:**

The Code of Ethics for Educators defines the professional behavior of educators in Georgia and serves as a guide to ethical conduct. The Georgia Professional Standards Commission has adopted standards that represent the conduct generally accepted by the education profession. The code defines unethical conduct justifying disciplinary sanction and provides guidance for protecting the health, safety and general welfare of students and educators, and assuring the citizens of Georgia a degree of accountability within the education profession.

### **Definitions:**

- (a) “Breach of contract” occurs when an educator fails to honor a signed contract for employment with a school/school system by resigning in a manner that does not meet the guidelines established by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission.
- (b) “Certificate” refers to any teaching, service, or leadership certificate, license, or permit issued by authority of the Professional Standards Commission.
- (c) “Child endangerment” occurs when an educator disregards a substantial and/or unjustifiable risk of bodily harm to the student.
- (d) “Educator” is a teacher, school or school system administrator, or other education personnel who holds a certificate issued by the Professional Standards Commission and persons who have applied for but have not yet received a certificate. For the purposes of the Code of Ethics for Educators, “educator” also refers to paraprofessionals, aides, and substitute teachers.
- (e) “Student” is any individual enrolled in the state’s public or private schools from preschool through grade 12 or any individual under the age of 18. For the purposes of the Code of Ethics for Educators, the enrollment period for a graduating student ends on August 31 of the year of graduation.
- (f) “Complaint” is any written and signed statement from a local board, the state board, or one or more individual residents of this state filed with the Professional Standards Commission alleging that an educator has breached one or more of the standards in the Code of Ethics for Educators. A “complaint” will be deemed a request to investigate.
- (g) “Revocation” is the invalidation of any certificate held by the educator.
- (h) “Denial” is the refusal to grant initial certification to an applicant for a certificate.
- (i) “Suspension” is the temporary invalidation of any certificate for a period specified by the Professional Standards Commission.
- (j) “Reprimand” admonishes the certificate holder for his or her conduct. The reprimand cautions that further unethical conduct will lead to a more severe action.
- (k) “Warning” warns the certificate holder that his or her conduct is unethical. The warning cautions that further unethical conduct will lead to a more severe action.
- (l) “Monitoring” is the quarterly appraisal of the educator’s conduct by the Professional Standards Commission through contact with the educator and his or her employer. As a condition of monitoring, an educator may be required to submit a criminal background check (GCIC). The Commission specifies the length of the monitoring period.
- (m) “No Probable Cause” is a determination by the Professional Standards Commission that, after a preliminary investigation, either no further action need be taken, or no cause exists to recommend disciplinary action.

### **Standards:**

**Standard 1: Legal Compliance** - An educator shall abide by federal, state, and local laws and statutes. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to the commission or conviction of a felony or of any crime involving moral turpitude; of any other criminal offense involving the manufacture, distribution, trafficking, sale, or possession of a controlled substance or marijuana as provided for in Chapter 13 of Title 16; or of any other sexual offense as provided for in Code Section 16-6-1 through 16-6-17, 16-6-20, 16-6-22.2, or 16-12-100; or any other laws applicable to the profession. As used herein, conviction includes a finding or verdict of guilty, or a plea of nolo contendere, regardless of whether an appeal of the conviction has been sought; a situation where first offender treatment without adjudication of guilt pursuant to the charge was granted; and a situation where an adjudication of guilt or sentence was otherwise withheld or not entered on the charge or the charge was otherwise disposed of in a similar manner in any jurisdiction.

**Standard 2: Conduct with Students** - An educator shall always maintain a professional relationship with all students, both in and outside the classroom. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

- committing any act of child abuse, including physical and verbal abuse;
- committing any act of cruelty to children or any act of child endangerment;
- committing any sexual act with a student or soliciting such from a student;
- engaging in or permitting harassment of or misconduct toward a student that would violate a state or federal law;
- soliciting, encouraging, or consummating an inappropriate written, verbal, electronic, or physical relationship with a student;
- furnishing tobacco, alcohol, or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any student; or
- failing to prevent the use of alcohol or illegal or unauthorized drugs by students under the educator's supervision (including but not limited to at the educator's residence or any other private setting).

**Standard 3: Alcohol or Drugs** - An educator shall refrain from the use of alcohol or illegal or unauthorized drugs during professional practice. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

- being on school or Local Unit of Administration (LUA)/school district premises or at a school or a LUA/school district-related activity while under the influence of, possessing, using, or consuming illegal or unauthorized drugs; and
- being on school or LUA/school district premises or at a school-related activity involving students while under the influence of, possessing, or consuming alcohol. A school-related activity includes, but is not limited to, any activity sponsored by the school or school system (booster clubs, parent-teacher organizations, or any activity designed to enhance the school curriculum i.e. Foreign Language trips, etc.).

**Standard 4: Honesty** - An educator shall exemplify honesty and integrity in the course of professional practice. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to, falsifying, misrepresenting, or omitting:

- professional qualifications, criminal history, college or staff development credit and/or degrees, academic award, and employment history;
- information submitted to federal, state, local school districts and other governmental agencies;
- information regarding the evaluation of students and/or personnel;
- reasons for absences or leaves; 5. information submitted in the course of an official inquiry/investigation; and 6. information submitted in the course of professional practice.

**Standard 5: Public Funds and Property** - An educator entrusted with public funds and property shall honor that trust with a high level of honesty, accuracy, and responsibility. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

- misusing public or school-related funds;
- failing to account for funds collected from students or parents;
- submitting fraudulent requests or documentation for reimbursement of expenses or for pay (including fraudulent or purchased degrees, documents, or coursework);
- co-mingling public or school-related funds with personal funds or checking accounts; and
- using school or school district property without the approval of the local board of education/governing board or authorized designee.

**Standard 6: Remunerative Conduct** - An educator shall maintain integrity with students, colleagues, parents, patrons, or businesses when accepting gifts, gratuities, favors, and additional compensation. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

- soliciting students or parents of students, or school or LUA/school district personnel, to purchase equipment, supplies, or services from the educator or to participate in activities that financially benefit the educator unless approved by the local board of education/governing board or authorized designee;
- accepting gifts from vendors or potential vendors for personal use or gain where there may be the appearance of a conflict of interest; 3. tutoring students assigned to the educator for remuneration unless approved by the local board of education/governing board or authorized designee; and 4. coaching, instructing, promoting athletic camps, summer leagues, etc. that involves students in an educator's school system and from whom the educator receives remuneration unless approved by the local board of education/governing board or authorized designee. These types of activities must follow all rules and regulations of the Georgia High School Association.

**Standard 7: Confidential Information** - An educator shall comply with state and federal laws and state school board policies relating to the confidentiality of student and personnel records, standardized test material and other information. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

- sharing of confidential information concerning student academic and disciplinary records, health and medical information, family status and/or income, and assessment/testing results unless disclosure is required or permitted by law;
- sharing of confidential information restricted by state or federal law;
- violation of confidentiality agreements related to standardized testing including copying or teaching identified test items, publishing or distributing test items or answers, discussing test items, violating local school system or state directions for the use of tests or test items, etc.; and
- violation of other confidentiality agreements required by state or local policy.

**Standard 8: Required Reports** - An educator shall file reports of a breach of one or more of the standards in the Code of Ethics for Educators, child abuse (O.C.G.A. §19-7-5), or any other required report. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

- failure to report all requested information on documents required by the Commission when applying for or renewing any certificate with the Commission;
- failure to make a required report of a violation of one or more standards of the Code of Ethics for educators of which they have personal knowledge as soon as possible but no later than ninety (90) days from the date the educator became aware of an alleged breach unless the law or local procedures require reporting sooner; and
- failure to make a required report of any violation of state or federal law soon as possible but no later than ninety (90) days from the date the educator became aware of an alleged breach unless the law or local procedures require reporting sooner. These reports include but are not limited to: murder, voluntary manslaughter, aggravated assault, aggravated battery, kidnapping, any sexual offense, any sexual exploitation of a minor, any offense involving a controlled substance and any abuse of a child if an educator has reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused.

**Standard 9: Professional Conduct** - An educator shall demonstrate conduct that follows generally recognized professional standards and preserves the dignity and integrity of the education profession. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to a resignation that would equate to a breach of contract; any conduct that impairs and/or diminishes the certificate holder's ability to function professionally in his or her employment position; or behavior or conduct that is detrimental to the health, welfare, discipline, or morals of students.

**Standard 10: Testing** - An educator shall administer state-mandated assessments fairly and ethically. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to

- committing any act that breaches Test Security; and
- compromising the integrity of the assessment.

**Reporting:**

(a) Educators are required to report a breach of one or more of the Standards in the Code of Ethics for Educators as soon as possible but no later than ninety (90) days from the date the educator became aware of an alleged breach unless the law or local procedures require reporting sooner. Educators should be aware of legal requirements and local policies and procedures for reporting unethical conduct. Complaints filed with the Georgia Professional Standards Commission must be in writing and must be signed by the complainant (parent, educator, or other LUA/school district employee, etc.).

(b) The Commission notifies local and state officials of all disciplinary actions. In addition, suspensions and revocations are reported to national officials, including the NASDTEC Clearinghouse.

**\*\*Employees of the Bartow County School System are mandated to report actions as related to the Code of Ethics. Reports are made to the employee's immediate supervisor. This report should be documented and dated for reporting purposes. The Human Resources Department should be contacted by an administrator or department head immediately upon receipt of a report of possible unethical behavior, violations.**

**Disciplinary Action:**

(a) The Georgia Professional Standards Commission is authorized to suspend, revoke, or deny certificates, to issue a reprimand or warning, or to monitor the educator's conduct and performance after an investigation is held and notice and opportunity for a hearing are provided to the certificate holder. Any of the following grounds shall be considered cause for disciplinary action against the holder of a certificate:

- unethical conduct as outlined in The Code of Ethics for Educators, Standards 1-11 -10 (GaPSC Rule 505-6-.01);
- disciplinary action against a certificate in another state on grounds consistent with those specified in the Code of Ethics for Educators, Standards 1-11 -10;
- order from a court of competent jurisdiction or a request from the Department of Human Resources that the certificate should be suspended or the application for certification should be denied for non-payment of child support (O.C.G.A. §19-6-28.1 and §19-11-9.3); 4. notification from the Georgia Higher Education Assistance Corporation that the educator is in default and not in satisfactory repayment status on a student loan guaranteed by the Georgia Higher Education Assistance Corporation (O.C.G.A. §20-3-295);
- suspension or revocation of any professional license or certificate
- violation of any other laws and rules applicable to the profession (O.C.G.A. §16-13-111); and
- any other good and sufficient cause that renders an educator unfit for employment as an educator. (b) An individual whose certificate has been revoked, denied, or suspended may not serve as a volunteer or be employed as an educator, paraprofessional, aide, substitute teacher or, in any other position during the period of his or her revocation, suspension or denial for a violation of The Code of Ethics. The Superintendent and the educator designated by the Superintendent/Local Board of Education shall be responsible for assuring that an individual whose certificate has been revoked, denied, or suspended is not employed or serving in any capacity in their district. Both the Superintendent and the Superintendent's designee must hold GaPSC certification. Should the Superintendent's certificate be revoked, suspended, or denied, the Board of Education shall be responsible for assuring that the superintendent whose certificate has been revoked, suspended, or denied is not employed or serving in any capacity in their district.

Authority O.C.G.A. § 20-2-200; 20-2-981 through 20-2-984.5

### **Identification Badges and Security**

All employees of the Bartow County School System will have picture identification badges provided to them. These badges must always be worn while at work. Upon separation from the school system, the badge is returned to his/her principal or supervisor and forwarded to the Human Resources Department. The badge is school system property and should be maintained and collected as such.

### **Non-School Employment**

Educational personnel are expected to place their job assignments with the Bartow County Board of Education as their first and foremost obligation, and if outside employment is taking time and/or energy from their assignment, they shall be asked to choose one assignment or the other. The principal, director or designated head of an administrative unit shall have direct responsibility for evaluating the effects of outside employment. Please contact Human Resources with any questions. **Reference Policy: GBR, GCR – Personnel Working Conditions**

### **School Assignment for Children of Employees**

Employees of the Bartow County Board of Education may elect to enroll their children in the school at which they are employed. O.C.G.A. 20-2-293(b) states “a student shall be allowed to attend and be enrolled in the school in which a parent or guardian of such student is a full-time teacher, professional, or other employee (of the Bartow County School System) notwithstanding the fact that such school is not located in the local unit of administration in which such student resides.” A child of an employee, however, does not automatically receive enrollment preference to the feeder school. Employees remain required to complete the out of zone, out of district employee application annually. **Reference Policy: JBCCA – Student Assignment to Schools**

### **School Visitation by Employee Relatives**

Employee relatives and/or children should not be permitted to accompany employees to their work location at any time when students/school is in session and/or when teachers are on assignment for workdays, etc. Alternative arrangements should be made for children that do not involve them accompanying a parent or family member that is an employee to work. This includes school visits during the normal school day by students that may have early release, etc. Any deviation in this regard must be pre-approved by the Superintendent or his/her designee.

### **Sexual Harassment Policies**

All persons associated with the school system including, but not limited to, the Board, the administration, the staff and students are always expected to conduct themselves so as to provide an atmosphere free from sexual harassment. Any person who engages in sexual harassment while acting as a member of the school community will be in violation of school system policy. There will be zero tolerance of sexual harassment. All matters involving sexual harassment complaints shall remain confidential to the extent possible. Individuals who believe they are being sexually harassed should report it to the Human Resources Department immediately. Retaliation against a complainant for making a complaint is strictly forbidden. **Reference Policy: GAEB - Harassment**

### **Social Media/Networking**

Social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram, SnapChat, etc. are prevalent today and are often used to communicate with friends and acquaintances. Expectations as an employee of the school system are as follows:

1. Do not accept students as friends on any personal social media account.
2. Do not initiate friendships with students via any personal social media account.
3. Do not use content deemed to be defamatory, obscene, proprietary, or libelous.
4. Exercise caution with regards to exaggeration, colorful language, guesswork, obscenity, copyrighted materials, legal conclusions, and derogatory remarks or characterizations.
5. Imagine your students, their parents, and/or your administrator visiting your site and post only what you want the world to see.
6. Do not discuss students or coworkers or publicly criticize school policies or personnel.
7. Do not post images that include students.
8. No personal use of social media during the school day/work day.

Employees that violate expectations as listed here may be subject to disciplinary action by the school system. **\*\*Please stay informed and cautious when using all networking technologies. Social media accounts used for school groups or functions must be pre-approved by administration and monitored on a regular basis.**

### **Solicitation by Staff Members**

The soliciting of sales, the advertisement of products, or the endorsement of one product over another by school personnel in their relations with students is prohibited by the Bartow County Board of Education. No fund-raising organizations shall be permitted to solicit funds from students or teachers without prior approval from the Superintendent or his/her designee. **Reference Policy: GAI – Solicitations**

### **Solicitation on School Property**

No person, firm, corporation or business may solicit money from or sell, trade, or barter merchandise of any kind to students, employees, and school clubs or organizations without the approval of the Bartow County Board of Education. **Reference Policy: GAI - Solicitations**

### **Staff Conflict of Interest**

No employee shall give a written or oral endorsement to any company or representative for any periodical, book, or product, which may be offered for sale to the schools. **Reference Policy: GAG – Staff Conflict of Interest**

### **Telephone Use**

Personal use of school system phones and cell phones should be kept to a minimum during work hours. Employees will not use personal cell phones while instructing or supervising students. The use of cell phones while driving a school bus or other county vehicle is prohibited.

### **Violence in the Workplace**

The Bartow County Board of Education strongly believes that all employees should be treated with dignity and respect. Acts of violence will not be tolerated. Any instances of violence must be reported to the employee's supervisor, a department or building supervisor and/or Human Resources. The school system will fully investigate all complaints.

### **Weapons**

In keeping with Bartow County School System's priority of providing a safe and secure environment for teaching and learning, and pursuant to the Official Code of Georgia, O.C.G.A. 16-11-127.1, it is unlawful for any person to possess, carry or have within their control while within a school safety zone or within 1,000 feet of any school building, administrative or support facility, on school grounds, at school functions or activities, on school buses or other transportation furnished by the school/ school district any weapon or explosive compound. Provided however, the Official Code of Georgia, O.C.G.A. 16-11-135 provides that employees of the state, and its political subdivisions shall be permitted to park privately owned motor vehicles on the employer's premises with a firearm contained therein so long as the firearm is locked out of sight and provided that any applicable employee possesses a Georgia firearms license.

### **Workday and Work Week**

Classified employees may work a maximum of 40 hours per week. Employees should check with their immediate supervisor to determine their schedule. For certified personnel, the Bartow County Board of Education defines the minimum workday as eight (8) hours on campus and the minimum workweek as forty (40) hours. Extracurricular activities for which a supplement is paid must be over and beyond the minimum requirement for teachers within the school. **Reference Policy: GBR, GCR – Personnel Working Conditions**

## **SECTION II: Employment**

### **Annual Performance Evaluation**

All employees are evaluated annually by their immediate supervisor, using state and locally approved evaluations plans and procedures. Exceptions may be implemented where suspended or ordered by government or Department of Education actions or notice. **Reference Policies: GBI – Personnel Evaluation**

### **Assignment**

Employees are assigned to positions which meet the needs of the Bartow County School System, commensurate with the employee's training, years of experience and other appropriate factors. The Superintendent is authorized to reassign any employee to a location other than the one previously assigned. The reassignment and/or transfer of personnel should be for the betterment of the school system when such conditions as the following exist: **Reference Policy: GBE, GCE – Personnel Assignment**

- Increases or decreases in enrollment in various grades
- Opening of a new building or closing of an old one;
- Changes in organization of the school system;
- Addition or elimination of an educational service;
- Vacancies created by promotions, leaves of absences, death, retirement, etc.;
- Compliance with federal, state and/or local requirements.

### **At-Will Employment**

Georgia recognizes at-will employment; that is a classified employee is hired at-will and employment can be terminated at the will of either party, for any reason or for no reason at all. Certified staff issued a Bartow County Board of Education approved Contract of Employment do not have at-will employment but do fall under state law O.C.G.A. 20-2-940, *Grounds and procedures for terminating or suspending contract of employment*.

### **Criminal Background Check (Fingerprinting)**

All new employees must pass a criminal background check as required by Georgia State Law [20-2-211, subsection (e)(1)]. All employees must have an acceptable fingerprint record on file during their employment with the Bartow County School System. **Reference Policy: GAK (1) - Criminal Background Check**

### **Changes in Personal Information**

It is the responsibility of the employee to update any changes in their name, home address, telephone number and emergency contact information utilizing the Employee Self-Serve System (ESS). A name change requires the employee to upload a copy of their social security card and driver's license with the new name. Use this link to access the ESS System: <https://ess.bartow.k12.ga.us/EmployeeSelfService/Account/Login>.

### **Certification Qualifications and Duties**

All certified and classified employees holding positions in the Bartow County School System for which certification from the Georgia Professional Standards Commission is required must have a valid Georgia certificate for employment and must maintain certification during employment and/or the duration of the school system employment contract. Certifications are monitored and communicated within the Human Resources Department. You are responsible for confirming with the HR Department if you have a certificate upgrade. **Reference Policy: GBBA – Personnel Qualifications and Duties**

### **Drug Free Workplace/Drug Testing Policy**

#### **Pre-employment Drug Testing**

It is the policy of the Bartow County School System, consistent with its obligations under state and federal law to establish and maintain drug-free schools and workplaces, to require applicants for covered positions to consent to a pre-employment, post-offer, drug test. See page 17 for the *Consent for Pre-Employment Drug and Substance Screening Form*

Securing a drug-free environment is vital to the district's duty to comply with legal mandates and its obligation to promote the health, welfare, safety, and education of students and employees. Because district employees render services to students, serve as role models for students, act as enforcers of student drug policies, and constitute potential sources of illegal drugs for students, the district has a compelling interest in eliminating illegal drug use from its workplaces and in ensuring that its employees are drug-free. Substance abuse can be reasonably expected to produce impaired job performance, lost productivity, absenteeism, accidents, wasted materials, lowered morale, rising health costs and diminished interpersonal relationships skills.

This policy applies to all applicants who have received offers of employment for regular full-time or part-time positions, unless expressly excluded. This policy also applies to Board of Education members.

No offer of employment for a covered position shall be made to any applicant who has not agreed to submit to a drug test as part of the employment screening process. Any applicant who receives a conditional offer of employment and refuses to take a drug test shall be disqualified from further consideration for the position.

All applicants for covered positions shall receive written notice of this drug testing policy prior to receiving a conditional offer of employment. All drug test results from an applicant shall be maintained as a confidential record and shall be released only with the express, written consent of the applicant, unless otherwise required by law.

## I. COVERAGE

- a. **Applicants:** The term 'applicant' includes persons making application for employment by the system, as well as employees making voluntary application for posted vacancies, but *does not* include employees who are recalled from lay-off or transferred laterally or involuntarily by the district.
- b. **Covered positions:** Unless expressly excluded, all professional and non-professional, regular full-time and regular part-time positions, including summer-school teachers and paid non-teacher coach/advisor positions, are covered positions.
- c. **Excluded positions:** Student, temporary employee, outside consultant/contractor; competitive event referee, official, judge, and volunteer positions are excluded positions.
- d. **Timing:** A drug test shall be administered within 48 hours only after an offer of employment, (offer of employment is defined as recommendation approved by the Board), conditioned on the results of the test, has been made to an applicant for a covered position.

## II. NOTICE

- a. **Policy notifications:** All applicants for covered positions shall be notified that such positions are subject to the system's drug testing policy, that agreement to submit to a drug test is a condition of consideration for such a position, and that receipt of satisfactory drug test results is a condition of employment for such position.
- b. **Advertising and job descriptions:** Advertisements, job descriptions, and postings for all covered positions shall include notice as outlined in item II. A.
- c. **Application form:** The district's employment application form for all covered positions shall include notice as outlined in II. A. and shall require the applicant to agree to submit to a drug test.
- d. **Consent from:** Applicants for all covered positions not filled pursuant to the district employment application form shall be required to execute a consent form acknowledging the positions are subject to the district's drug testing policy and agreeing to submit to a drug test.
- e. **Alternative notice:** Failure of the district to provide notice of its drug testing policy by the methods outlined herein shall not preclude drug testing of applicants, if applicants for covered positions are provided prior written notice by alternative means.
- f. **Emergency hires:** Applicants filling covered positions pursuant to the system's emergency hiring procedures shall be required, before being permitted to begin work, to execute a consent form acknowledging that the positions are subject to the district's drug testing policy and agreeing to submit to a drug test. Emergency hires may be asked to begin work before drug test results are available but offers of employment for such positions shall remain conditioned on receipt of satisfactory test results.
- g. **Conditional offers:** All offers of employment to applicants for covered positions shall be conditioned on agreement to submit to a drug test and receipt of satisfactory test results. Any applicant for a covered position who does not agree to submit to a drug test shall be disqualified from further consideration for the position.

## III. DRUG TESTING PROCEDURES

- a. **Schedule for test:** The system's HR Department shall schedule drug tests and shall direct applicants who have received a conditional offer of employment for a covered position to report to the designated clinic, or, with the consent of the department, to an alternate facility for production of a urine, breath or saliva. Applicants shall provide the specimen requested by the clinic within 72 hours after such direction.
- b. **Cooperation required:** Applicants who receive a conditional offer of employment for a covered position and refuse to cooperate in drug testing shall be disqualified from further consideration for the position. Failure to appear when scheduled for production of a urine, breath or saliva or substituting or tampering with a urine, breath or saliva, shall be deemed a refusal to cooperate in drug testing.
- c. **Medication:** Applicants directed to provide a urine, breath, saliva or blood specimen may voluntarily supply information concerning their use of medication or other substances that might affect the drug test results. Applicants are not required to provide such information before the results of the testing, though such voluntarily-



offered information will be reviewed. Such applicant information and/or documentation by a physician of an applicant's lawful possession or use of any drug may be submitted to and will be reviewed exclusively by the system's human resources department. Inappropriate use of prescription drugs is considered a violation of this policy. An applicant who is taking prescription medication in accordance with a valid prescription is not in violation of this policy.

- d. **Urinalysis:** Urine, breath or saliva will be analyzed by the designated clinic for the following drugs: amphetamine, methamphetamine, morphine, codeine, cocaine, marijuana, phencyclidine, and such other controlled substance as regulated by local, state, or federal law and as determined by the Board of Education.
- e. **Test facilities:** The system's collection and laboratory facilities shall adhere to the Mandatory Guidelines for Federal Workplace Drug Testing Programs with respect to professionally trained collection personnel, quality assurance for testing, chain of custody standards, and confidentiality requirements.

#### IV. TEST RESULTS and REPORTING

- a. **Reporting test results:** The laboratory shall report test results to the system's Human Resources Department. Only specimens that test positive on an initial and confirmatory test shall be reported as positive for a specific drug.
- b. **Medical advisor verification:** The Superintendent or his/her designee shall review all positive test results and shall consider any medical information/documentation provided by an applicant to justify positive test results, but applicants are not entitled to a hearing with the human resources department. If positive test results are obtained, the applicant will have the opportunity to justify any positive result. Evidence to justify positive test results may include, but is not limited to, a valid prescription or a physician's certification of the existence of a valid prescription. Hemp product consumption is not an acceptable medical explanation for a positive test for marijuana. If there is no justification for positive results, such results shall be reported to the superintendent or his designee as certified positive results.
- c. **Satisfactory test results:** All negative test results and those positive tests results determined to be justified by the system's Human Resources Department shall be reported to the Bartow County School System as satisfactory test results.
- d. **Consequences:** An applicant for a covered position who fails to receive satisfactory test results shall be disqualified from further consideration for the position and shall not be permitted to apply for another covered position for a period of one year. If the applicant has begun work pursuant to a conditional offer of employment under the system's emergency hiring procedures, such failure shall constitute sufficient justification, up to and including "just cause," for rescission of the conditional offer of employment, and the applicant's work shall be terminated immediately.

Applicants for covered positions who fail to receive satisfactory test results shall be subject to the following consequences:

1. Initial application for employment by the Bartow County School System. The applicant shall be disqualified from further consideration for the position and shall not be permitted to apply for another covered position for a period of one year. If the applicant has begun work pursuant to a conditional offer of employment under the district's emergency hiring procedures, such failure shall constitute sufficient justification, up to and including "just cause," for rescission of the conditional offer, and the applicant's work shall be terminated immediately.
2. Voluntary application for posted vacancy: The applicant shall be disqualified from further consideration for the position, reassigned to his/her prior position, and may be subject to further discipline. If the applicant has begun work pursuant to a conditional offer of employment under the district's emergency hiring procedures, such failure shall constitute sufficient justification, up to and including "just cause," for rescission of the conditional offer, and the applicant's work shall be terminated immediately, and the applicant shall be reassigned to his/her prior position and may be subject to further discipline.

#### V. CONFIDENTIALITY

All drug test results and medical information/documentation provided by applicants for covered position pursuant to the district's drug testing policy shall be maintained as confidential medical records consistent with applicable state and federal law. **Reference Policy: GAMA**

### **Dual Pay**

Employees of the Bartow County School System shall be prohibited from receiving dual pay for services rendered during the regular working hours for the Bartow County School System Board of Education. The employee must forfeit the regular pay or the pay from the other agency, organization or individual. Employees may receive payment for services rendered while on leave or for services performed other than during the regular working day for the Bartow County Board of Education. **Reference Policies: GBR, GCR – Personnel Working Conditions**

### **Fair Dismissal - Grounds for Termination or Suspension**

According to the State of Georgia's Fair Dismissal Act [Act 20-2-940], certified employees can be terminated or suspended for the following reasons:

- Incompetency;
- Insubordination;
- Willful neglect of duties;
- Immorality;
- Inciting, encouraging, or counseling students to violate any valid state law, municipal ordinance, or policy or rule of the Bartow County Board of Education;
- To reduce staff due to loss of students or cancellation of programs;
- Failure to secure and maintain necessary educational training; or
- Any other good and sufficient cause.

The Bartow County School System Superintendent or his/her designee can relieve any employee from duty for a period not to exceed ten days if the employee's presence could cause serious harm or disrupt students, the school or other employees. **Reference Policies: GCK, GBK, GBL – Personnel Suspension, Personnel Tenure**

### **Hiring**

All school personnel of the Bartow County School System shall be employed by the Board of Education on the recommendation of the Superintendent. All employees must meet minimum qualifications as set forth by provisions of law or job descriptions established by the Bartow County Board of Education. The Superintendent shall present a list of personnel selections to the Board for approval. Human Resources will finalize the offer of employment after the pre-employment screening process has been completed. Some post-employment screening may be necessary. There shall be no discrimination based on age, disability, gender, race, religion, or national origin in the hiring process. **Reference Policies: GBD, GCD – Personnel Hiring**

### **Job Abandonment**

Three (3) or more consecutive absences for reasons not approved by your supervisor or the Superintendent may be considered job abandonment or a voluntary resignation. Employees must notify the supervisor if an absence exceeds three (3) days. Without proper notice to a supervisor regarding absences, the Human Resources Department will issue a certified letter of job abandonment seeking a response immediately. Notice will precede actions by the school system to pursue termination procedures.

### **New Hire Teacher Orientation and New Teacher Mentor Program**

Teachers newly hired to the Bartow County School System will be required to attend a New Teacher Orientation as communicated to all prior to pre-planning for all employees. Teachers/Certified Staff new to the profession, new to public education, and/or new to Georgia will participate in the school system Bartow County School System New Teacher Mentor Program during year one of employment. New teachers may opt to remain in the Mentor Program for up to three (3) years from initial date of employment.

### **Personnel Records**

The official personnel files for all employees reside with the Human Resources Department. Employee requests to review personnel records must be made in writing to the Chief Human Resources Officer. **Reference Policy: GAK; Administrative Regulation: GAK-R – Personnel Records**

### **Personnel Transfer**

Requests to transfer between buildings or within district departments must be submitted within specified guidelines pursuant to intent forms issued to employees at the beginning of the reemployment/employment process. The request must be to an open position and with the approval of the principal and/or department heads involved and the Superintendent. Involuntary transfers may be made at the discretion of the superintendent. **Reference Policy: GBM**

### **Professional Development and Professional Learning Communities**

The Bartow County Board of Education establishes a policy that requires the preparation and implementation of a comprehensive plan for professional learning. The school system implements a plan for collaborative professional learning communities in which all certified employees participate. **Reference Policy: GAD – Professional Learning Opportunities**

### **Professional Publishing**

Employees who prepare material on their own time without the use of school facilities or equipment are not required to submit such material for review prior to publication. Employees who desire to copyright or patent, and to market material prepared totally or partially on school time, shall submit a copy of such material to the Superintendent or his/her designee for review and approval consideration. **Reference Policy: GBT – Professional Publishing**

### **Re-Employment**

Contracts for certified personnel are automatically considered for renewal each year. Individuals whose contracts will not be renewed are notified in writing on/or before a date as determined by the Superintendent and/or his/her designee. Contract renewal and nonrenewal are communicated in accordance with state law. **Reference Policy: GBA, GBP – Personnel Compensation Guides and Contracts; Personnel Re-Employment**

### **Reduction in Force**

A reduction in force may be caused by several factors, including reorganization, the elimination of or a change in programs, or loss of funding. The Bartow County School System will rely on a process that maintains effectiveness and quality of the educational programs and services and that minimizes the number of employees impacted. **Reference Policy: GBKA**

### **Resignations**

Certified employees who want to terminate their contracts for the new contract year must submit written notification to Administration before June 15<sup>th</sup> of the current school year. Certified employees who want to resign during the contract period because of emergency situations should submit a statement of resignation to their immediate supervisor, and/or the Human Resources Department as soon as possible. The contract cannot be terminated by the employee without the approval of the Bartow County Board of Education. A release from an existing contract will be issued following Board approval. Classified employees are asked to submit a letter of resignation at least two weeks prior to leaving the Bartow County School System. **Reference Policy: CGN, GBO – Personnel Resignation**

### **Staff Political Activities**

The Board of Education recognizes that its employees have the same civic responsibilities and privileges as any other citizen including the privilege of campaigning for and holding public office and actively supporting candidates and causes in the political arena. An employee's political activities must not interfere or conflict with an employee's job or with the best interest of the school system. The Board has established specific procedures for employees, Board members, and candidates for the Board of Education. **Reference Policy: GAHB – Staff Political Activities**

### **Substitute Teachers**

The Human Resources Department maintains an up-to-date list of approved substitutes. All substitutes are required to complete specified training and undergo a criminal background check prior to placement on the approved list. Please contact the Human Resources Department for information. An individual may substitute only once approved and placed on the school system eligibility list. A person not listed is not to be contacted or allowed to substitute at any time. **Reference Policy: GBRJ**

### **Tobacco Products**

The Bartow County School System prohibits the use of all tobacco products by all persons in any building, bus, vehicle, or any property owned or used by the Bartow County Board of Education. This prohibition includes but is not limited to the use of vaping, oil, or other nicotine related products and their devices. **Reference Policy: GAN – Employee Tobacco Use**

### **Workers' Compensation**

The Human Resources Department oversees the Workers' Compensation Program for the Bartow County School System. If a work-related injury occurs, employees must report the accident to their supervisor as soon as it happens, no matter how insignificant the accident may appear. A completed **Employee Accident Form/First Report of Injury** should be sent to Human Resources immediately. A traditional **Panel of Physicians** is posted in the common areas, e.g., break rooms, meeting areas for employees, main office, etc. for the convenience of the employees. Only those physicians or vendors listed on the panel will provide medical evaluations, treatment, and referrals as necessary.

*The Bartow County School System works proactively to help an injured employee stay or return to productive and safe work as soon as physically possible. The Human Resources Department will work with supervisors, treating physicians, and the employee to identify duties that accommodate any specific restrictions as a result of the injury.*

## **Section 3: Compensation**

### **Contracts**

The Bartow County Board of Education offers new contracts for the coming year to all certified employees on the payroll at the beginning of the current year, except those who have resigned, been terminated, or notified in writing that their contract will not be renewed. Any change to this timeline will be overruled dependent upon legislative action pursuant to fiscal limitations placed on local school systems due to budget. *Reference Policies: CGA, GBA, GCA, and GDA – Compensation Guides and Contracts*

### **Deductions**

Payroll deductions include, but are not limited to, federal and state taxes required by law; retirement systems contributions; and medical, dental and other deductions authorized by the employee.

### **Direct Deposit**

All full-time employees are encouraged to participate in direct deposit for payroll checks.

### **Employee Work Experience**

To receive experience credit, employees are required to provide Experience Verification forms. The forms will be reviewed by Human Resources to determine salary experience credit. Forms are issued by the Human Resources Department at the time of hire and employee intake. It is the responsibility of the employee to get verification forms to the Human Resources Department within specified timelines.

### **Extended Day/Year**

Supplemental pay may be provided to certified employees who work an extended school day or school year to meet program responsibilities or student needs. School administrators must approve submit an Extended Day/Year pay request to the District Offices as needed for student and school needs. Such pay cannot be based on tasks that would normally be performed during the regular workday.

### **Jury Duty Pay**

Employees who are selected to serve on juries while they are employed by the school system will receive from the Board of Education their daily rate of pay and retain their jury duty pay as compensation for a public service.

### **Overtime**

Unless otherwise directed, all classified employees who are on a full-time basis are expected to work a maximum of forty (40) hours per week. It is necessary to receive permission from the Superintendent and/or his/her designee before an employee shall be allowed to work overtime. If it is necessary for an employee to work more than forty (40) hours in any one week, and assuming prior approval has been given by the Superintendent or designee, the employee shall be paid at the rate of time and one-half for all hours worked in excess of forty (40) hours.

### **Pay Schedule**

All BCSS employees are paid monthly, on the last working day of the month or as designated by the Superintendent. This pay schedule is applicable to substitute employees as well.

### **Salary**

Salaries for certified employees are determined by the Georgia teaching certificate they hold and the years of verified experience. Classified employees are paid based on years of verified direct full-time experience related to their current classification and the job duties for which the employee will fulfill. *Reference Policy: GBA, GCA – Compensation Guides and Contracts*

### **Tutoring**

The acceptance of gifts or money by personnel from students under their supervision during a school year for coaching or tutoring is prohibited by the Bartow County Board of Education. *See Code of Ethics, Standard 6. Reference Policy: GBR, GCR – Personnel Working Conditions*

### **Unsatisfactory Annual Evaluation**

The Bartow County School System shall withhold a step increase for any employee who receives an unsatisfactory annual evaluation. Unsatisfactory performance ratings include annual summative ratings of “Ineffective” (TKES/LKES Level 1), “Needs Development” (TKES/LKES Level 2), or the equivalent. The employee will remain on his/her assigned step for an additional year and the school system Pay Card will reflect this designation as issued to employees annually.

## **Section 4: Benefits**

### **Benefits**

Benefits comprise a significant portion of the school system's total compensation package and are designed to meet the most important needs of Bartow County School System employees. Benefits available are:

#### ***Dental Insurance:***

Dental insurance is available for eligible employees, spouses, and dependent children. The dental insurance plan provides benefits for preventive, basic, major, and orthodontic procedures. The employee pays 100% for dental coverage.

#### ***Flexible Spending Account:***

Medical and/or dependent care accounts are offered and administered by a school system approved vendor.

#### ***Health Insurance:***

The school system's health insurance is administered by the State of Georgia Department of Community Health. Employees may choose from the program that best meets his/her needs. The school system pays an employer's share of each employee's health insurance premium. Eligibility for insurance is dependent upon employment status.

#### ***Life Insurance:***

Eligible employees receive \$15,000 of life insurance at no cost. Additionally, eligible employees may choose to participate in a variety of life insurance plans including Basic, Voluntary, and Whole Life insurance.

#### ***Short Term and Long-Term Disability:***

Short-Term Disability (STD) and Long-Term Disability (LTD) insurance is available for eligible employees who become disabled. The employee pays 100% of the premiums.

#### ***Social Security and Medicare Insurance:***

The school system participates in the Social Security and Medicare insurance.

#### ***Tax Sheltered Annuities:***

Current Internal Revenue Service (IRS) regulations allow employees to participate in tax deferred investments under Sections 403(b) and 457(b) and ROTH Plans. All employees are eligible to participate.

#### ***Teacher Retirement Service (TRS):***

Regular employees who work at least half-time in their position are required to participate in a retirement service. A portion of your salary will be contributed to the plan each pay day. TRS covered positions include: Administrators, Teachers, Paraprofessionals, Nurses, Clerical Staff and School Resource Officers. Guidelines and regulations are available at: [www.trsga.com](http://www.trsga.com).

#### ***Public School Employees Retirement System (PSERS):***

All non-temporary employees not covered under TRS (above) will participate in PSERS. Refer to the guidelines and regulations at [www.trsga.com](http://www.trsga.com).

#### ***Vision Insurance:***

Vision insurance is available for eligible employees, spouses, and dependent children. The employee pays 100% of the vision insurance.

### **Benefit Eligibility**

Benefit coverage becomes effective within 31 days of your hire date. You must work 30 hours or more per week to be eligible. Please contact the Payroll/Benefits Department for specific information about availability, coverage periods, etc. Annually during Open Enrollment, important information is shared to all employees regarding coverages, terms, and conditions.

## **Section 5: Employee Leave**

### ***Reference Policy: GARH***

#### **Administrative Personnel Professional Leave**

Professional leave may be granted by the Superintendent or designee upon request of the principal or other administrative personnel.  
**Reference Policy: GARH – Employee Leave and Absences**

#### **Bereavement Leave**

In the event of a death in the immediate family of an employee, a leave of absence will be granted to a maximum number of five days in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Board and such leave will be charged against sick leave.

#### **Dual Pay Involving Leave**

Employees of the Bartow County School System are not eligible to receive dual compensation from earned leave and workman's compensation insurance during leaves for illness/injury. The employee must make a choice as to which of these two benefits the employee will receive.

#### **Family and Medical Leave Act**

Eligible employees of the Bartow County Board of Education are entitled to take unpaid leave for a period of up to 12 workweeks in any 12-month period for certain family and medical reasons which are defined in the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 and the National Defense Authorization Act of 2008.

Eligible employees of the Bartow County Board of Education are entitled to take unpaid leave for a period of up to 26 workweeks in any 12-month period for care of a service member who becomes seriously ill or is seriously injured while on active duty. The service member must be a spouse, son, daughter, or next of kin.

An employee must provide the school system at least a 30-day advance notice before FMLA leave is to begin if the need for the leave is foreseeable based on an expected birth, placement for adoption or foster care, planned medical treatment for a serious health condition of the employee or of a family member or an exigency resulting from a call to active duty or the need to take leave due to the serious injury or illness of a covered service member while on active duty. If a 30-day notice is not possible, then the employee should give verbal notice to the school system on the same business day or the next day, absent emergency situations, when the need for leave becomes known to the employee. As early as practical, the employee must provide written notice setting forth the reasons for the requested leave, the anticipated start of the leave, and the anticipated duration of the leave.

Following an absence for a serious health condition, an employee must provide the school system with a fitness-for-duty report completed by an appropriate health care provider prior to being restored to duty.

The Board will maintain an employee's medical insurance for the duration of the FMLA leave. If an employee paid all or part of the premium payments prior to leave, then the employee must continue to pay the same premium payments during the leave period.

Upon return from FMLA leave, an employee will be restored to either the former position held by the employee or to an equivalent position with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms. The specific work location of an employee returning from FMLA leave will be at the discretion of the Superintendent or Superintendent's designee. **Reference Policy: GBRIG – Federal Family and Medical Leave Act**

#### **Holidays for Employees**

Refer to the appropriate work schedule for the scheduled days off. Work schedules are found on the system website at [www.bartow.k12.ga.us](http://www.bartow.k12.ga.us) under the Human Resources Department link.

#### **Jury and Witness Duty**

All employees will be granted court leave without a loss of days or salary under the following conditions: Employees who are required by court order or subpoena to appear in court and whose appearance is not for financial or personal interest shall be granted court leave. Employees who are selected to serve on juries while they are employed by the Board will receive from the Board of Education their daily rate of pay and retain their jury duty pay as public service compensation.

#### **Contracted Employee Leave**

Individuals who are employed to work 49% or less will not be eligible to accrue sick, personal and/or vacation leave. Contracted services personnel do not earn sick, personal, and/or vacation leave.

### **Medical (Catastrophic) Leave of Absence**

Employees of the Bartow County Board of Education may be granted a health leave of absence without pay for a period of one calendar year. The same position cannot be guaranteed. If a position is not available upon the employee's written request to return to work, a position will not be created, and the employee will remain on leave without pay status until a position becomes available (within the one year time period) or/when the one year time period has expired. An employee is eligible for compensation only if/when placed in a position.

### **Military Leave**

Employees who are members of the National Guard or Reserves can take up to 18 days of paid leave per calendar year for required military service. In the event of a declared state or national emergency, additional paid leave will be granted as determined by law. The employee must provide written documentation of the duty and dates of service.

### **Personal Leave**

A maximum of three (3) days personal leave shall be available to all employees who earn leave. Such leave may be used for personal or professional reasons, provided prior approval of the absence is given by the Superintendent or an authorized representative. Such leave shall be deducted from the employee's accumulated sick leave. Reasons for which personal leave may be granted include, but are not limited to, any activity in which the employee is involved in legal matters such as court cases, loan closing matters, and to attend weddings or funerals of persons when such attendance would not be authorized under the Board's sick leave policy.

### **School Closings**

When school closing occurs before students arrive, information about school closing will be sent to local radio and television stations at the earliest possible time. The central office will be open unless specifically announced otherwise. All annual employees should report to work unless they consider their routes unsafe or unless directed otherwise by their immediate supervisor. When school closing occurs while school is in session, announcements will be made by means of the emergency communication system within the school system. All employees must remain at their assigned duties until the safe dismissal of students is accomplished. Once students have been dismissed, the central office will announce whether to continue or discontinue the workday for local school employees. **Reference Policy: AFC – Emergency Closings**

### **Short Term Leave of Absence for Family Illness**

The Bartow County Board of Education defines family illnesses as an illness or injury of any member of the employee's immediate family. Immediate family is to include spouse, children, mother, father, brother, sister, grandmother, grandfather, mother-in-law, father-in-law, or any relative living in the household of the employee. Absences under this policy are limited to five (5) days per occurrence unless approved by the Superintendent in advance.

### **Sick Leave**

Each eligible employee in the Bartow County School System shall be entitled to sick leave with full pay computed based on one and one-fourth working days for each completed school month of service, such leave to be cumulative up to but not to exceed 90 days. A teacher may utilize sick leave upon the approval of the principal of the school in which such teacher is employed for absence due to personal illness or injury; illness or death in the teacher's immediate family; or necessitated by exposure to contagious disease in which the health of workers would be endangered by attendance on duty. Teachers shall be charged with sick leave for absence only on days on which they would otherwise work, and no charge against sick leave shall be made for absence on Sundays, holidays, or other non-workdays. A Report of Absence for explaining and confirming reasons for sick leave shall be filed with the principal for each absence immediately by the teacher upon return to work after taking sick leave. The Bartow County School System reserves the right at any time to require from an employee proof of the reason for their absence. The School System reserves the right to designate a health care provider, at the system's expense, to confirm the reason for an absence. A teacher who has used all their sick leave shall have the salary-reduced 1/190 of the annual salary for each additional day of absence. Abuse of this policy shall be considered grounds for dismissal. Leave shall not be taken preceding or following a school holiday, preplanning, post-planning and in-service or vacation period. A teacher's Report of Absence for explaining and confirming reasons for sick leave shall be filed with the principal for each absence immediately by the teacher upon return to work after taking sick leave.

### **Student Teacher Leave (Request)**

Leave may be requested under specified conditions of employment. See **Student Teaching (ST) Leave Request** available at [www.bartow.k12.ga.us](http://www.bartow.k12.ga.us) under the Human Resources link. STL is subject to Board of Education approval.

**Vacation Leave**

Twelve-month employees are eligible for annual vacation earned at a rate of .833 days for each full calendar month employed up to a maximum of ten (10) days per year. This is accrued monthly and cannot be taken prior to accumulation. Any unused vacation may be used in subsequent year(s). A maximum accumulation of thirty (30) vacation days can be carried forward. At the time of separation from the Bartow County School System, an individual may be compensated for up to 30 unused vacation days. Compensation shall be based upon the daily rate of pay of the individual. Approval of vacation shall be made through formal request to the immediate supervisor and/or Superintendent. This request should be submitted two weeks prior to the first day of vacation.

**Voting**

There is no federal law which requires employers to give employees paid time off to vote. Under Georgia law, if the polls are not open for at least two hours before or after the normal work period/shift, employees are entitled to take up to two hours off to vote in any local, state, or federal election or primary. The law does not require the employers to pay the employees for this time.



## **Contact Information**

### **Office**

770-606-5800

### **Human Resources Fax**

770-606-5859

### **Bartow County School System Web Site**

[www.bartow.k12.ga.us](http://www.bartow.k12.ga.us)

#### **Human Resources Department**

- Americans with Disability Act
- Age Discrimination in Employment Act
- Address/Name Change – See link at [www.bartow.k12.ga.us](http://www.bartow.k12.ga.us) (Human Resources)
- Background Checks and Fingerprinting
- Certification, Re-certification
- Contracts
- EEOC
- Employment: Vacancies, Applications, Intake
- Fair Labor Standards Act
- Family Medical Leave Act
- Grievances, Complaints: Employee, Policy
- Loan Forgiveness: Current/Former Employees – Title
- Recruitment, Job Fairs
- Salary Computation and Employment Verifications
- Substitutes: Certified and Classified
- Title VI, VII, IX (Employee) – Nondiscrimination in Employment Practices
- 504 Plans (for employees)
- Workers' Compensation: Care and Claims

#### **Payroll/Benefits Department**

- Benefits: Health and Supplemental Insurance/Benefits Coverage
- Direct Deposit
- Leave Forms
- Payroll Checks/Issuance
- W-2s
- Retirement (TRS, PSERS)
- Salary Deductions: Local, State, and Federal

