



Employee Handbook 2021-2022

“Committed to Excellence and Success in All We Do!”

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Policies and Guidelines: Workplace/On-the-Job

Accidents and Emergencies

All employees are responsible for maintaining a safe working environment and should report safety concerns to their supervisor so that corrective action can be taken. In the event of an accident sustained in the performance of job duties, employees should report the injury to their supervisor as soon as possible and the appropriate forms detailing the injury and accident must be completed in a prompt manner. If medical treatment is required, the employee may select a physician from the approved Panel of Physicians. If an employee must be out of work on a work-related injury, the employee must maintain contact with his/her supervisor on a weekly basis.

Accreditation

All schools in the Bryan County School District are accredited by AdvancED.

Alcohol and Controlled Substances Testing

The health and well-being of students and employees depends on the judgment, physical dexterity, reflex actions and unimpaired hearing and sight of employees engaged in safety-sensitive functions. The Bryan County Board of Education will not tolerate and specifically prohibits the unauthorized use, abuse, possession or sale of alcohol or controlled substances, as well as a measurable presence of alcohol in any employee. Employees engaged in safety-sensitive functions participate in an alcohol and controlled substance testing program that complies with all applicable state and federal regulations.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The Bryan County School District will not discriminate against any qualified employee with a disability. Employees must be able to perform the essential functions of the job with or without reasonable accommodation. Reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with a disability will be provided, following the ADA guidelines.

Attendance

Attendance is a part of performance, and employees are required to be at work and on time. Employees who will be late to work or absent should personally notify their supervisor in advance or as quickly as possible, so that their responsibilities can be covered appropriately. Absences for reasons that are not approved by the Bryan County Board of Education may be considered job abandonment. Employee absences without approval for three (3) or more days may be considered voluntary resignations.

Confidential Nature of Work

Student and employee files, records, documentation, and other information are private and confidential. Disclosure of such information is limited by applicable federal and state laws.

Conflict of Interest/Dual Pay

All employees are expected to adhere to the highest ethical standards of conduct at all times. While the Bryan County School District recognizes the right of employees to engage in private activities outside their employment with the school district, business dealings that create a conflict with the interests of the Bryan County School District are not acceptable. Employees should disclose any potential conflicts of interest, including those where the employee's influence could result in personal gain for the employee or an immediate family member.

Employees who are paid for outside work during regular work hours must forfeit one of the salaries. Employees can be paid for outside work while on vacation leave, jury duty, or personal days, or for services performed outside the regular workday.

Dress Code

Employees should maintain an appropriate level of personal hygiene and dress professionally for school or workplace situations and level of formality (jeans may be worn for special occasions as approved by the school principal). Professional attire should be worn at all times when meeting with parents. Body piercings and visible tattoos that do not promote or enhance a safe and productive workplace are not considered professional dress. Employees should follow safety regulations concerning equipment.

Drug-Free Workplace and Workforce

A drug-free workplace and workforce encourage productivity and help accomplish the Bryan County School District vision, mission and goals. The unlawful and/or unauthorized manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the workplace for all employees, students, and visitors. In addition, the Bryan County School District will take appropriate personnel action against any employee convicted of a criminal drug offense.

Electronic Communications

All electronic communication conducted by an employee with a student must be relative to the educational services provided to the student and shall be delivered by means provided by or otherwise approved by the district for this purpose. Approved school district electronic communication methods are school district email, district-approved teacher websites, school websites, school-provided phones, and other electronic communication that is approved by the Bryan County School District. School district employees are prohibited from using any school district electronic communication with a student for a purpose not related to educational services, except for communication with an immediate family member, if such communication is specifically authorized. It is the duty of each district employee to comply with this electronic communications policy. Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action, and, in extreme circumstances, may constitute willful neglect of duty.

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)

All employees are entitled to equal treatment in decisions involving hiring, promotions, compensation, training, and discipline. The Bryan County School District does not consider race, color, gender, religion, national origin, age, military status, disability status, or any other legally protected status in any employment decision or employment practice. The district will consider requests for accommodation on the basis of religion and will provide reasonable accommodation on the basis of ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) qualified disabilities, if it can do so without undue hardship or safety threat.

Ethics

All employees must adhere to the high standards and expectations determined by the Bryan County Board of Education and those described in the Professional Standards Commission [Code of Ethics for Educators](#). As public employees expected to uphold the public trust, employees should not use their positions or professional relationships for personal gain. All employees of the district are required to notify their immediate supervisor and the superintendent by the end of the next business day following any arrest. Any misstatement or omission of required information may be reason for dismissal or non-employment.

Financial Transactions

No purchase can be made and charged to the Bryan County School District or its schools, unless a purchase order has been executed. Items or services ordered without a purchase order become the personal responsibility of the individual. Purchasing will be made through the school and/or department office. All inquiries regarding purchase orders should be handled at the school and/or department level.

Any employee given the responsibility of collecting monies from students, parents, employees, or other individuals must be accountable for the receipt of those monies. A receipt shall be issued if the individual collection is \$10.00 or greater. Individual collections less than \$10.00 shall be counted and summarized on a Cash Collection Form. Both receipt books and Cash Collection Forms are available from the school and/or department office. All monies collected must be submitted to the school office on a daily basis. No school employee shall hold monies in his/her classroom or personal possession overnight unless the monies are collected after the school office has closed for the day. In this situation, the school employee shall secure the monies and remit to the school office at the beginning of the next school day.

Fraud Prevention

The School District ("District") shall not tolerate fraud of any kind and has an established system for the reporting of suspicious activities. "Fraud" is defined as a false representation of a matter of fact, whether by words or by conduct, or by concealment of that which should have been disclosed, that is used for the purpose of misappropriating property and/or monetary funds from federal, state, or local grants and funds.

Employees and parties maintaining a business relationship with the District who suspect fraud, whether it pertains to federal, state, or local programs, should report their concerns to the Superintendent of his/her designee. If fraud is suspected by the Superintendent, such allegations should be reported to the Chair of the Board of Education. All reports of suspected fraud shall be handled under the strictest confidentiality allowed under the law. Informants may remain anonymous as allowed by law but are encouraged to cooperate with investigators and to provide as much detail and evidence of the alleged fraudulent practice as possible. Any and all reports of suspicious activity and/or suspected fraud will be investigated. Results of an investigation shall not be disclosed to or discussed with anyone other than those individuals with a legitimate need to know until the results become subject to public disclosure in accordance with state and/or federal law.

Fund Raising Activities

All fund-raising activities must be approved by the Bryan County Board of Education.

Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy

All employees have a right to be treated with respect and dignity and to work in a professional environment that is free of bias, prejudice, and harassment. The Bryan County School District does not tolerate harassment, discrimination, or differential treatment of any employee, and encourages employees who believe they have been discriminated against to seek relief through the Bryan County School District discrimination complaint resolution process. Also see Staff Complaints and Grievances.

Responsibilities for Responses to Civil Rights Concerns

All employees are required to fully comply with all federal and state non-discrimination laws, including Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; the Age Discrimination and Employment Act (ADEA); Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Public Law 101-476, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA); and the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA).

Questions concerning these policies and procedures should be directed to the school principal first and then to the following:

Facilities Accessibility	Director of Planning and Logistics
Title VI,VII,IX, ADEA, Employee Issues, ADA, Personnel Issues, Section 504	Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning/Human Resources
Title IX, Student Issues	Director of Planning and Logistics
Title VI, Student Issues	Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning
Student Program Accessibility; Section 504; ADA; Public Law 101-476 (IDEA)	Director of Exceptional Student Services

Employees may also contact the Director, Office of Civil Rights, Education Department, Washington, D.C. 20201

School Assignment for Children of Employees

In accordance with Policy JBCCA, children of employees, regardless of where they live, may attend the Bryan County School District in the attendance area where their parent(s) /guardian(s) work. To attend any other out-of-attendance area school, the employee must establish that there is a hardship and that such an assignment is necessary for the employee.

In deciding whether a hardship request is justifiable, factors such as the appropriate school nearest the place of employment, the appropriate school nearest a childcare center or sitter caring for the child before or after school hours (elementary only) and other reasonable factors will be considered. Current employees must submit a transfer form during the application period; however, a waiver of the deadline will be considered for new hires or when an employee's circumstances change during the year.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is unlawful and specifically prohibited. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature will not be tolerated. Examples of prohibited conduct include, but are not limited to, unwelcome intentional touching of intimate body areas; employees dating students; graphic or degrading comments about an individual or his/her appearance; the display of sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cards or letters; lewd or suggestive comments or gestures; and off-color language or jokes of a sexual nature. ***Individuals who believe they are being sexually harassed should immediately notify a building or department administrator or the Director of Human Resources.*** Retaliation against a complainant for making a complaint is strictly forbidden.

Smoking

Tobacco use is a health hazard and inconsistent with the concepts and principles taught in the Bryan County School District. Employees and visitors are prohibited from using any tobacco or tobacco devices, including e-cigarettes or vapor products/vaping systems, at all school-sponsored events and in/on all school property, including buildings, athletic facilities, offices, trucks, automobiles, and buses.

Social Security Number

The Bryan County School District reserves the right to use an employee's social security number in employment-related practices. All employees who handle documents containing employee identification data such as social security numbers should use reasonable precaution to preclude compromise or identity theft.

Solicitation by Staff Members

Employees cannot solicit, advertise, or endorse one product over another when dealing with students, parents, or other employees.

Solicitation on School Property

No person, firm, corporation, or business can 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 Bryan County Board of Education. The Board has approved the following activities: PTSO and booster club activities held outside school hours, approved food service vendors, senior ring vendors, graduation paraphernalia vendors, school picture vendors, vendors that provide approved employee benefits, and vendors who have merchandise that can be purchased from local school funds and employee activities.

Staff Complaints and Grievances

When workplace problems or disputes cannot be resolved informally, employees can turn to the Bryan County School District's internal grievance process. This process addresses alleged violations, misinterpretations, or misapplications of the district's statutes, policies, rules, regulations, or written agreements. It does not apply to performance ratings, job performance, termination, non-renewal, demotion, suspension and reprimands, or the revocation, suspension, or denial of certification of any certified employee. The complaint must be sent in writing to the school Principal or Department/Division Supervisor within 10 calendar days of the event/incident.

Student Supports

Special Education regulations require that appropriate student supports be considered for any student with an Individualized Education Program (IEP). Student supports consist of accommodations for instruction and testing, supplemental aids and services, and/or supports for district personnel. These may be provided to assist students in advancing toward attaining annual goals, in being involved and making progress in the general curriculum, and/or in being educated and participating with other nondisabled students.

Students may also receive accommodations if they qualify for support through a 504 Plan. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in programs and activities, public or private, which receive federal financial assistance. This law conforms to the definition of disability under the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA).

Use of Equipment and Resources

Employees entrusted with public funds and property should honor that trust with a high level of honesty, accuracy and responsibility. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, misusing school-related funds or property; failing to account for funds collected from students or parents; and submitting fraudulent requests for reimbursement of expenses.

Computers

Bryan County School District (BCSD) computer hardware, software, and data should be used for assigned responsibilities only, and should be protected from damage, destruction, viruses, theft, and unauthorized access and use. Employees should have no expectation of privacy when using BCSD electronic resources.

Internet

Electronic resources should be used to support assigned responsibilities. Employees should have no expectation of privacy when using electronic systems and should minimize use of the Internet for personal reasons during working hours. Employees should never access pornographic or other sites prohibited by law during working hours or when using school district electronic resources.

Telephone

Personal use of telephones should be kept to a minimum during working hours. Personal long-distance calls should not be charged to school district telephones or accounts.

Violence in the Workplace

The Bryan County School District 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 and/or Human Resources. All complaints will be fully investigated. The Bryan County School District will promptly respond to any incident or suggestion of violence.

Policies and Guidelines: Employment

Annual Performance Evaluation

In accordance with O.C.G.A. 20-2-210, all personnel will be evaluated on an annual basis by their immediate supervisor. Specifically, in accordance with O.C.G.A. 20-2-210, all applicable rules of the State Board of Education, and the Implementation Handbooks, *teachers of record* will be evaluated based on the Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES) and *principals and assistant principals* will be evaluated based on the Leader Keys Effectiveness System (LKES). All other employees will be evaluated using approved evaluation plans and procedures of Bryan County Schools.

Assignment

Employees are assigned to positions based on the needs of the Bryan County School District, as well as the employee's training, certification, and other factors.

At-Will Employment

Georgia recognizes At-Will Employment; that is, an employee is hired at-will and employment can be terminated at the will of either party, for any reason or no reason at all. Employees who are issued board approved contracts do not have At-Will Employment.

Background Check

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 Bryan County School District. State law also requires employees to sign a consent form authorizing approval to conduct a criminal and/or driver's history record check every five years. Employees must sign a consent form allowing the district to periodically conduct a criminal background check, if reasonable cause exists for a check to be performed.

Certification Qualifications and Duties

At a minimum, certified employees must meet the district-defined professional qualifications for the field of their job assignment before being employed and must maintain these district-defined professional qualifications during employment. Maintaining proper professional qualifications is the expectation of the district and the responsibility of the individual employee.

Discipline

Discipline is necessary and will be implemented when there is unsatisfactory and/or unacceptable employee performance of any type. Depending on the nature or severity of the offense, the Bryan County School District may provide employees with an opportunity to bring their performance up to standard through the use of the following: (1) immediate feedback regarding unsatisfactory performance, (2) factual documentation of performance, (3) employee input and commitment to improving performance, and (4) final resolution of the performance issue(s).

The district utilizes progressive discipline in which disciplinary actions normally follow a gradually escalating path. However, depending on the seriousness of the offense, more than one progressive discipline action may occur simultaneously, or it may be determined that progressive discipline is not appropriate, and any disciplinary action may be imposed. The action taken should be consistent with precedent in similar situations, appropriate to the offense, and documented. When warranted, an employee who holds a certificate with the Georgia Professional Standards Commission may be reported at any time for a violation of the Code of Ethics for Educators.

Fair Dismissal

According to the State of Georgia's Fair Dismissal Act [Act 20-2-940], certified employees can be dismissed or suspended based on incompetence; insubordination; willful neglect of duties; immorality; inciting, encouraging or counseling students to violate state and local laws, regulations and ordinances, or policies and rules of the Bryan County Board of Education; failure to secure and maintain necessary educational training; to reduce staff due to the loss of students or programs; and any other good and sufficient cause.

Suspensions may be without pay and can last up to 60 days. The Bryan County School District superintendent or his/her designee can relieve any employee from duty for up to 10 days, if the employee's presence could cause serious harm or disrupt students, the school, or other employees. The Bryan County School District superintendent may also write letters of reprimand for any valid reason. These letters are placed in the employee's district personnel file. Demotions and non-renewal of contracts of certain certified employees are governed by Code Section 20-2-942. A demotion is a job with less pay, less responsibility, and less prestige. Transfers are not covered by the Fair Dismissal Act.

Hiring

Individuals are employed by the Bryan County Board of Education, based on the recommendation of the superintendent. Offers of employment may be made by the administrator, contingent upon the candidate's successful completion of all pre-employment requirements. Recommendations for hire are made by the superintendent, and hiring approval is enacted by the Bryan County Board of Education.

Interviewing

Human Resources and/or the administrator will interview the most qualified applicants for positions. Offers of employment may be made by the administrator, contingent upon the candidate's successful completion of all pre-employment requirements. Recommendations for hire are made by the superintendent, and hiring approval is enacted by the Bryan County Board of Education.

Job Abandonment

Absences for reasons that are not approved by the Bryan County Board of Education may be considered job abandonment. Employee absences without approval for three or more days may be considered voluntary resignations.

Job Descriptions

Each position should have a valid job description that is updated and maintained on a regular basis. It is the responsibility of direct supervisors to ensure job descriptions are accurate and up to date. The superintendent reserves the right to revise job descriptions, should the need arise.

Job Posting

Announcements of job vacancies will be posted electronically on the Bryan County School District website, as well as other appropriate outlets.

Nepotism

Employees cannot supervise or evaluate members of their immediate family. Immediate family shall be defined as including spouse, children, parents, siblings, grandparents, grandchildren or any relatives living in the immediate household of the employee. These relationships include those arising from adoption or marriage.

Personnel Records

Information contained in an employee's personnel file is not made public unless required by law or requested by the employee in writing. It is the employee's responsibility to notify the district of any changes of personal information. Employees must notify their supervisor, Human Resources, and the Payroll Department when their name and/or home address and/or contact numbers change. Forms for name changes are available from Human Resources and on the Bryan County Schools Private Network Home Page. Address and contact information changes should be submitted through Employee Self Service.

Pre-Employment Physical Examinations

Prior to employment, employees may be asked to take physical and/or psychological examinations that demonstrate their competence and ability to perform job-related functions. The Bryan County School District will reimburse up to \$30 for the required examinations but is not responsible for the cost of treatment. Employees in some job classifications (for example, those who operate vehicles that transport students) may be required by law to pass an annual physical or to acquire special permits.

Professional Learning

Employees have the opportunity to participate in professional learning activities with a goal of enhancing professional capacity and performance. The Professional Learning department submits an annual comprehensive plan designed to address instructional program needs for certified employees. All employees who hold a GaPSC license and/or certificate are required to record and monitor professional learning goals /plans within the TLS D platform. Professional opportunities for classified employees may be handled at the local school or Central Office.

Reassignment

Employees may be reassigned at any time by the Bryan County School District. Some of the reasons for reassignments are reorganizations, changes in attendance zones, changes in approved programs, changes in student enrollment, and the opening or closing of schools. This list of reasons is not all inclusive.

Recruitment

The Bryan County School District's active recruitment process is designed to attract and retain competent and qualified personnel to work in the district. Job vacancy announcements may be sent to placement offices at colleges and universities, to the State Department of Education's Recruitment Services (www.teachgeorgia.org), and to media outlets in Bryan County. Announcements may be placed on the Bryan County School District website and advertised in newspapers, magazines, and professional journals.

Reduction in Force (RIF)

A reduction in force may be caused by a number of factors, including reorganization, the elimination of or a change in programs, decrease in student enrollment, or a loss of funding. If it becomes necessary to reduce the certified workforce, the Bryan County School District will rely on a process that maintains the effectiveness and quality of the educational programs and services, and that minimizes the number of employees who are negatively impacted.

The superintendent will prepare and present a written plan for reduction in force for Board approval and action. The plan shall identify the underlying conditions, as well as what positions are affected and why. Employees who receive written notice that their positions have been eliminated can choose to resign or accept separation under the RIF.

Re-Employment

The contracts for administrative/supervisory and certified personnel are automatically considered for renewal each year. Individuals whose contracts will not be renewed are notified in writing.

Reference Checks

Supervisory and other work-related references are checked for each prospective employee.

Resignations

Certified employees who want to terminate their contracts for the new contract year must submit a completed and signed Bryan County Schools Separation Form to their immediate supervisor. Certified employees who want to resign during the contract period because of emergency situations should submit a completed and signed Bryan County Schools Separation Form at the earliest possible date but must realize that contracts cannot be terminated by the employee without the written consent of the Bryan County Board of Education. Classified employees are asked to submit a completed and signed Bryan County Schools Separation Form to their immediate supervisor at least two weeks prior to leaving the Bryan County School District.

Substitute Teachers

Principals or their designees are responsible for securing a substitute teacher from the list of substitute teachers approved by the Bryan County Board of Education. The length of time a substitute teacher may serve in the same classroom is determined by State Board rule and/or the circumstance surrounding the absence. In the event a substitute teacher is needed in the same classroom for 20 consecutive days or more, the principal or his/her designee should verify with Human Resources the credentials of the selected substitute teacher.

Transfers

Employees may participate in the transfer process to move to another school or department if they meet transfer requirements. A teacher is eligible to apply for a transfer if she/he has been recommended for employment for the next school year and is not on a professional development plan, under disciplinary action, or on limited contract.

Policies and Guidelines: Compensation**Adjustments to Pay**

In the event of an omission of a required pay increase or decrease, a pay correction will be made. Any retroactive pay increase or decrease due will only be applied as far back as one preceding year.

Contracts

Certified employees receive written employment contracts that are signed by the employee and the superintendent. Contracts may be terminated if an employee cannot be properly certified. The Bryan County Board of Education offers new contracts for the coming year to all current employees and new hires recommended by the principal and/or administrator and approved by the Board of Education. All employees must have an Oath of Allegiance on file.

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. The district participates in Medicare for all new employees. The district participates in social security for all temporary employees, paraprofessionals and those who participate in the Public School Employees Retirement System.

Direct Deposit

All employees are required to participate in Direct Deposit for payroll checks.

Extended Day/Year

Supplemental pay may be provided to employees who work an extended school day or school year to meet program responsibilities or student needs. For example, some high school teachers may be asked to work an additional hour beyond the normal eight-hour day to provide student instructional services or to teach an additional period of instruction. Extended day and/or year pay must be recommended by the principal and/or administrator and approved by the Board of Education.

Holiday Pay for Hourly Employees

In the event a 12-month hourly employee is required to work on an approved holiday, compensation will be made at two times the regular rate of pay. A minimum of two hours will be paid if called to work on an approved holiday.

Overtime

Overtime is defined as time worked beyond the normal 40-hour work week (Sunday through Saturday) including emergency or planned overtime. The forty (40) hours are defined as actual hours worked and do not include hours or days for which the employee was paid for leave time such as sick leave, personal leave, annual leave, etc.

Whenever possible, it is the expectation of the Board of Education that all Bryan County Schools supervisory personnel will use a reciprocal leave (flex) procedure to avoid overtime. Flex time must be granted to employees within a seven-day work week. Flex time shall be granted on an hour-for-hour basis.

Overtime work by "non-exempt" employees shall not be performed, nor shall employees direct that overtime work be performed, without the determination and prior approval of the superintendent, or supervisory personnel who have been designated by the superintendent, that there is no other viable alternative.

Cases involving approval for overtime compensation shall be the result of emergency situations, limited timelines or when additional responsibilities are assigned individuals on a temporary basis. Violation of this policy concerning prior approval for overtime work may result in disciplinary action against the employee, up to and including termination.

Compensation for overtime will be reimbursed at one and one-half the employee's regular rate of pay or compensatory leave at the same rate. Compensation for time worked during emergency situations, or at times when the entire district is closed, will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

Affected employees may accrue compensatory time up to no more than 240 hours. The school system, in its discretion, may substitute payment for accrued, but unused, compensatory time, in whole or in part. Use of compensatory time shall be permitted within a reasonable period after making formal request for its use, so long as the employee's absence does not "unduly disrupt" operation of the school system.

All classified employees who are considered "non-exempt" under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and are legally entitled to compensation for overtime work as provided by law and in accordance with this policy shall comply with any requirements of the district for documenting time actually worked and shall be responsible for ensuring the accuracy of such records.

Pay Advances

Early pay advances for any employee is not permitted.

Pay for Supervising Student Teachers

Colleges and universities may choose to compensate certified employees who supervise and evaluate their student teachers. To be eligible, the teacher must hold a valid Georgia certificate in the student teacher's practice field; meet all requirements established by the college or university; demonstrate successful teaching experience; and have the approval of the principal and central office administrator. The amount of compensation is determined by the university and will be paid to the employee after funds are received from the university.

Pay Schedule

All employees are paid monthly. Salaries will be prorated based on the beginning and/or ending dates of employment if the employee does not work a full year.

Salary/Teaching Experience

Salaries for certified employees are determined by certification and verified years of experience, along with local supplements approved by the Bryan County Board of Education. Salaries for classified employees are determined by placement on the approved Bryan County Board of Education pay scales. Placement on the approved Bryan County Board of Education pay scales for classified personnel may be affected by verified years of job-related work experience.

Step Increases

Certified employees who receive overall unsatisfactory, needs development or ineffective annual evaluation ratings and do not successfully complete a professional development plan during the evaluation period may remain on a step plateau for an additional year. The employee should receive verbal and written documentation during the year indicating that performance has not met expectations.

Travel Reimbursement

Employees will be reimbursed for reasonable and necessary expenses incurred in connection with approved travel on behalf of the Bryan County School District. The State Accounting Office of Georgia has an established travel policy which provides guidelines for the reimbursement of all approved travel expenses. The complete document is available at <http://sao.georgia.gov/state-travel-policy>. Travel reimbursement forms are available from each school/department office or the Finance Department. Forms must be completed and submitted to the Finance Department no more than 60 days following the approved travel dates.

Tutoring for Pay

In accordance with the Georgia Code of Ethics for Educators (505-6-.01), employees cannot be paid to tutor students assigned to them. Private tutoring for pay must be done off-campus and must not include students assigned to the teacher.

Work Day/Work Week

Depending on the position, classified employees work a maximum of 40 hours per week. Employees should check with their immediate supervisor for specific information regarding work schedules. Paraprofessionals' workday is eight hours, which includes a thirty-minute lunch period. Non-instructional, full-time classified employees' workday equals eight hours, excluding lunch periods.

Policies and Guidelines: Benefits

The Bryan County School System offers a comprehensive benefits package to all full-time employees. It is designed in response to employees' needs and desires – a plan that opens the door for financial security and affordable benefits. Employees are offered the opportunity to participate in the employee benefits program during the first thirty (30) days of employment and during the annual Open Enrollment period, generally scheduled during the months of October or November of each year, with coverage effective January 1 of the following year.

Available benefits may include medical, dental, vision, accident, basic and voluntary group life, spouse and dependent life, whole life, disability, cancer, long-term care, automobile insurance, savings plan through credit union, State retirement plan, 403b and 457 annuity plans, flexible spending accounts for medical and dependent care, as well as other options.

Eligibility requirements, premiums, and plan documents are available through the Finance Department.

Retirement Plans

All eligible employees are required to become members of a State of Georgia retirement system.

Teachers Retirement System (TRS)

All employees who are employed one-half time or more in covered positions of the State's public school systems are required to be members of the Teachers Retirement System (TRS) of Georgia as a condition of employment. Covered positions include all certified staff, paraprofessionals, administrators, nurses, clerical staff and other qualified positions as deemed appropriate through TRS rules. Refer to the TRS guidelines for specific information regarding the Teacher Retirement System of Georgia.

Public School Employees Retirement System of Georgia (PSERS)

Regular, non-temporary employees of public school systems who are not eligible for membership in the Teachers Retirement System of Georgia (TRS) must establish membership in the Public School Employees Retirement System of Georgia (PSERS) as a condition of employment. Covered positions include maintenance and custodial employees, bus drivers, bus monitors and food service assistants. Refer to the PSERS guidelines for specific information regarding the Public School Retirement System of Georgia.

403(b) and 457 Tax Sheltered Annuity Plan

Bryan County School District offers a 403(b) and a 457 tax sheltered annuity plan to all employees. An approved listing of providers is available through the Finance Department.

Benefits Disclaimer

There are additional requirements and conditions for benefit plans not discussed in this handbook. In the event of a conflict between the handbook and a requirement and condition, the Plan Description will prevail. Nothing in this section of the handbook creates a contract or an entitlement to any particular benefits. Benefits are subject to change at any time.

Policies and Guidelines: Time Off and Leave of Absence

Bereavement

In the event of the death of an immediate family member, employees may be granted a leave of absence to a maximum number of three (3) days per year and such leave will not be charged against sick leave. Absences in excess of the maximum approved days due to the death of an immediate family member will be charged against sick leave. For the purpose of this policy, immediate family members are defined as including spouse, children, parents, siblings, grandparents, grandchildren or any relatives living in the immediate household of the employee. These relationships include those arising from adoption or marriage.

Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

Employees of the district who have been employed for at least 12 months and who have worked at least 1250 hours during the 12-month period immediately prior to the commencement of the leave are eligible to take up to 60 working days of unpaid, job-protected leave during a single 12-month period for the following purposes:

1. Birth of a child;
2. Adoption of a child or the placement of a foster child;
3. Care for a sick spouse, child, or parent;
4. Employee's own serious health condition;
5. Qualifying exigencies arising from the fact that the employee's family member (the covered service member) is on covered active duty; or
6. Military caregiver leave.

The district requires supporting documentation and the appropriate leave form for any leave request based on a family member's (i.e. spouse, child or parent) health condition, the employee's own health condition, or military caregiver status. If the need for FMLA leave is foreseeable, an employee requesting leave must provide at least 30 days advance notice to the superintendent or his/her designee. If such advance notice is not possible, the employee must give notice as soon as practicable, which means as soon as both possible and practical, taking into account all of the facts and circumstances in the individual case. An approved health care provider's return to work release will be required for all employees who were on leave due to their own health condition.

The employee on Family Medical Leave continues to receive health coverage and other benefits, at the employee's rate, but he/she does not accrue seniority. Family Medical Leave may be taken continuously or intermittently. If possible, employees should provide at least 30-days written notice before the leave begins.

Employees on FMLA leave are entitled to be restored to the same position or an equivalent position with comparable benefits, pay, and other terms and conditions.

Specific details concerning FMLA leave are available within BCS policies and procedures and from Human Resources.

Georgia Paid Parental Leave

The Board of Education shall make paid parental leave equally available to all eligible employees of the Board of Education under the following terms:

An employee of the Board of Education shall be eligible for paid parental leave for qualifying life events upon satisfying the following criteria:

- a. The employee is classified as full-time by the District and is eligible to participate in the TRS (Teacher Retirement System of Georgia) or the PSERS (Public School Employees Retirement System); and
- b. The employee has six continuous months of employment with the Board, regardless of whether he or she is eligible for paid or unpaid leave under federal law. An employee paid on an hourly basis must have worked a minimum of 700 hours over the six-month period immediately preceding the requested paid parental leave date.

A qualifying life event means:

- The birth of a child of an eligible employee;
- The placement of a minor child for adoption with an eligible employee; or
- The placement of a minor child for foster care with an eligible employee.

The maximum amount of paid parental leave that may be taken by an eligible employee during a rolling 12-month period is 120 hours, regardless of the number of qualifying life events that occur during such period.

- The rolling 12-month period shall be measured backward from the date an eligible employee first uses parental leave.
- Parental leave may be taken as needed and may be taken in increments of less than eight hours. The smallest increment of parental leave that may be taken is two hours.
- Any unused paid parental leave that remains 12 months after the qualifying event shall not carry over for future use.
- Unused paid parental leave shall have no cash value at any time of the eligible employee's separation from employment with the Board of Education.

Paid parental leave under state law shall run concurrently with any leave provided under federal law.

Eligible employees requesting paid parental leave must submit the district's designated form to the Superintendent or designee at least thirty school days in advance of the requested leave start date. If such advance notice is not possible, the employee must give notice as soon as practicable, which means as soon as both possible and practical, taking into account all of the facts and circumstances in the individual case.

Inclement Weather

When Bryan County schools are closed due to inclement weather, employees should not report to work, unless specifically required to do so. Unsafe driving or facility conditions make attempts to report to work inappropriate and inadvisable. With the exception of 12-month employees and certain non-exempt employees specifically contacted by their supervisor and directed to report to perform emergency repairs or other duties, all other district employees should not report to work, unless directed to do so through either contact by their supervisor or by public announcement. The superintendent and/or Board of Education shall communicate a plan for making up missed work days due to inclement weather.

Jury and Witness Duty

Employees who are called to jury duty serve with no loss of pay. Employees who are subpoenaed as witnesses in cases related to his/her job function and have no direct personal interest are allowed the absence with no loss of pay. Absences due to jury duty are not charged against the employee's accumulated leave. Employees who are subpoenaed or volunteer as witnesses who have a direct personal interest in a lawsuit or legal proceeding should take personal leave.

Medical Leave of Convenience

Any benefit-eligible employee who meets the criteria listed below may request an unpaid medical leave of convenience, which will begin when all paid leave is exhausted or at the end of an approved FMLA leave, whichever occurs later. Upon approval by the Superintendent or his/her designee, this provision may be made for employees who:

1. Are unable to return to work due to a personal, medical necessity, or that of a spouse or child; and
2. Are at the end of an approved FMLA leave, or are not eligible for FMLA leave; and
3. Have exhausted all paid leave; and
4. Provide appropriate medical documentation to substantiate need.

Medical Leave of Convenience (continued)

Personal Medical Leaves of Convenience are not guaranteed and are within the sole discretion of the Bryan County Schools Superintendent and/or his designee. Human Resources will supply all required forms and will coordinate approval of the requested Medical Leave of Convenience. To request a Personal Medical Leave of Convenience, the Employee must complete a Leave Request Form and supply documentation certifying the necessity for the Leave.

If the unpaid Medical Leave of Convenience is granted, it will be from the school system and not from a specific job assignment and will extend for a period of no more than one year from the date the FMLA/Non FMLA leave began.

The employee on unpaid Medical Leave of Convenience may continue as an active employee of the school system with all rights afforded to active employees, with the exception of benefit premium payments. Benefit premium payments must be paid to the district in a timely manner and may be inclusive of both the employee premium and any appropriate employer subsidy rate or employer contribution. Failure to make such payments will result in lapse and forfeiture of the benefit(s) in question.

Employees returning from unpaid Medical Leave of Convenience will be given consideration to be re-employed to an available, comparable position. If the Medical Leave of Convenience was due to the employee's own medical condition, return to work is subject to approval by Human Resources upon receipt of the treating physician's Return to Work Release.

Military Duty

All persons employed in any capacity in the school system (other than those employed on a temporary basis) shall be entitled to military leave for ordered military duty with full employment and reinstatement rights as provided by law. An employee shall be allowed a leave of absence from his or her duties while performing ordered military duty.

An employee shall be paid his or her salary or other compensation for a period of absence while engaged in the performance

of ordered military duty and while going to or returning from such duty, not exceeding a total of 15 days in one calendar year and not exceeding 15 days in any one continuous period of such absence.

The employee must provide written documentation of the duty and dates of service.

Personal Leave

Full-time, regular employees may use a maximum of three (3) sick leave days as personal days. Prior to the date of the scheduled absence, the use of personal leave must be requested by the employee and approved by the principal and/or supervising administrator. Any personal leave taken without approval will result in docked pay. School-based personnel may not use personal leave either immediately preceding or following scheduled breaks (for example, spring break) or during required student testing. Under extreme circumstances, exceptions may be granted by the superintendent or his/her designee by recommendation of the immediate supervisor.

Personal or Family Illness

When an employee is absent for five (5) consecutive work days for his/her own personal illness, he/she must provide a signed statement from his/her treating healthcare provider that certifies the employee's clearance to return to work and perform the essential functions of his/her job assignment. If an employee is absent: five (5) or more consecutive work days; seven (7) or more non-consecutive work days; or a series of work days that appear to occur in a pattern, such as a series of Monday and/or Friday absences, the district reserves the right to require a physician's statement attesting that the employee was absent due to illness. Employees should keep their supervisors informed of the expected date of return on a daily basis. When an employee is out with a personal injury not related to work, the employee will need to provide a signed statement from his/her treating healthcare provider that certifies the employee's clearance to return to work and perform the essential functions of his/her job assignment. Any imposed restrictions must be reviewed and approved by Human Resources and the immediate supervisor.

Professional Leave

Professional leave is arranged between the employee and his/her supervisor and approved by the superintendent or his/her designee(s). Approval must be secured at least five (5) days in advance. Professional leave is restricted to those activities that are beneficial to the system and that promote the professional growth of the employee. Professional leave taken at the request of the school district or when required in conjunction with the district's routine professional development activities will not be charged against the employee's sick leave.

Religious Holidays

Employees may use personal leave for the observance of recognized religious holidays, provided that the process for personal leave approval is followed. If an employee desires to take leave for the observance of recognized religious holidays in excess of the days allowed for personal leave, the employee may take unpaid leave for such purposes, provided that such leave is not excessive and does not interfere with fulfilling the obligations of his or her job.

Sick Leave

Full-time (as defined by job), regular employees shall earn sick leave days at a rate of one and one-fourth days for each month of service for which the employee works a minimum of 10 days during the month. Part-time regular employees earn sick leave on a pro-rated basis determined by the portion of the position they work. No more than 75 sick leave days can be rolled over to the next fiscal year. Sick leave may be used for personal illness or injury, illness or death in the employee's immediate family, or when necessitated by exposure to contagious disease. A maximum of 45 sick leave days earned through another Georgia school system may be transferred into the district. Based on Teachers Retirement System of Georgia rules, TRS members may qualify to receive one month of service credit for each 20 days of accrued sick leave for which a member has not used or been paid.

Sick Leave Bank

After one full year of employment, employees may elect to donate one day of sick leave during the annual open enrollment period to become a member of the sick leave bank. Upon meeting eligibility requirements, employees may apply for Sick Leave Bank withdrawals. The Sick Leave Bank Committee reviews all requests and, if approved, awards sick leave grants in units of up to twenty (20) consecutive days not to exceed sixty (60) days in any twelve-month period. The specific guidelines of the administrative regulations are available through Employee Self Service. Refer to current Sick Leave Bank Rules and Procedures for the definition of immediate family related to Sick Leave Bank.

Vacation

Vacation leave is granted to employees serving in a 12-month position, as defined by Board procedure. Those who serve in a 12-month position for less than full time shall earn vacation leave at a pro rata share determined by the portion of the full-time position worked. Effective July 1, 2019, vacation leave shall be earned on a monthly basis at a rate determined by the number of verified, completed, consecutive years of service with the system serving in a position that earns vacation leave, as follows:

Years of Service	Annual Earnings
0 – 5 years	12 days
6 – 12 years	15 days
13 – 19 years	18 days
20+ years	20 days

The use of vacation days must be requested by the employee and approved in advance by the immediate supervisor. Vacation leave may be accumulated up to a maximum of 30 days. Unused vacation days not in excess of 30 days shall be carried forward and available for use in the subsequent fiscal year. Employees in good standing with the district who resign, retire, or change to less than a 12-month work calendar will be paid for his/her unused accumulated vacation leave at the employee's current daily rate of pay.

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 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 employers to pay employees for this time (OCGA 21-2-404). Since Georgia polls are usually open from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm, employees should consult their supervisor to arrange time for voting before or after normal work hours.

Rules and Guidelines: Risk Management

Worker's Compensation

Employees are entitled to worker's compensation benefits for payment of medical treatment and wage loss of compensable on-the-job injuries. Employees must seek treatment with a physician listed on the District Panel of Physicians. An approved Panel of Physicians is posted in common areas at work locations (e.g. work rooms, meeting areas for employees etc.) for selection of a physician for treatment of their work-related injury. If an employee sustains an on-the-job injury, he/she is required to provide immediate notification to the supervisor or member of the department administrative staff. Delay in notification can result in denial of the worker's compensation claim.

Disclaimer

This handbook has been prepared to help familiarize you with some of our administrative rules and forms and to present the information in a form that will be readily available for reference. Although the contents of the handbook are based on the administrative rules and forms of the Bryan County Board of Education, the actual administrative rules and forms, which are far more lengthy and detailed, have been summarized to make the handbook more readable. There are additional administrative rules and forms not discussed in the handbook, and it is the responsibility of the employee to review and familiarize themselves with them. In the event of a conflict between the handbook and an administrative rule or form, the administrative rules or forms shall control. Nothing in this handbook or in the administrative rules and forms is intended to create a contract of employment or an entitlement to any particular benefits or terms and conditions of work. The Board of Education has the right to change or modify any of its administrative rules or forms at any time. For additional, more detailed information or if you have questions, please refer to the Board of Education Policy Manual at www.bryan.k12.ga.us.

505-6-.01 THE CODE OF ETHICS FOR EDUCATORS

(1) 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.

(2) 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 Georgia 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 Georgia 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 school 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 Georgia 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 permanent 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 of time specified by the Georgia 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 Georgia 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 Georgia Professional Standards Commission that, after a preliminary investigation, either no further action need be taken or no cause exists to recommend disciplinary action.

(3) Standards.

(a) 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.

(b) 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:

1. Committing any act of child abuse, including physical and verbal abuse;
2. Committing any act of cruelty to children or any act of child endangerment;
3. Committing any sexual act with a student or soliciting such from a student;
4. Engaging in or permitting harassment of or misconduct toward a student;
5. Soliciting, encouraging, or consummating an inappropriate written, verbal, electronic, or physical relationship with a student;
6. Furnishing tobacco, alcohol, or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any student; or
7. 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).

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

1. 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
2. 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).

(i) For the purposes of this standard, an educator shall be considered "under the influence" if the educator exhibits one or more of the following indicators, including but not limited to: slurred speech, enlarged pupils, bloodshot eyes, general personality changes, lack of physical coordination, poor motor skills, memory problems, concentration problems, etc.

(d) 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:

1. Professional qualifications, criminal history, college or staff development credit and/or degrees, academic award, and employment history;
2. Information submitted to federal, state, local school districts and other governmental agencies;
3. Information regarding the evaluation of students and/or personnel;

4. 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.

(e) 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:

1. Misusing public or school-related funds;
2. Failing to account for funds collected from students or parents;
3. Submitting fraudulent requests or documentation for reimbursement of expenses or for pay (including fraudulent or purchased degrees, documents, or coursework);
4. Co-mingling public or school-related funds with personal funds or checking accounts; and
5. Using school or school district property without the approval of the local board of education/governing board or authorized designee.

(f) 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:

1. 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;
2. 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 be in compliance with all rules and regulations of the Georgia High School Association.

(g) 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:

1. 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;
2. Sharing of confidential information restricted by state or federal law;
3. 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
4. Violation of other confidentiality agreements required by state or local policy.

(h) **Standard 8: Required Reports** - An educator shall file with the Georgia Professional Standards Commission 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:

1. Failure to report all requested information on documents required by the Commission when applying for or renewing any certificate with the Commission;
2. 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
3. Failure to make a required report of any violation of state or federal law 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. 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.

(i) **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.

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

1. Committing any act that breaches Test Security; and
2. Compromising the integrity of the assessment.

(4) 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.

(5) 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 educator:

1. Unethical conduct as outlined in The Code of Ethics for Educators, Standards 1-10 (GaPSC Rule [505-6-.01](#));
2. Disciplinary action against a certificate on grounds consistent with those specified in the Code of Ethics for Educators, Standards 1-10 (GaPSC Rule [505-6-.01](#));
3. 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);

5. Suspension or revocation of any professional license or certificate;

6. Violation of any other laws and rules applicable to the profession (O.C.G.A. §16-13-111); and
505-6-.01

7. 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

Contact Information

Human Resources: humanresources@bryan.k12.ga.us

Bryan County Schools web address: bryancountyschools.org

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Board of Education

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