



**2018-2019**

**EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK**

RCS VISION 2020

Collaborator. Communicator. Community Engagement. Creative &  
Critical Thinker. Goal Oriented & Resilient Individual

*[www.rock.k12.nc.us](http://www.rock.k12.nc.us)*

## ***Table of Contents***

About This Handbook .....	4
Overview of the Rockingham County School System .....	4
Board of Education Policies.....	4
General Policies	
Equal Employment Opportunities.....	5
Sexual Harassment .....	5
Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Control .....	5
Communicable Diseases .....	5
Drug-Free Workplace .....	6
Drug and Alcohol Testing .....	6
Smoke-Free School Facilities .....	6
Employee Evaluation .....	6
Personnel Files .....	7
Corporal Punishment .....	7
Health Examination Certificates .....	7
Employee Responsibilities	
Compliance with Board of Education Policies .....	7
Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct .....	7
Licensure .....	8
Inclement Weather Procedures.....	8,9
The Workday .....	9
Administration of Medication .....	9
Reporting Child Abuse or Neglect .....	9
Teacher Responsibilities .....	9
Teacher Assistant Responsibilities .....	10
Other Classified Staff Responsibilities .....	10
Personal Financial Responsibilities .....	10
Employment Policies and Procedures	
Employment Contracts .....	10
Retention .....	11
Changes in Employment Records .....	11
Job Postings .....	11
Promotions .....	11
Employee-Initiated Transfer .....	11

Dismissal .....	11
Resignation .....	11
Reduction in Force .....	12
Substitute Teachers .....	12
 Employee Relations	
Communications .....	13
Orientation .....	13
Employee Assistance Program .....	13
Employee Suggestions .....	13
Resolving Formal Complaints and Grievances .....	13,14
Removal of Information from the Personnel File .....	14
Exit Interviews .....	14
Recognition .....	14
 Learning and Growth Opportunities	
Licensed Staff .....	14,15
Beginning Teacher Support Program .....	15,16
Beginning Teacher Induction Program .....	16
 Compensation	
Definitions of Terms .....	17
Salary .....	17
Fair Labor Standards Act/Compensatory Time .....	18,19,20
Longevity Pay .....	20
 Leaves of Absence	21
Holiday Leave .....	21
Annual (Vacation) Leave .....	21
Sick Leave .....	21
Twenty-Day Extended Sick Leave .....	22
Voluntary Shared Leave .....	22
Personal Leave .....	22
Educational Leave .....	22
Professional Leave .....	23
Community Responsibility .....	23
Jury Duty .....	23
Court Attendance .....	23
Parental Leave Without Pay .....	23

Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) .....	23
Parental Involvement Leave .....	24
Military Leave .....	24

Benefits

Income Tax Withholding Forms .....	24
Health Insurance .....	24
Dental Insurance .....	25
Vision Insurance .....	25
Life Insurance .....	25
Retirement .....	25, 26
Death Benefit .....	26
Employee Disability .....	26
Supplemental Retirement Income Plan of NC (401K) .....	26
Tax-Sheltered Annuities (403B) .....	26
Credit Union .....	27
Direct Deposit .....	27
Cafeteria Benefits Plan .....	27
Continuation of Insurance Coverage Following Employment Separation .....	27
Liability Insurance .....	27
Workers' Compensation .....	27
Paydays .....	28
Local Supplement .....	28

Miscellaneous

Where to Call if You Have Questions About .....	29,30
Inquires Regarding the Nondiscrimination Policies .....	31

## **ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK**

The Rockingham County Schools' Employee Handbook has been prepared for all employees. It is designed to include general information on policies, benefits, and procedures. This handbook is purposely limited in size and scope to those matters which are of immediate and recurring concern to teachers, principals, and other staff members. The intent has been to keep it as brief and concise as possible without impairing its usefulness.

Other means of communication will supplement the handbook at appropriate times throughout the year. Copies of the *Rockingham County Schools Policy Manual*, curriculum guides, school improvement plans, and school policies and procedures are available in school media centers or principals' offices.

Also, school personnel are expected to seek additional information whenever they need it from the superintendent's office and the supervisory staff.

Since this handbook summarizes many detailed provisions about employment, benefits, and other related matters, the official policies, regulations, and procedures will always govern when questions arise. Additionally, nothing in this handbook is intended to create or imply any contract rights.

## **OVERVIEW OF THE ROCKINGHAM COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM**

Rockingham County Schools is comprised of approximately 13,000 students and approximately 1,500 full-time and part-time employees. The school district is the largest employer in the county.

A wide range of organizational patterns make up the 25 schools that are located throughout the county. There are 5 high schools, 4 middle schools, and 15 elementary schools of various grade-level configurations, and 1 alternative school.

Rockingham County Schools was formed in 1993 with the merger of the four school systems: Eden City Schools, Reidsville City Schools, Rockingham County Schools, and Western Rockingham City Schools. Since merger, the goal of the Board of Education has been to consolidate educational programs, to equalize educational resources across the county, and to teach all students to become productive citizens and lifelong learners.

## **BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICIES**

School district employees and interested individuals may access Board of Education policies via the school district's web site at [www.rock.k12.nc.us](http://www.rock.k12.nc.us). Once at the web site, access "Board of Education," and then, open the link to "Board Policies." Board Policy 1755, "SEXUAL HARRASSMENT," AND Policy 1750 "STAFF COMPLAINTS, CONCERNS, AND GRIEVANCES" ARE LOCATED IN THE Personnel Section.

## **GENERAL POLICIES**

### ***Equal Employment Opportunities***

The Board of Education (Rockingham County School System) does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, homelessness or otherwise in its educational programs and activities and in employment.

### ***Sexual Harassment***

Rockingham County Schools believes that employees and students are entitled to work and study in an environment which is free from sexual harassment. Employees are prohibited from engaging in sexual harassment. If evidence of sexual harassment is established, an employee will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Although not an all inclusive list, some examples of sexual harassment include the following: deliberate, unwelcome touching; suggestions or demands for sexual involvement accompanied by implied or overt promises of preferential treatment or threats; pressure for sexual activity; continued or repeated offensive sexual flirtations, advances, or propositions; continued or repeated verbal remarks about an individual's body; sexually degrading words used toward an individual to describe an individual; or the display in the workplace of sexually suggestive objects or pictures.

Board of Education Policy 1755, "SEXUAL HARRASSMENT," and Policy 1750 "STAFF COMPLAINTS, CONCERNS, AND GRIEVANCES" are accessible via the school district's web site at [www.rock.k12.nc.us](http://www.rock.k12.nc.us). If you have complaints or concerns refer to page 33 in this handbook.

### ***Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Control***

Each school has a Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Control Plan designed to minimize employee exposure to potentially infectious blood and other bodily fluids. All employees must be aware of the provisions of the Plan. Some employees are classified as occupationally exposed because they can reasonably anticipate coming into contact with blood or bodily fluids in the normal performance of their assigned work duties. These employees will receive appropriate training, be offered the Hepatitis B vaccination free of charge, and use specific work precautions to minimize contact with potentially infectious bodily fluids.

Employees designated as occupationally exposed will be notified regarding training and HBV vaccinations. Copies of the Exposure Control Plan are available in each school. Questions may be referred to the Assistant Superintendent for Student Support.

### ***Communicable Diseases***

The school system, in an effort to provide a safe and secure environment for all students and employees, shall make decisions regarding the employment of persons with a communicable disease on a case-by-case basis. All employees must follow regulations regarding the handling and cleaning up of potentially infectious bodily materials (universal precautions) to prevent the spread of communicable diseases.

An employee suffering from a communicable disease or condition is encouraged to inform his/her principal or supervisor so that appropriate accommodations may be made and appropriate precautions may be taken.

## ***Drug-Free Workplace***

Due to the commitment to a drug and alcohol free workplace, it is the policy of the Board of Education that the work environment shall be free of the presence of alcoholic beverages or unlawful controlled substances and that employees shall perform their job assignment safely, efficiently, and without the adverse influence of alcohol or controlled substances. Therefore, the Board of Education prohibits all employees from possessing, using, manufacturing, dispensing, selling, distributing, or being under the influence of illegal drugs and from the use, sale, distribution or possession of drug paraphernalia. All employees are prohibited from unlawfully possessing, using, manufacturing, dispensing, selling, distributing, or being under the influence of alcohol.

Violation of this policy shall subject an individual to personnel action including, but not limited to, termination of employment or the requirement that the employee participate satisfactorily in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved for such purposes by the Administration, suspension with or without pay, conditional continuation of employment, or any combination of these enumerated actions.

## ***Drug and Alcohol Testing***

The purpose of drug and alcohol testing is to promote and maintain a drug-free environment in the workplace and to protect employees, students, and the public by ensuring that employees of the Board of Education are physically and mentally fit to perform their assigned duties.

To help insure for the safe operation of school vehicles, all applicants for bus driver, bus mechanic, or other transportation positions directly involving the safe transportation of students, or positions which require that the employee has a valid CDL license are required to submit to a drug assessment prior to final consideration for employment and will be subjected to random drug testing during employment under the guidelines set forth in Board of Education policy and the 1995 Omnibus Federal Drug and Alcohol Testing Act.

Any employee who refuses to submit to any diagnostic test to detect alcohol and/or drug use after reasonable suspicion is established may be suspended immediately pending consideration of a decision to terminate employment.

## ***Smoke-Free School Facilities***

On January 1, 1995, the *Goals 2000: Educate America Act* went into effect. This legislation required that no Federal agency shall permit smoking within any indoor facility (or portion thereof) utilized for the provision of routine or regular early childhood development (Head Start) services, kindergarten, elementary, or secondary education or library services to children. On April 17, 2006, the Rockingham County Board of Education implemented a 100% tobacco free school policy.

## ***Employee Evaluation***

Employees are evaluated according to guidelines established by the State Board of Education based on regulations set forth in the Excellent Schools Act of 1997. The Excellent Schools Act is a comprehensive plan for improving student academic achievement and reducing teacher attrition with three specific goals: (1) concentrate student learning in the core academic areas; (2) improve teacher skills and teacher knowledge as those skills and knowledge relate to improved academic achievement; and (3) reward teachers for their improved skills and knowledge and for improved student academic achievement.

### **Licensed Personnel:**

The Excellent Schools Act directed the State Board of Education to "... revise and develop uniform performance standards and criteria to be used in evaluating professional public school employees including school administrators." Rockingham County Schools uses North Carolina Educator System (NCEES) based on these standards and criteria:

**North Carolina Educator System (NCEES):** This instrument is used by all licensed and employed by Rockingham County Schools.

Time lines and procedures that will be explained in detail by the licensed employee's direct supervisor at the beginning of each school year.

**Classified Personnel:** The Board of Education places a high priority on employing the most competent personnel available and on assisting them to develop throughout their term of employment. Classified employees, who are at-will employees, are evaluated once every year by the principal, supervisor, or designee using the appropriate evaluation instrument.

### ***Personnel Files***

The school system shall maintain a personnel file on each employee that includes employment records and documents collected and retained by the school system. An employee may review his/her personnel file during regular office hours. No evaluation, commendation, complaint, or suggestion may be placed in a personnel file unless it is signed, dated, and a written copy is provided to the employee at least five days before it is placed in the file. An employee may offer a written denial or explanation of any written document which will also be placed in the personnel file.

The superintendent may elect not to place in an employee's file a letter of complaint that contains invalid, irrelevant, outdated, or false information when there is no documentation of an attempt to resolve the issue.

### ***Corporal Punishment***

Corporal punishment is not to be used in the Rockingham County School System.

### ***Health Examination Certificates***

All public school employees upon initial employment or within 30 days of employment, must have on file in the Human Resources Department a completed copy of the Health Certificate.

## ***EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES***

### ***Compliance with Board of Education Policies***

It is the responsibility of all employees to familiarize themselves with the printed policies of the Board of Education. Employees will be held accountable for compliance with these policies.

### ***Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct***

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

Employees are to take action to remedy an observed violation of the Code of Ethics for North Carolina Educators and promote understanding of the principles of professional ethics...



## ***Licensure***

State law requires all employees in licensed positions to hold an appropriate license for their subject, grade level, or professional assignment. "Appropriate" can mean initial license, continuing license, lateral entry license, alternative license, or provisional license.

**Initial License:** This license is issued to individuals who are required to complete a Beginning Teacher Program.

**Standard Professional I License:** This license is issued to graduates of North Carolina's approved education programs.

**Standard Professional II License:** This license is issued to graduates of North Carolina's approved education programs who have at least three years of public school experience.

**Lateral Entry License:** This license is issued to skilled individuals who hold non-teacher education four-year degrees. Lateral entry licenses are issued on a provisional basis in licensure areas that correspond to the individuals' areas of academic study. Lateral entry license holders are subject to the regulations that apply to other beginning teachers in North Carolina, and they must meet program and testing requirements within three years.

**Provisional License:** This license is usually issued to individuals who are teaching out-of-field or have an expired license. Specific requirements are necessary for clearing the provisional license.

**The maintenance of a valid license in the area of assignment is the individual responsibility of the employee. Employees who hold licenses that expire during a particular year must furnish documentation to the Human Resources Department that the required renewal credits, test scores, course work, etc., have been completed.**

## **Inclement Weather Procedures**

When an announcement is made that schools are closed, the procedures below will be in effect. The announcement will be made on the RCS District website at [www.rock.k12.nc.us](http://www.rock.k12.nc.us), on the RCS Facebook/Twitter pages, an RCS Alert Now phone message, on local TV or radio stations and on the RCS Weather Line at 623-1385.

### **Plan 1:**

- Schools closed for students.
- Optional Workday for teachers, teacher assistants and other 10 month employees.
- Child care opens at 9:00 AM.

### **Plan 2:**

- Schools closed for students.
- Annual leave day or holiday for teachers, teacher assistants and other 10 month employees.
- Child care is closed.

### **Plan 3:**

- Schools are closed.
- No school employee should report unless they are called in for specific purposes.
- Child care is closed.

### **"\_\_" Hour Delay:**

- Schools operate on a "\_\_" hour delay; with option to close.
- Employees should report at time noted - review your options.
- Child care opens at 9:00 AM.

### **Early Release:**

- Schools close at specified time.
- Employees review your options.
- Child care closes at 4:00 PM.

### **Snow Routes:**

When snow routes are noted, buses will not travel on unpaved roads.

### **When Bad Weather Hits...**

- No announcement means that school will operate on a regular schedule!
- If we have to make an inclement weather call, the announcement will be made on the RCS District website at [www.rock.k12.nc.us](http://www.rock.k12.nc.us), on the RCS Facebook/Twitter pages, an RCS Alert Now phone message, on local TV or radio stations and on the RCS Weather Line at 623-1385.
- The decision to close school or to operate on a delayed schedule will be announced by 6:00 AM., if possible. The announcement will designate what plan to follow.
- If bad weather begins after school is in session, school may be dismissed early to permit student to get home before roads become too dangerous. Again, please check the RCS District website at [www.rock.k12.nc.us](http://www.rock.k12.nc.us), the RCS Facebook/Twitter pages, local TV or radio stations or the RCS Weather Line at 623-1385.

### **Important Weather Announcement Locations:**

**RCS District Website** - [www.rock.k12.nc.us](http://www.rock.k12.nc.us)

**RCS Facebook Page** - [www.facebook.com/rockinghamcountyschools](http://www.facebook.com/rockinghamcountyschools)

**RCS Twitter Page** - [http://twitter.com/RCS\\_NC](http://twitter.com/RCS_NC)

**RCS Weather Line** - 336-623-1385

**TV Stations** - WFMY (News 2), WXII (News 12), WGHP (Fox 8)

**Radio Stations** - WLOE 1490 AM, WMYN 1420 AM & WFDD 88.5 FM

### ***The Workday***

A normal day of employment for all full-time, permanent employees is eight hours. (Exception: For some child nutrition positions, full-time, permanent is six hours.) This excludes lunch for all classified staff other than teacher assistants who are directly involved in the supervision of students during their lunch period.

Due to such things as program development, professional growth activities, faculty meetings, bus duty, parent conferences, special help for individual students, and care of school property and equipment, licensed personnel may be required to extend their professional service beyond the normal working hours.

Each work site determines its own working hours.

### ***Administration of Medication***

The administration of medication to students by employees shall be permitted only upon the proper authorization by a physician and the student's parent or guardian. Please refer to the medication administration guidelines that is on file in the school office. Specific medication administration questions should be directed to the school nurse.

### ***Reporting Child Abuse or Neglect***

Any school employee who has reason to suspect that a child is the victim of child abuse or neglect has a legal responsibility and duty to report the case in accordance with the following procedures. The employee must promptly report the case to the principal, designee, or supervisor. When a principal, designee, or supervisor receives a report of suspected child abuse or neglect, the report must then be transmitted immediately to the Department of Social Services.

### ***Teacher Responsibilities***

The teacher is directly responsible to the principal. The primary functions are to direct the growth and development of pupils and to assume definite responsibilities toward the efficient operation and the improvement of the total program of the school. Examples of additional responsibilities which may be assigned include, but are not limited to the following: bus duty, cafeteria supervision, playground duty, supervision of extracurricular activities, and service on committees.

### ***Teacher Assistant Responsibilities***

The primary functions of the teacher assistant are to assist with instructional activities and free the teacher from some of the routine duties. Teacher assistants shall also be assigned for the purpose of providing services to meet the unique needs of identified special needs students. Teacher assistants perform all duties under the supervision of teachers and principals.

### ***Other Classified Staff Responsibilities***

Each classified employee is directly responsible to a designated supervisor. Each employee has a responsibility for the smooth and efficient operation of the school system. Additional responsibilities may be assigned by the designated supervisor.

### ***Personal Financial Responsibilities***

It is important that each employee be a responsible citizen in the community. This includes prompt payment of tax obligations including county property taxes, state and federal income taxes. When a taxing authority is forced to garnish an employee's wages it is a poor reflection on the employee and the school system. Incidents of non-payment of taxes may be considered as insubordination and may reflect negatively on future employment opportunities.

## ***EMPLOYMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES***

### ***Employment Contracts***

Eligible licensed personnel are issued contracts upon their employment with Rockingham County Schools. Listed below are the types of contracts given to licensed employees.

***Probationary Contracts:*** Newly licensed instructional employees who hold a clear North Carolina license are eligible for a probationary contract for a maximum of four consecutive years.

Former licensed employees who held career contracts with Rockingham County Schools and who are re-employed in the school system must remain on a probationary contract with a clear license.

To earn credit for a probationary year, a licensed employee must work 120 days (student days and workdays).

Probationary contracts may be non-renewed by the Board of Education at the end of the contract term; however, the employee must receive notice of non-renewal by June 15 of a given contract year.

Contracts for any position requiring licensing are valid only after such certification or licensing has been secured. N.C.G.S. 115C-315

***Interim Contracts:*** Interim contracts are issued to licensed personnel who fill positions that are temporarily vacant, or short-term for a specific period of time, not to exceed one school year.

***Administrative Contracts:*** Principals, assistant principals, and certain directors and supervisors who are not eligible for career status under the provisions of GS 115C-325 will be issued contracts.

## ***Retention***

The Board of Education's intent is to employ or re-employ only those teachers who strive for and have exhibited excellence in their preparation and performance. Satisfactory performance is considered the minimum acceptable standard of performance; however, satisfactory performance does not assure any teacher of rights to or consideration for employment or re-employment.

## ***Changes in Employment Records***

Change forms should be completed with the Human Resources Department for any changes in name, address, or telephone number. Your prompt notification will help maintain accurate employment records for pay, leave, salary verification, and other purposes.

## ***Job Postings***

Job vacancies within the school system are posted during the school year on a regular basis in each school, the Central Office, and on the school system web site at [www.rock.k12.nc.us](http://www.rock.k12.nc.us).

## ***Promotions***

When current employees apply for vacancies which would constitute a promotion, they will be given full consideration in light of their qualifications.

## ***Employee-Initiated Transfer***

A request by an employee for a transfer to a different school or position must be on the electronic form provided by the district or in writing and submitted to the Department of Human Resources by May 1. The cut off date for approving employee transfers (lateral movement – same category of position, different address) among schools and departments will be July 1 or the next workday if July 1 is on a weekend or holiday. Following the end of the workday on July 1 or the next workday if July 1 is on a weekend or holiday, the personnel administrator will approve no additional transfers for the following school year. Vacancies that occur during the school year are posted in accordance with board policy.

## ***Dismissal***

Licensed employees included within the definition of "teacher" under North Carolina General Statute 115C-325 are subject to the dismissal procedures outlined in that law and in General Statute 115C-333.

Although classified employees are not entitled to the protections of North Carolina General Statute 115C-325 and are considered employees-at-will, the school system is committed to fair employment practices that assure there is reasonable basis for dismissal or termination.

## ***Resignation***

Licensed staff must give a 30 day written notice prior to resigning from the system. The 30 days are counted from the date of receipt of the resignation by the Personnel Office. Failure to give a 30 day written notice may

result in license revocation. Classified support staff must give at least two weeks written notice prior to resigning from the school system. The superintendent may accept an employee's resignation on behalf of the Board of Education.

## ***Reduction in Force***

The Board of Education recognizes that circumstances may require the reduction in the number of persons employed by the school system because of district reorganization, decreased enrollment, or decreased or discontinued funding. When circumstances require such a reduction in the work force, the Board of Education follows the appropriate procedures set forth in its policy.

## ***Substitute Teachers***

Rockingham County Schools is committed to making every effort to hire licensed teachers to serve as substitutes. Substitutes may be employed on all workdays, including optional teacher workdays (unless the regular teacher is using annual vacation leave on the optional workday). Substitutes may not be employed on holidays and on annual vacation leave days scheduled in the calendar.

All approved substitutes will have access to our online and calling system through Frontline Technologies (Aesop). **Only those substitutes with access to Aesop are eligible to be used as substitutes.**

Minimum requirements for substitute teaching are as follows:

- Completion of an Effective Teacher Training course offered by an accredited college or university.
- Proof of High School Diploma or GED.
- Completed application online.
- Clear Criminal records background check completed by Rockingham County Schools.
- Approval of the Board of Education.
- Completion of required new hire paperwork.
  - Health Certificate
  - Tuberculosis Test
  - Tax Forms
  - Direct Deposit
  - I-9
  - Substitute Agreement
  - Reference Forms
  - Copy of Drivers License
  - Copy of Social Security Card

The daily rate of pay for a substitute who currently holds or has held a teaching license is based on 65% of the A00 teacher salary. The daily rate of pay for a substitute teacher not holding a teaching license is based on 50% of the A00 teacher salary. The rate of pay is established by the State Legislature and is subject to change each year.

A principal, who feels it appropriate to do so, may assign a teacher assistant to serve as a substitute teacher. When a teacher assistant acts as a substitute teacher, the salary for the day will be the same as the daily salary of an entry-level teacher with an “A” license.

Employment of substitute teachers will be in units of half-days or full days based on the employee's base percentage. If teaching responsibilities are for a half day or less, the deduction for a substitute will be for half-day.

## ***EMPLOYEE RELATIONS***

### ***Communications***

The school system considers good communication essential in creating a positive work environment that will retain motivated staff who can work together to achieve goals. A number of publications are produced to keep employees and school communities informed.

Additionally, if staff needs information or clarification about a matter affecting them, they are encouraged to discuss the subject with their supervisor or principal. If the problem cannot be handled by their supervisor, they should contact a Central Office administrator for assistance.

### ***Orientation***

New employee system-wide orientation meetings are scheduled on a regular basis throughout the year. Orientation meetings will be scheduled as needed for new employees hired after September. New employees will be notified about these sessions by Human Resources. Orientations are designed to assist new employees to make a successful transition to their job by acquainting them with personnel policies, procedures, and benefits related to their employment. Additional orientations are also conducted at school and department levels to address specific job responsibilities and procedures.

### ***Employee Assistance Program***

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a system-wide benefit that provides confidential and free, short-term professional counseling services to resolve personal problems interfering with an employee's life at home, in society, or on the job. Services are available to all employees and members of their immediate families.

Although the Employee Assistance Program is sponsored and paid for by the school system, the program is administered independently by two different providers: the Rockingham County Mental Health Clinic and Carolina Psychological Associates, P. A. in Greensboro. This assures the employee of complete confidentiality in seeking help from the program.

The telephone numbers for contacting the two providers are as follows: Mental Health Center – 342-8316 (8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.) & Carolina Psychological Associates -272-0855. Crisis/Emergency – 342-8316 (after working hours) – 634-3300

### ***Employee Suggestions***

The school system welcomes employee suggestions and ideas for improvement. You are encouraged to share suggestions with your supervisor or principal.

### ***Resolving Formal Complaints and Grievances***

The Board of Education encourages the administration to actively attempt to resolve differences and to reduce the potential sources of conflict among employees. Open, effective channels of communication among all employees, administrators, and the Board of Education shall be established and maintained. Any employee who has a grievance against the school district or against another employee within the district shall have the opportunity for an orderly presentation and impartial review of the grievance.

A grievance is a formal written claim by an employee that there has been a violation, misapplication, or misinterpretation of a law, policy, or regulation. All grievances shall be in writing and the written statement of grievance shall remain the same throughout all steps of the grievance procedure.

**Step 1:** The employee(s) shall present the grievance in writing on an approved form to his/her immediate supervisor or supervisor's designee, or if that is not appropriate, to the Executive Director of Human Resources. The formal grievance shall be filed as soon as possible, but in no event longer than ten days after the occurrence giving rise to the grievance. The immediate supervisor or designee shall provide the aggrieved employee(s) with a written response to the grievance within four days after the meeting.

In the event the immediate supervisor or designee determines at the outset that a Step 1 review is inappropriate, or if the immediate supervisor is the person against whom the grievance is being brought, the grievance procedure will originate at Step 2.

**Step 2:** If the grievance is not resolved at Step 1, within four days of receipt of the Step 1 decision, the employee(s) may refer the grievance for review by the Superintendent or designee.

Board of Education Policy 1750, "STAFF COMPLAINTS, CONCERNS, AND GRIEVANCES, is accessible via the school district's web site at [www.rock.k12.nc.us](http://www.rock.k12.nc.us). If you have complaints or concerns refer to page 33 in this handbook.

### ***Removal of Information from the Personnel File***

Any employee may petition the Board of Education to remove from the personnel file information that he/she deems invalid, outdated, or irrelevant. To do so the employee must make this request in writing to the Human Resources Department.

### ***Exit Interviews***

Upon separation from employment, employees are sent a survey to complete regarding their employment conditions while working for Rockingham County Schools. In addition, any employee desiring to give feedback to the school system will be granted an exit interview. Employees desiring an exit interview should contact the Human Resources Department.

### ***Recognition***

Several awards programs are conducted each year to recognize outstanding service or achievement. Those include but are not limited to the following: Teacher of the Year, Principal of the Year, and Volunteer of the Year. In addition, the school system provides service appreciation awards for employees who are retiring.

## ***LEARNING AND GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES***

### ***Licensed Staff***

Professional personnel, by State Board of Education policy, must periodically update their professional license. Certification of renewal credit is required to assure that professional personnel update their professional knowledge and technical competency.

A Standard Professional 2 License (SP2) is valid for a period of five years and must be renewed by earning 8 renewal credits within the current 5-year cycle. Renewal credit includes: 1 renewal credit for literacy, 1 renewal credit in the specific academic subject area and 5.5 general credits (as determined by the LEA). The academic subject area credit does not apply to school administrators or student service personnel (social workers, counselors, media coordinators, etc.) Credit is no longer given for teaching experience.

Principals and assistant principals must earn 3 renewal credits focused on the school executives as instructional, human resources and managerial leaders. The remaining 5 credits may be general credits.

One semester hour is equivalent to 1.5 units of renewal credit.

Teachers who complete National Board may earn 7.5 renewal credits (including 1 for academic subject area and 1 for literacy). Those who are in the 10 year National Board renewal cycle may earn 2 credits (1 for academic subject area and 1 for literacy).

Prior approval is required for all staff development activities by completing a proposal on the SEA system. After completion of the activity, the SEA survey should be completed. All out-of-district activities require a certificate of completion for renewal credits to be posted. All credits are posted from the SEA system.

For all licensed employees the PDP is an annual plan focusing on identifying goals and strategies for improving professional skills. The plan is developed in collaboration with the principal or designee and/or mentor teacher.

It is the responsibility of all licensed employees to keep up with their earned renewal credit. Keep a personal file of all earned credit.

Course credits can be earned through the following:

**Workshops, Conferences, and Activities**

Many opportunities for renewal credit are offered by outside agencies and organizations. All credits must be approved through the SEA system.

**College or University Courses**

Courses may be taken through any accredited college or university, including technical or community colleges. One quarter hour of credit is the equivalent of 1.0 renewal credit. One semester hour of credit is the equivalent of 1.5 renewal credits.

**In-system Courses or Workshops**

Workshops and courses are offered regularly through the school system. These activities generally offer approved renewal credit of at least 10 hours in length.

**CEU Requirements are:**

K - 8 Licensure Area Teachers  
3 renewal credits in CONTENT  
3 renewal credits in LITERACY  
2 renewal credits in GENERAL

ALL Other Licensed Educators  
3 renewal credits in CONTENT  
5 renewal credits in GENERAL

Effective July 2016, renewal credits 0.5 or higher will be accepted by Rockingham County Schools.

***Beginning Teacher Support Program***

The Beginning Teacher Support Program (BTSP) is a three-year program for beginning teachers that extends professional education preparation and offers the assessment and support necessary for an individual's professional growth. Student services personnel (media coordinators, counselors, and speech pathologists), administrators, and curriculum-instructional specialists are issued continuing licenses and do not participate in the Initial Licensure Program.

Out-of-state applicants are not subject to BTSP requirements if they have a NC license based on interstate reciprocity or completion of an NCATE approved education program, and have three or more years of experience (as determined by the Licensure section).

The fundamental purpose of the BTSP is to offer support for an individual's professional growth during the first three years of employment. Support consists of the following:

- A mentor
- BTSP Coordinator
- Periodic assessment of skills
- Evaluations of performance
- Professional Development Plan
- Staff Development
- Others as needed to be determined by Beginning Teacher Support Program Coordinator



Initially licensed teachers are eligible for a continuing license based on three years teaching experience and successful completion of the Interim Requirements for Licensure.

The requirements for BTs by year are as follows:

**First Year (BT-1):**

- Three formal observations by the principal or designee
- One formal observation by a peer
- Summative evaluation by the principal
- Completion of the Professional Development Plan
- A log of all staff development including name and date of workshop, number of hours credit
- A log of all meetings with the BT's mentor

**Second Year (BT-2):**

- Three formal observations by the principal or designee
- One formal observation by a peer
- Summative evaluation by the principal
- Completion of the Professional Development Plan
- A log of all staff development including name and date of workshop, number of hours credit
- A log of all meetings with the BT's mentor

**Third Year (BT-3):**

- Three formal observations by the principal or designee
- One formal observation by a peer
- Summative evaluation by the principal
- Completion of the Professional Development Plan
- A log of all staff development including name and date of workshop, number of hours credit

Teachers must serve three years within a five-year period from the date of enrollment to complete the initial licensure process and all three years must be in the same licensure area. In addition, the BT must be on the payroll for six consecutive months in order for the year to count for BT requirements. A teacher who is employed for less than 50% of the time is not eligible to participate in the BTSP.

The year-to-year employment decisions and the awarding of career status to probationary teachers are not local decisions. Teachers not recommended for continuing licensure have three options:

- Have the recommendation reviewed by filing a contested case petition in accordance with Article 3 of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes of North Carolina.
- Contact an approved teacher education program and complete a program of study to correct deficiencies.
- Exit the profession.

### ***Beginning Teacher Induction Program***

All first-year teachers are required to participate in the Beginning Teacher Induction Program. This program is designed to give support to first-year teachers as they adjust to their job responsibilities. The program begins with three full days of in-service prior to the first day that all staff report back to work. Other monthly meetings will be scheduled, with meeting dates given to all first-year teachers at the first induction meeting.

## **COMPENSATION**

### ***Definitions of Terms***

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

Employees in this category shall be eligible for membership in the State Employees' Retirement System, coverage under the North Carolina hospitalization insurance program, holidays, annual leave, and sick leave according to approved earning rates. Employees in this classification are earning state service toward annual leave and longevity pay.

**Part-Time Employee:** Employees who regularly work at least 20 hours per week, but less than the number of hours set as full time for that class of work.

Employees in this category are entitled to earn annual leave, sick leave, and holidays on a *pro-rata* basis. A part-time employee does not receive retirement and hospitalization benefits. However, an employee in this category is eligible for hospitalization coverage by assuming full costs (employee and employer charges) of coverage, but is not eligible for retirement system membership. Persons in this category are earning state service toward annual leave and longevity pay. A part-time employee is eligible to receive longevity pay.

**Full-time Employee:** Employees whose regular work week is the number of hours set as full-time in his or her class of work, but not less than 30 hours per week. Two or more part-time positions may be combined to produce full-time employment.

Employees in this category shall be eligible for membership in the State Employees' Retirement System, coverage under the North Carolina hospitalization insurance program, holidays, annual leave, and sick leave according to approved earning rates. Employees in this classification are earning state service toward annual leave and longevity pay.

**Temporary Employee:** Employees who are employed less than 6 full pay periods or an employee whose regular work week is less than 20 hours per week.

Employees in this category are not eligible for membership in the State Employees' Retirement System, coverage under the North Carolina hospitalization insurance program, holiday, annual leave pay, or sick leave. Persons in this classification are not earning state service toward annual leave and longevity pay.

**Instructional Personnel:** This classification includes all classroom teachers, school media specialists, and instructional assistants.

**Substitute Teachers:** Persons employed on a day-to-day basis and who are replacing regular employees who are absent shall be considered as substitutes. Substitutes are not eligible for membership in the State Employees Retirement System, coverage under North Carolina hospitalization insurance program, sick leave, annual leave, holidays, or state service.

### ***Salary***

Licensed employees are paid according to the licensure level and years of experience determined by the Department of Public Instruction when the North Carolina license is issued plus any local supplement approved by the local Board of Education.

Classified staff are paid based on the scale and pay grade assigned to the position they fill.

**National Board Certification:** Teachers are encouraged to become certified by the National Board for Professional Teacher Standards. Certification by the NBPTS results in a 12% salary increase. To learn more about NBPTS, contact the Teacher Education Section of the Division of Human Resource Management at 919-807-3309.

**Mentor Teacher:** Mentor teachers are assigned to provide support and assistance to initially licensed teachers

### ***Fair Labor Standards Act/Compensatory Time***

**Descriptor Term:** Fair Labor Standards Act Compliance

**Descriptor Code-GDBC**

**Date Adopted:** October 13, 2003

It is the policy of the Rockingham County Board of Education to comply with the wage and hour requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act for all nonexempt employees. The superintendent is authorized to designate different workweeks for various classes of employees.

- **Workweek:** For the purposes of compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act, all employees' workweek shall be from 12:01 a.m. Saturday to 12 midnight Friday.
- 
- **Timesheets:** Accurate and complete time sheets of actual hours worked during the workweek shall be signed by each employee and submitted to the finance officer.
- **Compensatory Time:** Employees who are not exempt from the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act will accrue compensatory time (comp. time) at a rate of 1.5 hours for every hour worked beyond (40) hours in a single workweek. Supervisors will make every attempt to modify an employee's schedule to avoid more than forty (40) hours of work in a given week.

No employee shall work overtime without the express written approval of the supervisor.

No supervisor shall allow an employee to accumulate more than 40 hours of compensatory time without prior approval of the Superintendent or designee. Employees must be allowed to use compensatory time within a reasonable period after requesting such use.

Compensatory time off at a rate of one and one-half times the hours worked, will be the first option for compensating an employee for overtime. Only with appropriate authorization will nonexempt employees be compensated for overtime worked at a rate of one and one-half times their regular hourly rate of pay. Supervisors should encourage employees to use accumulated compensatory time during the pay period in which that compensatory time was earned.

If an employee holds compensatory time upon termination of employment, such time will be paid to the employee in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act and federal regulations.

Employees must be allowed to use compensatory time within a reasonable period after requesting such use.

- **Overtime:** Overtime hours (in excess of 40 hours a week in a given workweek) may be compensated in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act and Wage and Hour regulations. Nonexempt employees should not work overtime except in an emergency or extraordinary circumstances and with prior approval of the Superintendent or his/her designee.
- **Volunteer Work:** Employees may volunteer to work at school events, provided the work is clearly at the employee's option, is in a different capacity from the employee's regularly-assigned duties and is performed on an occasional or sporadic basis. Employees may not volunteer to provide the same type of service they are employed to perform for the school system. Such work shall be treated as regular work and be subject to hourly employment compensations.

- **Non-exempt Employees:** Non-exempt employees are considered to belong to one or more of the following groups of employees; teacher assistants, clerical employees, child nutrition workers, custodians, bus drivers, non-licensed coaches and assistants, transportation mechanics, and maintenance workers or anyone else who does not meet the test for executive, administrative or professional employees.
- **Exempt Employees:** Exempt employees are considered to belong to one or more of the following groups of employees, member of the board of education, superintendent, associate superintendent, assistant superintendent, director, coordinator, principal, assistant principal, teachers, counselor, media specialist, social worker, nurse, psychologist, anyone else who is required to hold a license by the State Board of Education, or anyone else who meets the test for executive, administrative, or professional employees.

Legal Ref. The Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, as amended; U.S.C. 201 et seq.

## **Policy Code: GDBC –Fair Labor Standards-R**

**Date Adopted: 10-2003**

### **Compensable Time Defined**

- Hours Worked-** Employees must be compensated at their regular hourly rate of pay for all hours worked in a workweek. In general, hours worked include:
  - all the time an employee must be on duty;
  - all the time an employee must be on the employer's premises;
  - all the time an employee must be at any other prescribed place of work;
  - any additional time the employee is allowed (i.e., suffered or permitted) to work;
  - any time spent awaiting medical attention at the employer's direction during normal working hours;
  - any time spent in civic or charitable work at the employer's request; and
  - any time spent in emergency travel outside of normal working hours at the request of the employer.
- Suffered or Permitted to Work** -If an employer knows or has reason to know that an employee is continuing to work, it is considered work time. (29 C.F.R. 785.11). Employees, including bus drivers, accruing overtime hours must complete *Authorization for Overtime Hours* form- E1 and have the approval of their supervisor.
- Rest periods-**A rest period of 15 minutes is permissible for every 4-hour period of work with permission of the supervisor. Employees may not "bank" or accrue break-time in order to leave early at the end of a workday. During authorized breaks, employees are not permitted to leave the work site.
- Meal Breaks-** All eight-hour employees are expected to receive at least a 30-minute meal break. This is not considered compensable work time unless the employee is required to perform specified duties and is not free to leave the work- station during the meal break.
- Timekeeping of Hours Worked-** An accurate keeping of time worked by each classified employee shall be kept in a manner designated by the Rockingham County Finance Department. Supervisors shall monitor weekly time records for accuracy and completeness and verify that all overtime worked by non-exempt staff is reported.
- Overtime for Employees with Hourly Assignments** - These employees will not be compensated with compensatory time but will instead be paid at 1 ½ times their hourly wage for all time worked over 40 hours in a single workweek.

## **Volunteering to Perform Regular Work**

Employees cannot volunteer to perform their regular work duties off the clock and without compensation (29 U.S.C. 2003(e)(4)(A)). The Department of Labor considers teaching/supervising students and coaching duties to be the same type of work; thus according to the Department of Labor, teacher assistants cannot volunteer to coach. Rockingham County Schools will not employ any non-exempt employee to coach if the coaching responsibilities will cause the employee's workweek to be greater than 40 hours.

The employee is considered a bona fide volunteer if the employees' services are offered freely and without pressure or coercion, direct or implied, from the employer and if the volunteer's work is not a continuation of the same or similar work for which the employee is normally employed. The employee must also sign the volunteer agreement form. (*Volunteer Agreement-E-3*)

## **Training**

Principals, supervisors and bookkeepers will be trained annually on record keeping requirements with regards to FLSA. A copy of the FLSA policy will also be included in the RCS Employee Handbook.

## **Agreements**

All non-exempt employees must sign an agreement annually stating that they have been provided a copy of the Board of Education's policy on work time, have reviewed it and agree to follow the policy. (*Agreement to Receive Compensatory Time Off- E2*)

A statement shall also be completed annually by non-exempt employees stating that any overtime worked over 40 hours will be compensated with time and a half compensatory time rather than overtime pay. (Bus drivers will be paid 1 ½ times their normal hourly pay for all hours worked beyond 40 hours during a single workweek).

## **Use of Compensatory Time**

An employee who asks for the use of compensatory time must be allowed to use the time "within a reasonable period after making the request if the use of the compensatory time does not unduly disrupt the operations of the school system". When an employee acquires at least 4 hours of compensable time, that time shall be used before annual leave is permitted.

## **Federal and State Required Employment Posters**

All employment posters must be posted in areas that are accessible to all employees, especially non-certified employees, i.e. lounge, school office, cafeteria kitchen, bus garage, maintenance offices, custodian's closet and other places where employees gather.

## **Longevity Pay**

SECTION 9.1.(e) Beginning with the 2014-2015 fiscal year, in lieu of providing annual longevity payments to employees on the licensed employee salary schedule, the amounts of those longevity payments are included in the monthly amounts under the teacher salary schedule.

*State Salary Manual 2015-2016, January 2016*

Longevity payments are paid during the pay period following the anniversary date of employment.

<b>YEARS COMPLETED</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
10 but less than 15	1.50%
15 but less than 20	2.25%
20 but less than 25	3.25%
25 or more	4.50%

## **LEAVES OF ABSENCE**

### ***Holiday Leave***

The number of holidays are determined by the State Personnel Commission. Ten holidays per calendar year are scheduled for permanent, full-time and part-time 10-month employees. Eleven holidays are scheduled for 12-month, permanent employees. Local boards of education determine when holidays are scheduled when a holiday comes while school is in session.

### ***Annual (Vacation) Leave***

Permanent, full-time and part-time employees earn vacation leave. Eligible part-time permanent employees earn leave equal to their percentage of full-time employment. On June 30 of each year, employees with more than 30 days of accumulated leave will have the excess accumulated leave converted to sick leave so that only 30 days are carried forward to the next fiscal year which begins on July 1. Requests for annual leave must be approved by the employee's supervisor.

Annual leave will be transferred when employees transfer among local educational agencies and may be transferred to state agencies if they are willing to accept the leave; otherwise, employees leaving the public schools will be paid for up to 30 days of accumulated leave. In case of death, the employee's estate will receive payment for any accumulated vacation leave up to 30 days. The following chart shows the number of days of vacation earned each month based on years of state service.

<b>WHEN YOU HAVE</b>	<b>YOU ARE GRANTED</b>			
Years of State Service	Days per Month	10 Month Employees	11 Month Employees	12 Month Employees
Less than 5 years	1.17	11.70	12.87	14.04
5 but less than 10 years	1.42	14.20	15.62	17.04
10 but less than 15 years	1.67	16.70	18.37	20.04
15 but less than 20 years	1.92	19.20	21.12	23.04
20 years or more	2.17	21.70	23.87	26.04

Instructional personnel who require a substitute and bus drivers are not permitted to take vacation leave on days when students are scheduled to be in attendance unless the employee's absence is due to a catastrophic illness and all sick leave has been exhausted. Instructional personnel who do not require a substitute may, with their supervisor's approval, take annual vacation leave on any day school is in session.

### ***Sick Leave***

Permanent employees who are working or who are paid leave for one-half or more of the workdays in a monthly pay period earn sick leave at the rate of one day per month. Eligible, permanent, part-time employees earn sick leave equal to their percentage of full-time employment. Sick leave may be granted for: (1) personal illness, injury, or other temporary disability, (2) illness in the employee's immediate family that necessitates the employee's attendance, (3) death in the immediate family, and (4) medical appointments.

Sick leave may be accumulated indefinitely and is transferable among local school systems. It may be transferred to a state agency, community college, or technical institute if they are willing to accept the sick leave.

## ***Twenty-Day Extended Sick Leave***

Instructional personnel (excluding teacher assistants) may request 20 days of additional sick leave each year, less \$50.00 per day, for personal illness. This extended sick leave may be used after all accumulated sick leave has been exhausted. A doctor's statement is required to initiate the use of extended sick leave and should be sent to the Human Resources Department for approval. Extended sick leave cannot be accumulated.

## ***Voluntary Shared Leave***

The purpose of voluntary shared leave is to provide economic relief for employees who, by reason of prolonged absence caused by serious medical conditions of self or immediate family, are likely to suffer financial hardship. Only permanent, full-time and part-time employees who have exhausted all accumulated paid leave (sick leave and annual vacation leave, if applicable) are eligible to receive donated (shared) leave.

An employee must complete Voluntary Shared Leave forms and send them to the Human Resources Department for approval. Application may also be made by a third party acting on the employee's behalf.

Any eligible employee in the school system may donate annual vacation leave to any approved employee in the same school system. Only family members may donate annual vacation leave to an immediate family member in another LEA.

SICK LEAVE may be donated to an employee of a public school system (LEA). A public school employee shall not donate more than five days of sick leave per year to any one non family member. Sick leave may be donated to an immediate family member in the same or another LEA, community college, or state agency.

A donor may not reduce his or her sick leave balance below one-half of what that person can earn in a year.

***Employees who donate sick leave are advised that the sick leave balance provides an income safety net while employed. Sick leave also has value at retirement. At retirement, a member of the Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System with an earned sick leave balance, receives an additional month of service credit in TSERS for each 20 days, plus one additional month if there is a remainder. The additional service credit increases the retirement benefit for the remainder of the life of the retiree.***

## ***Personal Leave***

Teachers earn two days (.2 per month) of personal leave during the 10-month school term with a standard salary deduction of \$50.00 for the cost of substitute teachers. No deduction is required on non-student days. These days must be used in one-half or whole day units and are transferable among school systems. A teacher may carry forward to July 1 a maximum of five days of personal leave; the remainder of the teacher's personal leave shall be converted to sick leave on June 30. At the time of retirement, a teacher may also convert accumulated personal leave to sick leave for creditable service towards retirement. Personal leave is granted upon authorization of an employee's immediate supervisor. This type of leave is not normally provided on the first day teachers are required to report for the school year, required teacher workdays, the last working day before or the next working day after holidays or scheduled vacation days. The immediate supervisor may make exceptions to these days when necessary.

## ***Educational Leave***

Educational leave is intended to enhance an individual's knowledge, ability, skills, and/or professional growth in a field of education or employment related to the employee's duties or responsibilities in this school system.

Short-term educational leave for participation in workshops and meetings is available if approved by the principal or supervisor. A "Leave Request Form" should be submitted to the principal or supervisor for approval at least five days before the activity is to take place. Any request for travel or workshop expenses must be made within 30 days of the conclusion of the approved educational activity.

Long-term educational leave of up to one year may be requested by employees who have been employed with the system for three years. A request for educational leave should be made in writing to the Human Resources Department. Long term educational leave is non-paid and is subject to approval by the principal or supervisor, superintendent, and the Board of Education.

## ***Professional Leave***

Permanent public school employees who have professional responsibilities or who need to attend meetings of professional associations may be absent with pay minus a salary deduction for substitute teachers. Such absences must be approved by the immediate supervisor and will be allowed for a period not exceeding three successive days for in-state meetings or five successive days for out-of-state meetings.

## ***Community Responsibility***

Upon approval of the supervisor, full-time or part-time school employees may be granted leave to represent the school or administrative unit at community functions such as the funeral of a school child or his parent. Employees absent for these reasons shall retain full salary during the days absent.

## ***Jury Duty***

When permanent school employees are absent from work to serve on a jury, no deduction is made from their regular salaries. Employees are entitled to their regular compensation plus any fees received for jury duty.

## ***Court Attendance***

When permanent employees are absent from work to attend court in connection with their official duty, no salary deduction is made. Any fees received when serving in an official capacity as a witness must be returned to the local school system. Employees who are absent for appearance in court as defendants, plaintiffs or witnesses for personal matters, even if subpoenaed, shall not be entitled to receive any salary payment for those days, unless they are using appropriate, approved earned leave.

## ***Parental Leave Without Pay***

Male or female school employees are granted a leave of absence without pay for up to one calendar year for the birth or adoption of a child.

## ***Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)***

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) allows eligible employees to take 12 workweeks of unpaid, job-protected leave for their own serious medical condition or that of an immediate family member. In addition, the FMLA allows eligible employees to take the same job-protected leave for the birth of a child or the placement of a child with the employee through adoption or foster care. Employers must maintain any employer-paid health benefits while the employee is on FMLA leave.

To be eligible for FMLA benefits, an employee must be employed by the employer for at least 12 months (not necessarily consecutive) and work at least 1,250 hours during the 12-month period immediately preceding the commencement of the leave.

As of January 28, 2008, FMLA was amended to provide eligible employees with up to 12 weeks of leave related to the active military service of a spouse, son, daughter or parent or after being notified of an impending call to active duty status of a cited family member. Also, eligible employees are entitled to up to 26 work weeks of leave to care for a spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin who is undergoing medical treatment for injuries received as a member of the Armed Forces. The maximum combined total leave that an employee may take during a single 12 month period is 26 work weeks of leave.

Twenty-six workweeks of leave during a single 12-month period to care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness who is the spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin to the employee (military caregiver leave).



## ***Parental Involvement In School Leave***

Any employee who is a parent, guardian, or person in *loco parentis* may take up to four hours per fiscal year to attend or otherwise be involved at his/her child's school. Leave granted for the purpose shall be at a mutually agreed upon time between the employer and employee.

## ***Military Leave***

Leave with pay is granted to members of reserve components of the US Armed Forces for certain periods of active duty training and for state military duty. Leave with pay is extended to full-time or part-time permanent school employees, normally not to exceed 15 days each calendar year, for annual training.

# **BENEFITS**

## ***Income Tax Withholding Forms***

Federal (Form W-4) and state (Form NC-4) forms may be obtained from the school office or Finance Office for the purpose of changing income tax withholding information. Changes in exemptions and deductions may be made at any time during the year. Employees claiming exempt must complete a new form each year.

## ***Health Insurance***

All permanent, full-time employees of Rockingham County Schools are eligible for group insurance. Enrollment is not automatic. Employees may elect to have their spouses and/or children covered by the same plan by paying a set, monthly premium. This premium is collected by payroll deduction and is handled as a "before tax" salary reduction unless the employee rejects this benefit by July 1st of each year. For employees who are paid in 10 installments monthly premiums will be higher than employees on 12 month installments to cover the summer months. Permanent, part-time employees working a minimum of 20 hours per week may purchase health insurance if they pay the total premium.

The State Health Plan of North Carolina, currently administered by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina, provides coverage for hospital and medical expenses.

The annual enrollment period for health insurance is determined by the state each year. The effective date of coverage is January 1 – December 31.

Claims under the State Health Plan should be filed as soon as possible after services are received. The "year" for purposes of meeting the deductible is January 1 – December 31. It is the employee's responsibility to file claims. Claim forms are available online at [www.shpnc.org](http://www.shpnc.org)

Changes in coverage can be made only during the annual enrollment period or within 30 days of a documented "qualifying event." Examples of "qualifying events" include, but are not limited to, birth of a child, change in marital status, etc. All changes must be done online at <https://shpnc.org>

Employees who are first hired on or after October 1, 2006, who retire with 5 but less than 10 years of retirement service credit, will be eligible for State Health Plan coverage by paying the full premium. Employees who are first hired on or after October 1, 2006, who retire with 10 but less than 20 years of retirement service credit, will have to pay 50% of the individual coverage premiums under the regular State insured plan. Employees first hired on or after October 1, 2006, who retire with 20 or more years of retirement service credit, will have the total amount of their regular State insured plan individual coverage premiums paid by the State.

## ***Dental Insurance***

All permanent, full-time employees of Rockingham County Schools are eligible to purchase dental coverage. Employees may elect to purchase coverage for their dependents at an additional cost.

Premiums collected by payroll deduction are pre-taxed. Employees who are paid on 10 month installments will have higher premiums deducted to cover the summer months.

Changes in coverage can be made only during an open-enrollment period or within 30 days of a documented "qualifying event."

Open enrollment for dental benefits is held during the spring of each year and becomes effective September 1<sup>st</sup>.

COBRA dental will be offered for up to 18 months when an employee retires or terminates employment.

## ***Vision Insurance***

All permanent, full-time employees of Rockingham County Schools are eligible to purchase vision coverage. Employees may elect to purchase coverage for their dependents at an additional cost.

Premiums collected by payroll deduction are pre-taxed. Employees who are paid on 10 month installments will have higher premiums deducted to cover the summer months.

Changes in coverage can be made only during an open-enrollment period or within 30 days of a documented "qualifying event."

Open enrollment for vision benefits is held during the spring of each year and becomes effective September 1<sup>st</sup>.

COBRA vision will be offered by the vision carrier when an employee retires or terminates employment.

## ***Life Insurance***

The Board of Education provides to all permanent, full-time employees basic group life insurance coverage in the amount of \$8,000 upon employment. Employees may elect to purchase additional coverage up to 5 times their annual salary for themselves at a minimum cost and coverage for family members with premiums being payroll deductible. Coverage will cease at termination of employment. Terminating employees can call Colonial Life at 1-800-325-4368 to get a conversion price quote if they want to keep the coverage.

## ***Retirement***

Permanent, full-time employees are covered by the North Carolina Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System. Employees contribute 6% of their monthly salary and employers contribute a percentage set by the state of the employee wages to the Retirement System. Employee contributions are paid with pretax dollars,

thereby reducing the current state and federal income taxes. Employees who are involuntarily terminated or resign after five or more years of retirement system membership may withdraw their retirement contributions plus any interest they have earned. Persons who voluntarily resign with less than five years of membership in the Retirement System may withdraw only the funds they contributed. Persons leaving public school employment with five or more years of membership credit in the Retirement System may elect to leave their contributions in the Retirement System and receive future retirement benefits.

Full, unreduced retirement benefits may be received at

- any age with 30 years of service,
- age 60 with 25 years of service, or
- age 65 with 5 years of service (10 years if you became a member on or after 8/1/11)

Early, reduced benefits may be received at

- age 50 with 20 years of service or
- age 60 with 5 years of service (10 years if you became a member on or after 8/1/11)

All retirements are effective the first day of the month; applications must be received in Raleigh by the last day of the preceding month.

Change of retirement beneficiaries is possible at any time prior to retirement and under certain option provisions after retirement. Refund of accumulated contributions is also possible after the employee terminates employment with the state as an alternative to a monthly pension.

### ***Death Benefit***

A death benefit between \$25,000 and \$50,000 is payable to a designated beneficiary after an employee has completed one year as a contributing member of the Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System. The amount paid is determined by the employee's annual salary. Employee retirement contributions are also paid to the designated beneficiary.

### ***Employee Disability***

A comprehensive short-term and long-term disability income plan is provided at the employer's expense for permanent, full-time employees who are members of the Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System and meet certain state service requirements.

***The Short-Term Disability Plan:*** This plan is available to disabled employees with at least one year of contributory retirement service. It begins on the 61st day of disability and provides monthly income equal to 50 percent of one-twelfth of the annual base salary and longevity for up to 365 calendar days, with a maximum of \$3,000 per month. Short-term disability benefits may be extended for as many as 365 days beyond the original short-term period if approved by the State Medical Board. Employees must have at least five years of membership service in order for the school system to continue paying the employer portion of their hospital insurance. Short-term benefits will be offset by Workers' Compensation benefits.

***The Long-Term Disability Plan:*** This plan begins after the short-term plan ends for the totally and permanently disabled permanent full-time employee with five years of contributory retirement service. The benefits provide monthly income equal to 65% of one-twelfth of the annual base salary and longevity, up to \$3,900 per month until the employee qualifies for unreduced retirement benefits. Long-term benefits, however, are coordinated with Social Security disability payments and Workers' Compensation benefits. Employees interested in applying for disability need to contact the Human Resources Department for forms.

### ***Supplemental Retirement Income Plan of NC (401K)***

Participation is available in the 401(K) Supplemental Retirement Income Plan of North Carolina. Prudential Retirement is the state administrator of the plan. For information, contact the Human Resources Department.

### ***Tax-Sheltered Annuities (403B)***

Tax-sheltered annuities are available for interested employees. Employees are provided payroll deduction for the purchase of a tax sheltered annuity from approved vendors.

### ***457(b) Deferred Compensation Plan***

457(b) deferred compensation plan is available for interested employees. Employees may complete the appropriate enrollment materials for payroll deduction to defer compensation and divert it to the approved vendor.

## ***Credit Union***

Rockingham County Schools allows voluntary monthly deductions from permanent full-time or part-time employees for financial obligations incurred with the State Employees' Credit Union. State Employees' Credit Union payroll deductions may be made for savings, checking, and/or loan accounts.

## ***Direct Deposit***

Direct deposit services are available for payroll. Employees may contact the Finance Office for enrollment forms. New employees will receive their monthly salary electronically. Each new employee will need a checking account, saving account, or a credit union account to facilitate the deposit of their monthly salary.

## ***Cafeteria Benefits Plan***

Rockingham County Schools offers all full-time employees a comprehensive Cafeteria Benefits Program. The Cafeteria Benefits Program allows employees to save money by paying for non-reimbursed medical expenses, day care expenses, vision, dental, and cancer insurance with pre-tax dollars. The open enrollment for cafeteria benefits is held during the spring each year. The Flexible Spending accounts are effective July 1. Once enrolled, **NO** changes in coverage options may be made for one year unless there is a qualifying event as outlined on your election form for cafeteria benefits. Additional information is available from the Finance Department.

## ***Continuation of Insurance Coverage Following Employment Separation***

Continuation of group health insurance coverage is available to employee, spouse and/or dependents under the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) and the Public Health Service Act (PHSA) as required by federal law. Certain qualifying events are governed by these COBRA regulations. Continuation of this coverage is paid by the members at a rate two percent higher than the normal group rates, as allowed by Federal law. For more information concerning the COBRA regulations, please contact The NC State Health Plan/BCBS.

## ***Liability Insurance***

All employees are covered by the Board of Education's School Professional Legal Liability Insurance Policy. Each claim has a limit of liability of \$1,000,000 and an aggregate limit of \$1,000,000. The program covers legal liability for an act, error, or omission in services rendered in the discharge of school system duties. The school system also carries general liability insurance coverage.

## ***Workers' Compensation***

All public school employees are entitled to receive workers' compensation under the North Carolina Workers' Compensation Act. Employees must have suffered an accidental injury or contracted an occupational disease in the course of employment to be eligible for a weekly compensation benefit equal to 66.66% of the employee's average weekly earnings for the year prior to the injury, up to a maximum established by the Industrial Commission each year.

When an employee is injured on the job, he/she must ensure that the immediate supervisor has knowledge of the injury immediately following the accident. An online employee accident report must be completed by the injured employee within 24 hours of the accident on the Public School Works System, accessible from the Rockingham County Schools homepage. An accident investigation will be completed by the injured employee's immediate supervisor.

Eligible employees receive the workers' compensation weekly benefit after the required regular waiting period of seven calendar days. It becomes effective on the eighth day of the disability. During the seven day waiting period, the employee may choose to use available sick leave or take leave without pay. If the injury results in disability of more than 21 calendar days, the workers' compensation weekly benefit is allowed from the date of disability.

Compensation benefits are not automatic. A doctor's excuse must be submitted to the Finance Department if the employee wants to receive compensation benefits.

While on workers' compensation leave, an eligible employee continues to accumulate vacation and sick leave if the employee earned such leave while working. Leave days earned while on workers' compensation leave will be added to the employee's leave account upon return to work. Absences for workers' compensation shall count as part of the employee's Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) entitlement for that year.

The school system does not approve claims or make payments for medical bills or compensation. An outside agency is employed to administer this plan.

**Workers' compensation claims must never be filed with a health insurance carrier.**

### ***Paydays***

Employees are paid monthly. Each paycheck will include earnings for all work performed through the end of the previous payroll period. In the event that a regularly scheduled payday falls on a day off such as a weekend or holiday, employees will receive pay on the last day of work before the regularly scheduled payday. If a regular payday falls during an employee's vacation, unless the employee is enrolled in direct deposit, the employee's paycheck will be available upon his/her return from vacation.

### ***Local Supplement***

Rockingham County Schools pay a local supplement to all licensed employees who earn leave. Contracted employees are not eligible. The supplement amount varies, depending on job responsibility. Teachers receive a flat rate supplement which is paid in two installments: December and May.

First-time teachers to Rockingham County Schools may request that their entire supplement for the first year of employment be paid in their first pay check.

## ***Where to Call if You Have Questions About .....***

### ***Board of Education***

**627-2627**

Board Policy	627-2627
Hearing Officer	627-2672
Student Transcripts	627-2600
Student Transfers/Assignments/Tuition	627-2622

### ***Administrative Services***

**627-2611**

Athletics	627-2622
Child Nutrition	627-2651
Facilities/Construction	627-2611
Maintenance	634-3270
OSHA	627-2622
Print Shop	634-0390
Transportation – Students	634-3275/627-2604

### ***Instructional Support & School Improvement & Operation Services***

**627-2688**

**627-2621**

Academically Gifted	627-2672
Administrators' Academy	627-2672
Alcohol & Other Drugs	627-2672
Alternative Learning Program	627-2688
Bloodborne Pathogens	627-2688
Career & Technical Ed	627-2621
Cultural Arts	634-3220
Drivers Education	627-2622
Early Childhood Centers	627-2705
Elementary Programs (K-5)	627-2690
Employee Assistance Program	627-2688
ESL/LEP	627-2680
Exceptional Child Program	627-2705
Field Trips:	Elementary 627-2690 Middle/High School 627-2672
GED Releases	627-2621
Grants	627-2680
Homebound Instruction	627-2688
Instructional Support	627-2688
Media & Technology Center	342-1823

Middle Grades Programs (6-8)	627-2672
Migrant Education Program	627-2680
Preschool Program	627-2649
Remediation	627-2688
School Age Child Care	627-2715
Secondary Programs (9-12)	627-2621
Staff Development	627-2621
Student Teachers	627-2621
Testing/Accountability	627-2673
Title I Programs	627-2680
Year Round Education	627-2690

***Financial Services***

**627-2645**

Accounts Payable	627-2642
Hospital/Dental/Life Insurance	627-2637
Payroll	627-2646
Purchasing/Fixed Assets	627-2630
School Facility Rental	627-2630
Worker's Compensation	627-2637

***Human Resources***

**627-2678**

Star Card/Name Tags	627-2678 627-2679 627-2692
Beginning Teacher Program	627-2692
Bus Drivers	627-2678
Classified Personnel Applications	627-2678
Employment Verification	627-2678 627-2679 627-2692
Powerschool	634-3991
Leave Of Absence	627-2678
Licensed Personnel Applications	627-2679
Provisional License	627-2679
Recruitment	627-2679
Renewal Credit	627-2692
Retirement/Disability	627-2678
Substitute Teachers	627-2678

**Rockingham County Schools**  
**511 Harrington Hwy.**  
**Eden, NC 27288**  
**336-627-2600**

**Notice of Nondiscrimination**

The Rockingham County School System does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, homelessness or otherwise in its educational programs and activities and in employment. The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies:

Title VI and ADA Coordinator	Mrs. Stephanie Ellis, Director of Exceptional Childrens' Program (336) 627-2715
Age Discrimination	Mr. Jonathan Craig, Executive Director of Human Resources Department (336) 627-2679
Title IX and Boy Scouts	Dr. Cindy Corcoran, Asst. Superintendent of Instructional Support Services (336) 627-2688
Section 504	Mrs. Holly Williamson, Asst. Director of Student Support Services (336) 627-2662
Career and Technical Education	Dr. Kenneth Scott, Director of Classified Personnel/ Career and Technical Education (336) 627-2606