



Employee Handbook 2022-2023



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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.

As a member of the staff you fill a vital role in the education of the community we serve. You perform tasks necessary to the operation of Rockingham County Schools. In addition to the individual jobs you perform, you are representatives of the district to the community. Because you perform your jobs in the "public eye," you have a greater responsibility in the performance of your duties and personal conduct. You have been offered employment with the district with the confidence that you can do your job well and also serve as representatives of the district.

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

Please note that Rockingham County Schools' policies and procedures are not an employment contract nor are they terms of an employment contract. The school district's employees (other than employees in positions covered by North Carolina General Statute 115C-325, or employees who have specific employment contracts) are employees at will. This means the employee or the school district has the right to end the relationship at any time, with or without reason.

Please be attentive to changes in policies and/or procedures implemented during the year. Because we always seek to improve the usefulness of this handbook, you are encouraged to send written suggestions or ideas regarding its content to hr@rock.k12.nc.us.

OVERVIEW OF THE ROCKINGHAM COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

Rockingham County Schools serves 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, 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. Once at the web site, click on the "About RCS" tab and select "Board of Education" to access the link to "District Policies." You can also access current Board policies at <https://boardpolicyonline.com/?b=rock>

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 (RCS Board Policies [1710](#), [1720](#), and [1730](#)).

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 1725: Sexual Harassment](#) – Prohibited Conduct and Reporting Process and [Policy 1750: Grievance Procedure for Employees](#) are accessible via the school district's web site at www.rock.k12.nc.us.

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 Instructional Support Services. ([RCS Policy 7260](#))

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. ([RCS Policy 7262](#))

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 assignments 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. ([RCS Policy 7240](#))

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. ([RCS Policy 7241](#))

Tobacco, E-Cigarette and Vaping-free Environment

The use of tobacco, e-cigarette and vaping products is a health, safety and environmental hazard for students, employees, visitors and school facilities. In addition, the Board recognizes that it has an obligation to promote a healthy learning and working environment, free from unwanted smoke and vaping chemicals for the students, employees and visitors in the school system. You, nor visitors are permitted under any circumstances to use tobacco or vaping products in or on the grounds of any facility owned or leased or contracted by Rockingham County Schools. For the purposes of this policy, tobacco and vaping product is defined to include cigarettes, electronic cigarettes, hookah pens, e-hookahs, vape pipes, cigars, pipes, chewing tobacco, snuff, and any other items containing or reasonably resembling tobacco, tobacco products or inhaled non-prescription products. Tobacco use includes smoking, vaping, chewing, dipping, or any other use of tobacco products.

Weapons on Educational Property

Rockingham County Schools is committed to providing a safe school environment that is free from violence, to the maximum extent possible. Except as otherwise specified in [Policy 7275](#), employees, visitors, and other persons are prohibited from possessing, carrying, using, or threatening to use, or encouraging another person to possess, carry, use, or threaten to use, weapons or explosives on school property or while attending curricular or extracurricular activities sponsored by the school system. Any employee who violates this policy will be subject to discipline up to and including immediate termination. Any visitor or other person who violates this policy will be escorted from the premises and/or school activity immediately. The superintendent or principal shall immediately report any violations of this policy to law enforcement officials. Any employee who is aware that a weapon or explosive is present on school property or at a school event in violation of [Policy 7275](#) must immediately report this information to the superintendent or building principal, his or her designee, or the school resource officer as appropriate.

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." ([RCS Policy 7810](#) & [NC State Board of Education Policy EVAL-004](#)).

North Carolina Educator System (NCEES): This instrument is used by all licensed employees of Rockingham County Schools. Timelines and procedures 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. ([RCS Board Policy 7815](#))

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. ([RCS Board Policy 7820](#))

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. RCS prohibits corporal punishment, believing that other consequences are more appropriate and effective for teaching self control. No employee, student teacher or volunteer may use corporal punishment with any student. ([RCS Board Policy 4302](#))

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. ([RCS Board Policy 7120](#))

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, alternate licensure, 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.

Permit to Teach, Emergency License, Residency License These license types are issued to graduates who require additional coursework, testing, and an affiliation with a State of North Carolina approved Educator Preparation Program (EPP). Individuals may be licensed from one to three years, based on licensure assignment and meeting criteria for licensure.

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. ([RCS Board Policy 7130](#))

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, 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 the 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.

In the event of inclement weather...

- 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, 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 students to get home before roads become too dangerous. Again, please check the RCS District website at 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

RCS Facebook Page - www.facebook.com/rockinghamcountyschools

RCS Twitter Page - 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. For additional information, refer to [RCS Board Policy 7500](#).

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 are on file in the school office. Specific medication administration questions should be directed to the school nurse. ([RCS Board Policy 6125](#))

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. RCS's Board of Education supports all employees who in good faith make a report under either of North Carolina's mandated reporting laws. ([RCS Board Policy 4240](#))

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.

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. One of the conditions of employment for Classified staff is to obtain and maintain a bus license. Classified staff may be asked to drive if a school has a need.

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. One of the conditions of employment for Classified staff is to obtain and maintain a bus license. Classified staff may be asked to drive if a school has a need.

Athletic Coach Responsibilities

Athletic coaches of athletic teams are contracted employees of Rockingham County Schools. Coaches are primarily responsible for the compliance of their team members to the rules, regulations, and policies governing athletics. Compliance is enhanced when athletes are informed of and understand the policies. All coaches are directly responsible to the Principal and Athletic Director at their schools for the application of these rules and regulations.

It is the responsibility of all Coaches to:

- Promote good sportsmanship by setting a positive example while coaching athletics. Respect the integrity and judgment of the sports officials.
- Approach competition as a healthy and constructive exercise and not a life and death struggle that emphasizes victory at any price.
- Strive to set an example of the highest ethical and moral conduct at all times with the student

- athletes and all other individuals associated with the athletic program in any way.
- Refrain from the use of profane or abusive language with players, opponents, officials or spectators.
 - Instruct his/her players in the elements of good sportsmanship and remove players from competition who demonstrate unsportsmanlike behavior.
 - Avoid behavior that will incite players, opponents or spectators.
 - Avoid and eliminate negative comments to members of the media.
 - Promote and work in harmony with the entire interscholastic program of the school.

Paid and volunteer coaches must complete a background check through Rockingham County Schools prior to beginning coaching responsibilities. All coaches are encouraged to obtain and maintain a bus license. Additional information regarding RCS's Athletics program can be found at <https://www.rock.k12.nc.us/athletics>.

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. Refer to [RCS Policy 7410](#) for additional information.

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 on the school system website at 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 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. ([RCS Regulation 7440-R](#))

Dismissal

Licensed employees included within the definition of “teacher” under North Carolina General Statute 115C-325 are subject to 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. ([RCS Board Policy 7940](#))

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. ([RCS Board Policy 7900](#))

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 workforce, the Board of Education follows the appropriate procedures set forth in its policy. ([RCS Board Policies 7920](#) and [7921](#)).

Substitute Teachers

Rockingham County Schools is committed to making every effort to hire licensed teachers to serve as substitutes. As outlined in [RCS Policy 7430](#), 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 Driver's 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

Rockingham County Schools 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 need 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: 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 area 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.

[RCS Board of Education Policy 1750](#), Grievance Procedure for Employees, is accessible via the school district's web site at www.rock.k12.nc.us.

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. ([RCS Policy 7821](#))

Exit Interviews

Rockingham County Schools values feedback and offers employees leaving the district the opportunity to participate in an exit interview. Upon separation from employment, employees are sent a survey to complete regarding their employment conditions while working for RCS. The purpose of an exit interview is to help us

identify gaps in our processes, better attract and retain talent and reduce turnover—essentially to gain feedback on your experience as an employee. This helps us determine if there are areas for improvement, whether it is onboarding, recruitment, or experience within the specific school or site you are leaving. If you leave the district's employment, it is not a requirement that you participate in a formal exit interview with Human Resources Department staff; however, if you request an exit interview to provide feedback to the district, you will be given that opportunity. The district may also request the interview of selected personnel upon separation from employment.

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

The North Carolina State Board of Education requires all licensed employees to maintain a valid, North Carolina Professional Educator’s License. Each license-holder is responsible for knowing and satisfying license renewal requirements. Failure to renew your license makes you ineligible for employment. You may contact the Human Resources Department for additional information.

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. Credit is no longer given for teaching experience. The number of continuing education units (CEUs) required to renew a Continuing North Carolina Professional Educator’s license is 8.0.

Credits required to Renew Continuing licenses expiring on or after June 30, 2019	
Grades K-5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Academic Subject Area – Aligned to NC Prof. Teaching Standard 3 and 4 • 3 Literacy - As defined in GS 115C-296 • 2 Digital Learning Competencies
Grades 6-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Academic Subject Area - Aligned to NC Prof. Teaching Standard 3 and 4 • 2 Digital Learning Competencies • 3 General
Administrators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Executive's Role - Align with the expectations of the North Carolina School Executive Standards 2, 4, and 5, focused on the school executive's role as instructional, human resources, and managerial leader • 2 Digital Learning Competencies • 3 General
Student Services Personnel (Counselors, Media Specialists, Social Workers, Psychologists and Speech Language Pathologists with a Teaching Area)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Professional Discipline Area (Licensure area/Subject area) • 2 Digital Learning Competencies • 3 General

You may earn credit for attending locally sponsored workshops, college and university courses, activities offered by various outside organizations and locally approved "independent study" activities. required to earn renewal credit for all Prior approval is activities offered by any entity other than Rockingham County Schools, including colleges, State Department of Public Instruction, universities, technical schools and community colleges. "Prior approval" means that you must request approval before the beginning date of the activity.

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

Course credits can be earned through the following:

Workshops, Conferences, and Activities

Many opportunities for renewal credit are offered by outside agencies and organizations.

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.

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.

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 a leave of absence without pay. Eligibility for benefits must be designated at the 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 Employee 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 timesheets 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 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, teacher, 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, classified staff 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 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.

YEARS COMPLETED	PERCENTAGE
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.

WHEN YOU HAVE	YOU ARE GRANTED			
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.

- [Application for Participation Form VSL Form #1](#)
- [Authorization of Donation of Leave Form VSL Form #2](#)

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 public school system (PSU).

Sick Leave may be donated to an employee of a public school system (PSU). 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 PSU, 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

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 1st.

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 1st.

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, a savings 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 the 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 note 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 paycheck.

Where to Call if You Have Questions About ...

Board of Education

627-2627

Board Policy	627-2688
Hearing Officer	627-1505
Student Transcripts	627-2600
Student Transfers/Assignments/Tuition	627-2689

Administrative Services

627-2611

Athletics	627-2717
Child Nutrition	627-2651
Facilities/Construction	627-2611
Maintenance	634-3270
Print Shop	634-0390
Transportation – Students	634-3275

Instructional Support & School Improvement & Operation Services

627-2688

627-2621

Academically Gifted	627-2690
Alternative Learning Program	627-2688
Bloodborne Pathogens	627-2688
Career & Technical Ed	627-2613
Cultural Arts	627-2680
Drivers Education	627-2690
Early Childhood Centers	627-2705
Elementary Programs (K-5)	627-2690
Employee Assistance Program	627-2688
ESL/LEP	627-2690
Exceptional Child Program	627-2705
Field Trips:	Elementary Middle/High School
	627-2690 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)	627-2621
Migrant Education Program	627-2649
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	627-1505
Title I Programs	627-2680

Financial Services

627-2645

Accounts Payable	627-2642
Hospital/Dental/Life Insurance	627-2646
Payroll	627-2650
Purchasing/Fixed Assets	627-2630
School Facility Rental	627-2630
Worker's Compensation	627-2630

Human Resources

627-2678

Star Card/Name Tags	627-2678 627-2679 627-2692
Beginning Teacher Program	627-2667
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:

Age Discrimination

Dean Richardson,
Director of Human Resources
(336) 627-2679

Career and Technical Education

Nina Walls
Director of CTE & Innovation
(336) 627-2613

Title IX and Boy Scouts

Dr. Cindy Corcoran, Asst. Superintendent
of Instructional Support Services & Human
Resources
(336) 627-2688

Section 504

Dr. Pam Watkins,
Director of Exceptional Children's Programs
(336) 627-2669