

Tallapoosa County Schools

679 E. Columbus Street
Dadeville, AL 36853
256.825.0746
www.tallapoosak12.org

Employee Handbook



Procedure Manual for Personnel and Payroll Policies

Building students today for a better tomorrow.

updated July 2024

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INTRODUCTION

On January 13, 2014, the Tallapoosa County Schools Board of Education adopted a revised policy manual. The Tallapoosa County Schools Policy Manual reflects updated federal and state laws by which to operate a public school system in the state of Alabama. Any changes in policy require board approval and *Meet and Confer* guidelines established by the Alabama Education Association.

The Tallapoosa County Schools' *Procedure Manual for Personnel Policies* addresses procedures that are referenced in the policy manual. These procedures are subject to change based on policy revisions, employee law updates, and recommendations from the Superintendent. The purpose of this manual is to provide clarification on appropriate personnel procedures that address a variety of Human Resources or Payroll/Benefits issues. All forms associated with Human Resources or Payroll/Benefits information can be found online at: www.tallapoosak12.org or Central Office Payroll Dept. or Personnel Director. In compliance with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and Social Security Administration, Tallapoosa County Schools participates in E-Verify as specified under federal law.

The intention of this handbook is to simply provide information. It does not constitute any part of an employment contract, nor does it supersede any law, board policy, or procedure. It should be used only as a guide.

Personnel and payroll related questions should be addressed to the Personnel and/or Payroll Department and can be reached at 256-825-0746.

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679 East Columbus St.

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EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

(Board policy, 6.10) The Board is an equal opportunity employer. Personnel actions and decisions will be made without regard to factors or considerations prohibited by federal or state law (as such laws may from time to time be amended), including but not limited to race, gender, age, disability, national origin, citizenship, and religious preference. Subject to the limitations set forth in 6.41, the general complaint (grievance) policy (6.41) may be used to present any complaint alleging unlawful discrimination or harassment. Inquiries regarding compliance and complaint procedures can be directed to:

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EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENTS

All applicants should visit the TCBOE website for employment information at www.tallapoosak12.org, under the Human Resources. Certified positions require an on-line application, which will include references, an official transcript, and a teaching certificate. Support applications are available on-line. Upon recommendation to hire, all employees of the Tallapoosa County Board of Education are subject to a background check through the State Department of Education and are required to be e-verified through the Department of Homeland Security

Alabama Educator Code of Ethics

Introduction

The primary goal of every educator in the state of Alabama must, at all times, be to provide an environment in which all students can learn. In order to accomplish that goal, educators must value the worth and dignity of every person, must have a devotion to excellence in all matters, must actively support the pursuit of knowledge, and must fully participate in the nurturance of a democratic citizenry. To do so requires an adherence to a high ethical standard.

The Alabama Educator Code of Ethics defines the professional behavior of educators in Alabama and serves as a guide to ethical conduct. The Code protects the health, safety and general welfare of students and educators; outlines objective standards of conduct for professional educators; and clearly defines actions of an unethical nature for which disciplinary sanctions are justified.

Code of Ethics Standards

Standard 1: Professional Conduct

An educator should demonstrate conduct that follows generally recognized professional standards.

Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Encouraging and supporting colleagues in the development and maintenance of high standards.
- Respecting fellow educators and participating in the development of a professional and supportive teaching environment.
- Engaging in a variety of individual and collaborative learning experiences essential to developing professionally to promote student learning.

Unethical conduct is any conduct that impairs the certificate holder's ability to function in his or her employment position or a pattern of behavior that is detrimental to the health, welfare, discipline, or morals of students. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Harassment of colleagues or students.
- Misuse or mismanagement of tests or test materials.
- Inappropriate language or behavior on school grounds.
- Physical altercations.
- Failure to provide appropriate supervision of students.

Standard 2: Trustworthiness

An educator should exemplify honesty and integrity in the course of professional practice.

Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Properly representing facts concerning an educational matter in direct or indirect public expression.
- Advocating for fair and equitable opportunities for all children.
- Embodying for students the characteristics of intellectual honesty, diplomacy, tact, and fairness.

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting professional qualifications, criminal record, or employment history when applying for employment or certification.
- Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting information submitted to federal, state and/or other governmental agencies.
- Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting information regarding the

- evaluation of students and/or personnel.
- Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting reasons for absences or leaves.
- Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting information submitted in the course of an official inquiry or investigation.

Standard 3: Unlawful Acts

An educator should abide by federal, state and local laws and statutes.

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the commission or conviction of a felony or of any crime involving moral turpitude. As used herein, conviction includes a finding or verdict of guilty, or a plea of nolo contendere, regardless of whether an appeal of the conviction has been sought or a situation where first offender treatment without adjudication of guilty pursuant to the charge was granted.

Standard 4: Teacher/Student Relationship

An educator should always maintain a professional relationship with all students, both in and outside the classroom.

Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Fulfilling the roles of trusted confidante, mentor, and advocate for students' growth.
- Nurturing the intellectual, physical, emotional, social, and civic potential of all students.
- Providing an environment that does not needlessly expose students to unnecessary embarrassment or disparagement.
- Creating, supporting, and maintaining a challenging learning environment for all students.

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Committing any act of child abuse, including physical or verbal abuse.
- Committing any act of cruelty to children or any act of child endangerment.
- Committing or soliciting any unlawful sexual act.
- Engaging in harassing behavior on the basis of race, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, religion, or disability.
- Soliciting, encouraging, or consummating an inappropriate written, verbal, or physical relationship with a student.
- Furnishing tobacco, alcohol, or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any student or allowing a student to consume alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs.

Standard 5: Alcohol, Drug and Tobacco Use or Possession

An educator should refrain from the use of alcohol and/or tobacco during the course of professional practice and should never use illegal or unauthorized drugs.

Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Factually representing the dangers of alcohol, tobacco and illegal drug use and abuse to students during the course of professional practice.

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Being under the influence of, possessing, using, or consuming illegal or unauthorized drugs.
- Being on school premises or at a school-related activity involving students while documented as being under the influence of, possessing, or consuming alcoholic beverages or using tobacco. A school-related activity includes, but is not limited to, any activity that is sponsored by a school or a school system or any activity designed to enhance the school curriculum such as club trips, etc., where students are involved.

Standard 6: Public Funds and Property

An educator entrusted with public funds and property should honor that trust with a high level of honesty, accuracy, and responsibility.

Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Maximizing the positive effect of school funds through judicious use of said funds.
- Modeling for students and colleagues the responsible use of public property.

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Misusing public or school-related funds.
- Failing to account for funds collected from students or parents.
- Submitting fraudulent requests for reimbursement of expenses or for pay.
- Co-mingling public or school-related funds with personal funds or checking accounts.
- Using school property without the approval of the local board of education/governing body.

Standard 7: Remunerative Conduct

An educator should maintain integrity with students, colleagues, parents, patrons, or businesses when accepting gifts, gratuities, favors, and additional compensation.

Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Insuring that institutional privileges are not used for personal gain.
- Insuring that school policies or procedures are not impacted by gifts or gratuities from any person or organization.

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Soliciting students or parents of students to purchase equipment, supplies, or services from the educator or to participate in activities that financially benefit the educator or his/her family members unless approved by the local governing body.
- Accepting gifts from vendors or potential vendors for personal use or gain where there appears to be a conflict of interest.
- Tutoring students assigned to the educator for remuneration unless approved by the local board of education.

Standard 8: Maintenance of Confidentiality

An educator should comply with state and federal laws and local school board policies relating to confidentiality of student and personnel records, standardized test material, and other information covered by confidentiality agreements.

Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Keeping in confidence information about students that has been obtained in the course of professional services unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law.
- Maintaining diligently the security of standardized test content, supplies and resources.

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

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

Standard 9: Abandonment of Contract

An educator should fulfill all of the terms and obligations detailed in the contract with the local board of education or educational agency for the duration of the contract.

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Abandoning the contract for professional services without prior release from the contract by the employer.
- Refusing to perform services required by the contract.

Reporting

Educators are required to report a breach of one or more of the Standards in the Alabama Educator Code of Ethics as soon as possible, but no later than sixty (60) days from the date the educator became aware of the alleged breach, unless the law or local procedures require reporting sooner. Educators should be aware of their local school board policies and procedures and/or chain of command for reporting unethical conduct.

Complaints filed with the local or state school boards or with the State Department of Education Teacher Certification Section, must be filed in writing and must include the original signature of the complainant. Alabama Administrative Code 290-3-2-.05

(1)-5-c Each Superintendent shall submit to the State Superintendent of Education within ten calendar days of the decision, the name and social security number of each employee holding an Alabama certificate or license who is terminated, or non-renewed, resigns, or is placed on administrative leave for cause, and shall indicate the reason for such action.

Disciplinary Action

Disciplinary action shall be defined as the issuance of a reprimand or warning, or the suspension, revocation, or denial of certificates. "Certificate" refers to any teaching, service, or leadership certificate issued by the authority of the Alabama State Department of Education.

Alabama Administrative Code 290-3-2-.05

(1) Authority of the State Superintendent of Education

1. The Superintendent shall have the authority under existing legal standards to:
 1. Revoke any certificate held by a person who has been proven guilty of immoral conduct or unbecoming or indecent behavior in Alabama or any other state or nation in accordance with Ala. Code §16-23-5(1975).
 2. Refuse to issue a certificate to an applicant whose certificate has been subject to adverse action by another state until after the adverse action has been resolved by that state.
 3. Suspend or revoke an individual's certificate issued by the Superintendent when a certificate or license issued by another state is subject to adverse action.
 4. Refuse to issue, suspend, or recall a certificate for just cause.

Any of the following grounds shall also be considered cause for disciplinary action:

1. Unethical conduct as outlined in the Alabama Educator Code of Ethics, Standards 1-9.
2. Order from a court of competent jurisdiction.
3. Violation of any other laws or rules applicable to the profession.
4. Any other good and sufficient cause.

An individual whose certificate has been revoked, denied, or suspended may not be employed as an educator, paraprofessional, aide, or substitute teacher during the period of his or her revocation, suspension, or denial.

STAFF CONDUCT AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Certified employees shall meet minimum requirements such as a degree and professional certification, and demonstrate efficient performance skills in the area of assignment along with satisfactory accomplishment of their job requirements.

Classified employees (support employees) shall meet the minimum qualifications of their job description and demonstrate satisfactory performance of their job duties.

Job duties and responsibilities are determined by the job description and as directed by their supervisor. If you are unable or unwilling to satisfactorily perform the assigned tasks in the allotted time, disciplinary action may be warranted, including termination.

Requirements of each employee:

1. Perform satisfactory work.
 - a. Carry out and complete your job duties in an acceptable manner and in a timely fashion.
2. **Behavior** – Act in a professional manner and be courteous to children, parents, supervisors and all other employees.
 - a. Behavior which is rude, obnoxious or disrespectful is unacceptable.
 - b. You are not expected to like your supervisors or co-workers and they are not expected to like you, but both are expected to be professional and courteous.
 - c. You are expected to treat everyone in a professional manner and with courtesy, regardless of your personal feelings towards that individual.
 - d. Do not show unwelcome familiarity with co-workers. The best advice to follow is to keep your hands to yourself and do not hug, kiss or touch co-workers.
 - e. Open disrespect or unprofessional conduct may lead to termination.
3. **Drug and Alcohol** – Report to work both drug and alcohol free.
 - a. All employees who drive school system vehicles are subject to random drug tests. Results that are positive will lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination.
 - b. All employees are subject to drug and alcohol testing for reasonable suspicion of impairment. Results that are positive for either drugs or alcohol will lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination.
4. **Attendance and Absences** – Work the days that you are scheduled to work.
 - a. Continual unpaid absences are unacceptable and may lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination.
 - b. Constant absences on Monday/Fridays or before/after holidays are suspect for abuse and may be subject to disciplinary actions.
 - c. You must notify your supervisor (principal) and Frontline/AESOP of absences.
5. **Tardiness** – Be at work when scheduled and on time, without tardiness.
 - a. Excessive late arrivals will result in progressive discipline and may lead to termination.
 - b. Notify your supervisor of any absences or of any extreme tardiness.
6. **Schedule** – Work the hours of your schedule.
 - a. Report to work on time.
 - b. Do not leave early unless authorized by your supervisor.
 - c. Do not clock-in early or clock-out late (noncertified) unless authorized by your supervisor.
7. **Time Reporting** – Missed punches and time worked. Fill out all forms relating to time worked accurately and honestly.
 - a. If you do not work a full day, do not state or indicate that you did.
8. **Compliance with directives** – Obey the orders of your supervisor, except as stated in 13(b) below.
 - a. If you disagree, do not argue with the supervisor, simply state your objections in a concise and

professional way and then carry out your supervisor's directions.

9. Insubordination to your supervisor or any other administrator is prohibited.

a. Insubordination may include:

- Refusal or failure to obey orders or perform a job assignment given by a supervisor or any authorized employee or system representative;
- Disrespect, publicly displayed on system premises, toward a supervisor or the system;
- Threatening, intimidating, coercing, or interfering with a supervisor;
- Abusive language to any supervisor;
- Openly making or publishing false, vicious, or malicious statements concerning supervisors; and
- Countermanding the order of a supervisor.

b. Insubordination does not include a refusal to comply with:

- Orders that endanger the health, welfare, or safety of the employee, other employees, students, or anyone else;
- Orders requiring the performance of an illegal, improper, or immoral act.
- Orders that require action that is beyond the employee's capability, and
- Orders having a nature of unlawful harassment; for example, orders accompanied by a racial, religious or sexist slur.

10. Firearms and weapons prohibition.

a. The possession of a firearm by an individual, employee, visitor, or student inside or on any property owned, leased, or operated by the Tallapoosa County School System is strictly prohibited, except as expressly allowed. Duly sworn and trained peace officers in the performance of their duties are excluded from this prohibition.

b. Possession and/or use of weapons shall be prohibited on school property, including buses and at school sponsored activities. Possession and/or use of weapons shall also be prohibited in any vehicle brought onto school property or to a school sponsored activity. Violation of this prohibition shall be considered a serious act of misconduct and subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Employment may be terminated if you are unable to comply with these general expectations.

Abandonment of Job:

Any employee will be considered to have abandoned his/her job and will be terminated as a voluntary resignation, who:

- leaves work and does not report back to work;
- who says he/she quits;
- who says he/she will not return to work or;
- for whatever reason fails to return to work without notification.

Any employee who has been absent from work for more than ten (10) consecutive work days and who has not obtained an approved leave of absence or otherwise accounted for the absences will be considered to have abandoned his/her job. The employee may be recommended for termination.

Any employee who has been absent from work for more than twenty (20) consecutive work days without contacting his/her supervisor, without good cause and without an approved leave of absence will be considered to have voluntarily resigned from his/her position and will be processed as having resigned from the position.

Other Requirements:

In-service education participation is encouraged for all employees, which will promote personal and professional growth. Employees are expected to develop and grow in job performance beyond minimum requirements.

Schedules for professional and support employees are formulated and disseminated by principals and supervisors. All employees shall observe and conform to time schedules furnished by his/her principal or supervisor.

For professional employees, the school day shall be defined as the time when classes are in session, when faculty and in-service meetings are being held and when student activities are being conducted.

Teachers are required to attend faculty meetings and parent-teacher conferences when deemed necessary by the principal. Also, teachers shall be provided a thirty-minute unencumbered time period during the day.

All schools shall have the school doors open for a minimum of eight (8) consecutive hours each workday. The day for professional education employees will include:

- Time assigned for instructional situations
- Time assigned for planning and conference
- Time assigned for student activities
- Time assigned for supervisory activities other than classroom instruction, faculty meetings or in-service meetings after the time students are dismissed and beyond the normal school closing time.

DRESS CODE:

The school system has a dress code that must be followed by all employees. In general, all employees (professional, administrative, and support personnel) should be professionally and appropriately attired when conducting school system business. The policy is a general guideline established in order to uplift, enhance, and promote the professional image of the school system.

Each school and department supervisor should review these guidelines with their employees each year. Immediate or site supervisors may approve exceptions to this code for special or occasional activities. In departments where uniforms or uniformity in dress is prescribed by the Board, all affected employees are required to abide by direction and procedure. However, schools or departments may adopt a voluntary dress code for uniforms. Also, reasonable accommodations will be made for religious beliefs if such accommodation would not unduly interfere with the effective functioning of the schools or departments.

Dress Code Do's	Dress Code Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Casual pants such as khakis, chinos, or dressy denim 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Casual denim or shorts (excepts PE teachers and bus drivers or otherwise approved)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Capri pants, dresses, skirts (appropriate length) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sweatpants, mini skirts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Collared shirts, polo shirts, blouses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Halter tops, tank tops, low neckline
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dress shoes, sneakers and sandals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Flip flops, slides, slippers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clothing that promote TCBOE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clothing that carries political or social agenda

Identification Badges

All employees will be issued a photo identification badge. They are required to be worn in a visible location whenever employees are on the work site or any Board property. This requirement enhances security and allows visitors to identify employees. The badge is the property of the Board and must be surrendered upon termination of employment. Replacement badges can be requested through TalentEd Records.

School Board Equipment

Board equipment is defined as anything that is not personally owned by the employee. Abuse or misuse of this equipment is not acceptable. No employee shall operate any equipment without appropriate training and authorization. The use of school-owned equipment at home must be approved by the principal/director.

PAYROLL INFORMATION & PROCEDURES

All employees will be compensated for work performed according to either their contract or terms of employment. The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) requires overtime pay at time and a half for all eligible employees who work over forty hours (40) in any one workweek. The workweek begins on Sunday and ends on Saturday. Only actual hours worked applies when determining if 40 hours for the work week have been exceeded before overtime pay is due. If there is a holiday, sick, or vacation day during the week, then that period of time does not apply to the 40-hour requirement.

Employees cannot make up missed time from one work week to another work week. This means that if the employee works 36 hours during one week and 44 hours during the second week, it does not average out to 40 hours a week and therefore no overtime is due. Each workweek stands as a separate period of time and the employee is due 4 hours overtime for the second week.

An employee is determined to be either Exempt from the overtime provisions of the FLSA, or they are Non-Exempt from those same provisions.

If an employee is Exempt, this simply means that he/she is not eligible for overtime pay or compensatory time. If an employee is Non-Exempt, this simply means that he/she is due overtime pay for hours worked over 40 in any one workweek. Also, any full-time employee, Exempt or Non-Exempt, who makes less than \$35,568 a year, is due overtime compensation at time and a half for any hours worked over forty (40) during any one workweek. If you have a question about whether you are an Exempt or Non-Exempt employee, contact the Payroll department.

The mission of the Finance Department is to secure financial resources necessary to achieve the goals of Tallapoosa County Schools and use the best management information practices to ensure fiscal responsibility. The payroll section of this handbook will seek to answer questions employees may have concerning paychecks, health benefits, insurance and other financially related matters.

When do I get my first paycheck ?

- Nine Month Employees
 - September 29th
- Ten and Eleven Month Employees
 - August 31st
- Twelve Month Employees
 - July 27

Payroll cutoff is the last day of the previous calendar month. If an employee is hired late in the contract year their annual amount will be calculated on the number of days actually worked the remainder of the contract year. *Checks are issued on the last business day of the calendar month.

Employee and Employer Taxes Paid- Employees hired prior to January 1, 2013 are considered Tier 1 employees for the employer contribution rate for retirement purposes. Any employee hired on or after January 1, 2013 is considered a Tier 2 employee for the employer contribution rate for retirement purposes.

Tier 1 Employees have 7.50% of their gross pay withheld for their retirement account at the Teachers' Retirement System in Montgomery. The board pays 12.59% to the retirement system on behalf of each employee. Tier 2 employees have 6.20% of their gross pay withheld for their retirement account at the Teachers' Retirement System in Montgomery. The board pays 11.44% to the retirement system on behalf of each employee. These rates are in effect beginning October 1, 2022. **New rates effective October 1, 2024 Tier I 12.60% and Tier 2 13.57%.***

For every dollar that an employee pays in Social Security and Medicare tax the Board is required to match that amount on the employee's behalf. State unemployment insurance is also paid by the Board for the employee.

DIRECT DEPOSIT

DIRECT DEPOSIT - All new employees are required to have direct deposit for receiving their monthly earnings.

Notify Payroll Department immediately if you change banks and/or your account is closed. Also, it is important that the payroll department be notified if your account number changes.

HEALTH BENEFITS

The Board provides a number of employee benefits. Many of these benefits are listed below. Please note that our retirement plan and health insurance are managed by the Retirement System of Alabama. ***All changes in status or coverage must be made directly through PEEHIP: www.rsa-al.gov or 1-877-517-0020***

HEALTH INSURANCE

Medical insurance through a combination of State and employee contributions is available through the Public Education Employees Health Insurance Plan (PEEHIP). Each full-time employee receives a monthly allocation, which is applied toward the cost of health care. Support employees working less than 4 hours per day and certified employees working less than full-time receive a prorated health insurance allocation. In cases where the spouse of an employee has other hospital insurance, the state allocation may be used to purchase supplemental coverage to pay out of pocket expenses or the optional insurance to cover hospital indemnity, dental, vision and cancer for single or family coverage. Optional insurance is available to those who are insured through the state plan at an additional cost. More detailed information about

hospital/medical insurance is available from the www.rsa-al.gov.

New Employees

New employees may enroll on their date of employment, or the first day of the month following employment. Enrollment should be completed within 30 days of the employee's employment date. If not enrolled within 30 days, the employee will only be allowed to enroll in single hospital medical coverage effective the date of enrollment not the date of employment. New employees may add family coverage on their date of employment or within 60 days of employment. Also, new employees employed during the Open Enrollment period cannot enroll in the optional plans on their date of employment and cancel the plans October 1 of that same year.

Employees Hired After October 1

These employees may enroll only on their date of employment or the first day of the month following their date of employment. New employees who enrolled in the optional plans outside of the Open Enrollment period are required to retain the coverage(s) for at least one year or until the next Open Enrollment period.

Current Employees

Open Enrollment for all current employees takes place from July 1 through September 10 for coverage to be effective October 1. Employees may add or change types of coverage, including dependent coverage, during this Open Enrollment period. Open Enrollment forms completed on or after August 31st will not be accepted by PEEHIP.

Blue Cross Blue Shield	VIVA Health Plan-HMS
Basic Major Medical	Major Medical, Vision, Dental
No Referrals	HMO
Monthly Premium	Monthly Premium
➤ \$30 Individual	➤ \$30 Individual
➤ \$207 Individual + Dependents (no spouse)	➤ \$207 Individual + Dependents (no spouse)
➤ \$282 Family, only spouse	➤ \$282 Family, only spouse
➤ \$307 Family, including spouse	➤ \$307 Family, including spouse

Optional Plans

There are four Optional plans offered through PEEHIP. Employees should refer to the PEEHIP Member Handbook for detailed information and limitations on these plans. The Open Enrollment/Member Handbook is available online or members can request a hard copy to be mailed to them by contacting the member's services department at 877-517-0020. All optional plans must be retained for the entire insurance year, i.e., until the end of September 30. New employees employed during the Open Enrollment period cannot enroll in the Optional plans on their date of employment and cancel the plans October 1 of that same year.

If a member is enrolled in one or more of the Optional plans, the contracts must be all family or all single plans. Members enrolled in family optional plans cannot change to single Optional plans outside of the Open Enrollment period unless all dependent(s) become ineligible due to age, death, or divorce. Optional plans offered include Cancer, Dental, Hospital Indemnity, and Vision.

Southland Supplemental Insurance Coverage

Cancer Program	\$ 38 per month*
Dental Coverage, single	\$ 38 per month
Dental Coverage, family	\$ 50 per month
Hospital Indemnity	\$ 38 per month*
Vision Coverage	\$ 38 per month*

*Single or Family Coverage

VSP Vision Care

Vision Coverage, employee only	\$ 8.84 per month
Vision Coverage, employee + spouse	\$17.70 per month
Vision Coverage, employee + child(ren)	\$18.92 per month
Vision Coverage, employee + family	\$30.24 per month

TEACHER RETIREMENT SYSTEM

Tier 1 Employees

All regular employees of the school system are required to be members of the Teachers Retirement System of Alabama. The major portion of the contribution is provided by the State of Alabama through legislative appropriation. Any member of the Retirement System who had service for which he or she received credit in the Employees' Retirement System or in the Teachers' Retirement System prior to January 1, 2013 is considered a Tier 1 plan member. The employee contribution (7.5% of contract salary) is tax sheltered. This means that employees do not pay income tax on their 7.5 per cent contribution until such time as it is received by the employee as retirement income. The retirement program provides for retirement at age 60 with 10 years or more of participation service or at any age with 25 years of service.

Tier 2 Employees

A Tier 2 plan member is any member of the Retirement System who first began eligible employment with an Employees' Retirement System or a Teachers' Retirement System participating employer on or after January 1, 2013, and who had no eligible service in the Employees' Retirement System or the Teachers' Retirement System prior to January 1, 2013. The employee contribution is 6%. The retirement program provides for retirement at age 62 with at least 10 years of service credit.

DEATH BENEFITS

The Retirement System provides life insurance in an amount equal to the annual salary paid to the employee during the last scholastic year (July 1-June 30) and \$15,000 life insurance for full time employees and \$7,500 for half-time employees. More information is provided under the section "Retirement" in this handbook.

Filing for Retirement

Written application should be made to the State Retirement System not less than thirty (30) days or more than ninety (90) days before the date of expected retirement. For example, if you wish to retire on June 1, you must file by the end of April. A representative of the Retirement System conducts local retirement seminars periodically throughout the year for school system employees planning to retire. Information regarding these meetings is available on the RSA website. Any employee who plans to retire shall submit his/her resignation in writing to the Tallapoosa County Board of Education. Employees will be expected to use a Talent Ed form for retirement and resignation.

DEFERRED COMPENSATION PLANS

403B - Under this plan, employees may contribute as much as \$23,500 (2024) of pre-tax income to an annuity each year. The contribution is automatically deducted from their paychecks.

By investing money in this way before taxes are paid, employees can reduce their current income tax burden. It is permissible to transfer accumulated funds, with no dollar limit, to other qualified IRA annuity plans.

Once such an investment is made, the interest or dividends earned are only taxed as funds are withdrawn. Since the withdrawals are usually made after retirement when the participant is likely to be in a lower tax bracket, less tax is paid and funds accumulate faster.

Voluntary Payroll Deductions

To cancel any payroll deductions, you will need to complete the “Payroll Deduction Cancellation” form in TalentEd. You will also need to contact the vendor to notify them of these cancellations- Tallapoosa County Board of Education is not responsible for notifying 3rd parties.

FLEXIBLE SPENDING PLAN

A flexible spending plan is a way to provide employees valuable benefits and tax savings. Benefits under an eligible plan may include reimbursement of dependent care expenses and medical expenses such as co-payments and deductibles.

Also, most importantly, you always pay insurance premiums with pre-tax dollars. All full-time employees are eligible to participate in this plan which gives them the opportunity to recognize additional monthly income through pre-tax savings.

❖ OPEN ENROLLMENT

- The open enrollment deadline for the Flexible Spending Accounts is September 30th, for an effective date of October 1st.
- Plan deductions start on the October payroll check. Deductions end with the September payroll check of the following year.

All deductions are processed over 12 months.

The Flexible Spending Account is administered through PEEHIP that is offered through BC/BS of Alabama. Below is the website address: <http://www.rsa.state.al.us/PEEHIP/flex.htm> Reimbursement of over-the-counter drugs from the Health Care FSA will be prohibited due to the Federal Reform Act unless you have a doctor’s prescription for the drug. PEEHIP offers a Preferred Flexible Spending Card as well as the auto bump and manual reimbursement.

EMPLOYEE SELF SERVE (ESS)

ESS can be found on our website to provide valuable information on your personal earnings at any point in time. This service will house your monthly earnings information as well as your W-2 statements for future reference.

ACCESS ESS

- Log in from work or your home computer.
- Google Chrome (web browser of choice).

DEMOGRAPHICS

- View name, address, phone number, and email information.
- Request a change** of address, phone number, email information, etc.
 - A color copy of your new Social Security card must be provided **before the change request will be approved.**
 - You may use your school email, or your personal email account.

TAX WITHHOLDINGS

- View Federal and State Tax Withholding Status.
- Request a change** for Federal and/or State Tax Withholding Status.
- If making a change type your name exactly as it appears on the form. This will serve as your electronic signature.

DEDUCTIONS

- View your current payroll deductions (no changes allowed at this time).

LEAVE

- View Leave balances (as shown on your paycheck).
- View detailed report of leave taken.

PAYCHECKS

- View/Print paychecks

EARNINGS & W2's

- View annual earnings summary (by calendar year)
- View / Print W2's

**Change requests will be acknowledged by an automatic email from ESS to the email account listed with ESS when the change request is received and again when the change request is approved.

CREATING an ESS ACCOUNT

****You will need your Employee ID number to create an account. Email Fran Coker at fran.coker@tallapoosak12.org to obtain your employee number.**

1. Access the page by choosing Faculty Information / ESS (Employee Self Service) on the website tallapoosak12.org
2. Your employee number can be found on your paystub/direct deposit receipt.
3. Add the page to your "favorites" for future use.
4. Click "Register" to create your account
5. Write down your user id and password and keep it in a safe place.
6. A black message box appears at the top right of the screen after you click "submit".
7. Momentarily you will receive an email. Click the "confirmation" link to finalize your account. (You must follow the confirmation link to complete registration of your account.)

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT/TRAVEL GUIDELINES

All employees must follow the procedures outlined herein when requesting to attend any professional development activities or events.

Professional development events must meet ESSA criteria and be evidence-based to be paid for with federal funds.

- All out-of-system professional development events and related travel expenses must be pre-approved via the Professional Development Request Form ten (10) days PRIOR to the event/activity.
 - **Failure to obtain prior approval will result in denial of the request and no travel expenses will be reimbursed.**
 - The employee should not attend the event unless his/her PD Request has been approved.
 - If approved, the employee is responsible for making all arrangements for attending the event.
- All travel claims are due to the paying entity/department *within 10 days* of the event:
 - Travel claims must be submitted on a **Travel Reimbursement Request Form** and accompanied by *original itemized receipts*. *In the event the restaurant name and/or specific items ordered are not printed on the receipt, the employee should write the information on the receipt and provide a paper copy or photo of the menu, if possible.*
 - All pertinent information must be provided on the form, and all required documentation must be submitted for the request to be processed.
 - Claims submitted more than 10 days after the event may not be paid.
- No reimbursement shall be authorized for travel between the employee's residence and assigned workplace (commute mileage).
- Official travel for a pre-approved conference or meeting out of town includes a maximum of one travel day at the beginning and one travel day at the end of the trip.
- Points of Travel: Travel related to the performance of routine job responsibilities is to be reported on the Local Travel Report.
 - Employees who report to various locations in one day must subtract commuting mileage from the total mileage claimed for reimbursement on that day.
 - Non-allowable travel expenditures include mileage to a PD event in the employee's city of residence, breakfast and/or dinner for local PD event, alcoholic beverages, tips over 15%, etc., and will not be reimbursed.
 - Limits may be established on the amount of authorized travel

TRAVEL PROCEDURES

Registration

- Registration fees are the sole travel expenditure that may be paid in advance via purchase order.
- The Travel Reimbursement Request must be accompanied by an agenda indicating event location and dates and a receipt for the registration fee if paid by the employee.
- The Board does not pay personal membership fees or dues. (Exception: CLAS membership for all administrators including Central Office, principals, assistant principals, administrative assistants.)

Hotel/Motel

- Personnel may be reimbursed for hotel/motel expense at the single room rate up to \$200 per night plus applicable taxes or the conference block room rate if higher.
- Itemized receipts are required.
- Parking and taxes may be reimbursed.
- Movie rentals, alcoholic beverages, and other personal expenses are not allowable expenditures.

Transportation

- Mileage for personal vehicles will be reimbursed at the rate of \$.50 per mile.
- Starting point for mileage calculation is the employee's base school/location.
- Employees are expected to carpool whenever possible.

Airfare

- A purchase order is required to book airfare in advance. Fare must be refundable, or trip insurance must be purchased.
- Itemized receipts are required.
- Most airlines charge fees for checked baggage. The Board will reimburse the employee for one baggage charge each way if receipt is submitted with the Travel Reimbursement Request.
- The employee is responsible for any excess weight charges or for any charges for two or more checked baggage items.

Food/Meal Allowance

- Maximum amount to be reimbursed for meals is \$45 per day for in-state travel which includes 15% tip. You may tip any amount you desire, but only 15% is reimbursable.
- Original, itemized receipts are required and must show the item(s) you ordered; the credit card receipt alone is unacceptable.
- In the event the restaurant name and/or specific items ordered are not printed on the receipt, the employee should write the information on the receipt and provide a paper copy or photo of the menu, if possible.
- Employees traveling together must request separate checks.

- For *out-of-state travel*, meal reimbursement will be paid on a per diem basis. NO RECEIPTS ARE REQUIRED.
 - Employee is responsible for determining per diem rate for their destination; printed copy of per diem must be attached to PD Request and Travel Reimbursement Request.
 - Per diem rates can be found at <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>
 - The full daily per diem rate will be paid for all days of approved travel.
 - If per diem is less than TCBOE allowance, \$50 will be used for per diem rate and no receipts will be required.

Other/Miscellaneous

Other necessary travel expenses such as cabs, subways, parking (self-park ONLY), toll charges, etc., are allowable if necessary, reasonable, and documented with receipts/tickets. Tips (other than meals) will not be reimbursed.

TECHNOLOGY

The primary goal of the technology environment is to support the educational and instructional endeavors of students and employees of Tallapoosa County Schools. Use of any and all technology resources is a privilege and not a right.

To ensure that students receive a quality education and that employees are able to work in a professional and intellectually stimulating environment, it is the policy of the Tallapoosa County School System to provide all students and employees with access to a variety of technology resources. All Tallapoosa County students and staff must acknowledge and adhere to this policy. This policy can be found on the TCBOE district website which include TCBOE Acceptable Use Policy and the Data Governance Policy. Each faculty member is to be trained on the Data Governance Policy annually. The creation of a large and varied technology environment demands that technology usage be conducted in legally and ethically appropriate ways, consistent with the Mission Statement and instructional goals of Tallapoosa County Schools. We recognize that the use of technology always requires attempts to balance the benefits against the possibilities of danger, security problems, and abuse. Rapid changes in technology and growth in the range of content available makes this a constant challenge. Thus, it is the intention of Tallapoosa County Schools that all technology resources will be used in accordance with any and all school system policies and procedures as well as local, state, and federal laws and/or guidelines governing the usage of technology and its component parts. Additionally, it is implied that all students and employees of Tallapoosa County Schools will use the provided technology resources so as not to waste them, abuse them, interfere with or cause harm to other individuals, institutions, or companies.

Some of the sections of the policy pertain to technology equipment personally owned by school employees and students and brought into school facilities. All personal technologies used on any Tallapoosa County School campus are subject to this policy and may be used only if such usage is in compliance with all school system policies, procedures, and guidelines as well as local, state, and federal laws. All electronic content stored on any external storage medium or personal off-site storage location that is brought to or accessed from a Tallapoosa County Schools campus is subject to all school system policies and guidelines, as well as local, state, and federal laws. Employees are prohibited from emailing outside the school system or storing/saving on external storage devices or portable devices that do not remain on campus, electronic copies of student or staff personal information. This information includes, but is not limited to, data containing social security numbers, information protected by FERPA, and any other sensitive and/or protected information. In the event that this type of information is stored on a portable or external device and said device is lost or stolen, the Technology Director should be notified immediately. Any questions about this policy, its interpretation, or specific circumstances shall be directed to the Technology Director before proceeding. No electronic device or equipment (computers, iPads, printers, laptops, etc.) owned by the District and currently in use will be sold.

COMPUTER, INTERNET, & ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

The term *Computer Resources* as used herein refers to TCBOE's entire computer, electronic and communications network. Specifically, the term *Computer Resources* includes, but is not limited to: computers, host computers, file servers, application servers, communication servers, mail servers, fax servers, Web servers, workstations, stand-alone computers, laptops, tablets such as iPads, telephones, facsimile machines, scanners, software, data files, peripherals such as printers, and all internal and external computer and communications networks)for example, Internet, commercial online services, value-added networks, e-mail systems) that may be accessed directly or indirectly (including access by students, vendors, consultants and other third parties using personally owned computer hardware as authorized by TCBOE) from our computer network or that are owned or have been purchased by TCBOE. This includes cloud services such as Gmail, e-Textbooks, Gmail, iBook, content and any web-based product or service.

The Computer Resources are the property of TCBOE and may be used for only legitimate business and educational purposes. Users are permitted access to the computer Resources to assist them in performance of their jobs. Computer and internet access is provided for TCBOE business use, but occasional minimal personal use is allowed. Use of the computer Resources is a privilege that may be revoked at any time. Users who violate this Policy may have their computer/internet use privileges revoked at any time and without prior notice AND are subject to discipline up to and including the possibility of termination. In using or accessing the Computer Resources, users must comply with and be aware of the following provisions:

No Expectation of Privacy. The computers and computer accounts given to users are to assist them in the performance of their jobs or in the case of students, in their educational studies and activities. Users should not have an expectation of privacy in anything they create, store, send or receive on the Computer

Resources. Computer Resources belong to TCBOE and may be used only for the purposes set forth herein. TCBOE has the right, but not the duty, for any reason and without the permission of any user, to monitor any and all of the aspects of its Computer Resources, including, without limitation, reviewing documents created and stored on its Computer Resources, deleting any matter stored in its system, monitoring sites visited by users on the internet, monitoring chat and news groups, reviewing material downloaded or uploaded by users from the internet, and reviewing e-mail sent and received by users. Employees and users should not have an expectation of privacy in anything they create, store, send or receive using the Computer Resources.

Waiver of Privacy Rights. TCBOE reserves the right to inspect the contents of all electronic data stored on TCBOE computer equipment of Computer Resources. Users, in using TCBOE Computer Resources, expressly waive any right of privacy in anything they create, store, send or receive on TCBOE Computer Resources or through the internet or any other computer network. Users consent to allowing personnel of TCBOE to access and review all materials users create, store, send or receive on the computer or through the internet or any other computer network. Users understand that TCBOE may use human or automated means to monitor use of its Computer Resources, including data stored on the local drive, data stored on any network drive, and electronic mail.

Passwords. Users are responsible for safeguarding their passwords for access to the Computer Resources. Individual passwords should not be printed, stored online or given to others. Users are responsible for all transactions made and actions taken using their passwords. No user may access the Computer Resources with another user's password or account. Use of passwords to gain access to the Computer Resources or to encode particular files or messages does not imply that users have an expectation of privacy in the material they create or receive on the Computer Resources.

Virus and Filter Protection. Users may not disable or remove virus or filtering protection software. Viruses can cause substantial damage to Computer Resources. Each user is responsible for taking reasonable precautions to ensure he or she does not introduce viruses into TCBOE Computer Resources or computer network. Virus software updates are automatically distributed regularly to Computer Resources. Users may not interrupt the update process and must report any errors in the update process immediately to the TCBOE technology department.

Compliance with Applicable Laws and Licenses. In their use of Computer Resources, users must comply with all software licenses, copyrights and all other state, federal and international laws governing intellectual property and online activities. It is TCBOE policy to comply fully with all software copyright licenses. Employees who willfully circumvent this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Prohibited Activities. The following activities, items, and materials are prohibited:

Inappropriate or unlawful material. Material that is fraudulent, harassing, embarrassing, sexually explicit, profane, obscene, intimidating, defamatory or otherwise unlawful or inappropriate may not be sent by e-mail or other form of electronic communication (such as bulletin board systems, newsgroups, chat groups), downloaded from the internet or displayed on or stored in TCBOE computers. This includes e-mails known as "spam" and emails containing non-business-related matter. Users encountering or receiving this kind of material should immediately report the incident to their supervisors.

Without prior written permission from the Technology Coordinator, Computer Resources may not be used for dissemination or storage of commercial or personal advertisements, solicitations, promotions, destructive programs (that is, viruses or self-replicating code), political material or any other unauthorized use, including material or significant personal uses.

Using or copying software in violation of a license agreement or copyright that violates any state, federal or international law.

Waste of Computer Resources. Users may not deliberately perform acts that waste Computer Resources or unfairly monopolize resources to the exclusion of others. These acts include, but are not limited to, sending mass mailings or chain letters, spending excessive amounts of time on the internet playing games, engaging in online chat groups, printing multiple copies of documents, streaming of multimedia content not required for work, or otherwise creating unnecessary network traffic.

Accessing Other User's Files. Users may not alter or copy a file belonging to another user without first obtaining permission from the owner of the file. The ability to read, alter or copy a file belonging to another user does not imply permission to read, alter or copy that file. Users may not use the Computer Resources to “snoop” or pry into the affairs of other users by unnecessarily reviewing their files and e-mail. Excepted from this provision are those persons conducting investigations or administrative duties at the request and with the authorization of the Technology Coordinator or Director of Operations.

Misuse of Software. Without prior written authorization from the Technology Coordinator, users may not do any of the following:

1. Copy software for use on their home computers;
2. Provide copies of software to any independent contractors or third party;
3. Install unauthorized software on any TCBOE laptop, workstation, or servers;
4. Download any unauthorized software from the internet or any other online service to any TCBOE laptop, workstations or servers;
5. Modify, revise, transform, recast or adapt any software or reverse-engineer, disassemble or decompile any software. Users who become aware of any misuse of software or violation of copyright law should immediately report the incident to their supervisors. Users who have currently copied software for home computers, distributed software or installed software on corporate computers are required to obtain approval according to the current guidelines or remove the software immediately;
6. Provide other users access to software with your password or account.

E-Mail Policy

To maximize the benefits of its Computer Resources and minimize potential liability, TCBOE has created this e-mail usage policy. All computer users are obligated to use these resources responsibly, professionally, ethically, and lawfully.

Employees and other users are given access to our computer network to assist them in performing their duties. Employees and users, including students, should not have an expectation of privacy in anything you create, store, send or receive on the Computer Resources. The Computer Resources belongs to TCBOE and may only be used for business purposes. Without prior notice, TCBOE may review any material created, stored, sent or received on its network or through the internet or any other computer network.

Altering attribution information. Employees must not alter the “From:” line or other attribution-of-origin information in e-mail, messages or postings. Anonymous or pseudonymous electronic communications are forbidden. Employees must identify themselves honestly and accurately when participating in chat groups, making postings to newsgroups, sending e-mail or otherwise communicating online.

Attorney-client communications. E-mail sent to in-house counsel, if any, or an attorney representing JCS should include this warning header on each page: “ATTORNEY-CLIENT

PRIVILEGED; DO NOT FORWARD WITHOUT PERMISSION.” Communications from attorneys may not be forwarded without the sender’s express permission.

Confidential Transmissions. Any confidential e-mail, and/or files transmitted with it, is intended solely for the use of the individual or entity to whom it is addressed. The communication may contain material that is privileged, confidential and exempt from disclosure under applicable law. If you are not the intended recipient or the person responsible for delivering the e-mail to the intended recipient, be advised that any dissemination, distribution or copying of this communication is strictly prohibited. If you have received an e-mail or communication in error, please notify the sender immediately.

Internet Use Policy

The internet can be a valuable source of information and research. In addition, e-mail can provide excellent means of communicating with other employees, students, parents, community stakeholders, vendors, and others. Use of the internet, however, must be tempered with common sense and good judgment. Users who abuse their use of Computer Resources to access the internet may have access to the internet restricted or removed. In addition, users who violate this rule may be subject to disciplinary action, including the possibility of termination, and civil and criminal liability.

Your use of the internet is governed by this practice:

Disclaimer of liability for use on internet. TCBOE is not responsible for material viewed or downloaded by users from the internet. The internet is a worldwide network of computers that contains millions of pages of information. Users are cautioned that many of these pages include offensive, sexually explicit and inappropriate material. In general, it is difficult to avoid at least some contact with this material while using the internet. Even innocuous search requests may lead to sites with highly offensive content. In addition, having an e-mail address on the internet may lead to receipt of unsolicited e-mail containing offensive content. Users accessing the internet do so at their own risk.

Employees’ duty of care. Employees should endeavor to make each electronic communication truthful and accurate. You should use the same care in drafting e-mail / electronic documents as you would for any other written communication. Please keep in mind that anything created or stored on the Computer Resources may, and likely will, be reviewed by others.

No privacy in communications. Users of TCBOE Computer Resources should never consider electronic communications to be either private or secure. E-mail may be stored indefinitely on any number of computers, including that of the recipient. Copies of your messages may be forwarded to others either electronically or on paper. In addition, e-mail sent to nonexistent or incorrect usernames may be delivered to persons whom you never intended.

Monitoring of computer usage. TCBOE has the right, but not the duty, to monitor any and all aspects of its Computer Resources, including but not limited to, monitoring sites visited by users on the internet, monitoring chat groups and newsgroups, reviewing material downloaded or uploaded by users to the internet and reviewing e-mail sent and received by users.

Blocking of inappropriate content. TCBOE may use software to identify inappropriate or sexually explicit internet sites. Such sites may be blocked from access by TCBOE networks. In the event you, nonetheless, encounter inappropriate or sexually explicit material while browsing on the internet, immediately disconnect from the site, regardless of whether the site was subject to TCBOE blocking software.

Illegal copying. Users may not illegally copy material protected under copyright law or make that material available to others for copying. You are responsible for complying with copyright law and applicable licenses that may apply to software, files, graphics, documents, messages and other material you wish to download or copy.

Accessing the internet. To ensure security and avoid the spread of viruses, employees accessing the internet through a computer attached to TCBOE's network must do so through an approved internet firewall. Accessing the internet directly, by modem or hotspot is prohibited.

Sensitive, Secured and Proprietary Information Policy

Tallapoosa County Schools values our students' and parents' privacy and seek to preserve the privacy of those who share information with us. TCBOE also must comply with federal, state, local and Board laws, regulations, and policies. A few of those mandates include, but are not limited to, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA), Gramm-Leach-Bailey Act (GLBA), Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), and numerous others.

- Administrators, staff, and teachers shall take the necessary steps to protect student information and to prevent unauthorized access to this information.
- All Computer Resources must be password protected.
- Student or other sensitive information should never be downloaded to personal or non-TCBOE devices and cloud services. This includes but is not limited to smartphones, tablets, computers, websites, and storage devices (external drives).
- All users must use extreme caution when opening email received from unknown senders, which may contain spam, virus, and Trojan horse code.
- Never provide student information to a website or organization that is not legally acting as an agent of TCBOE and if a non-disclosure agreement (NDA) is not in place.
- Any data breach must be reported to the Technology Coordinator immediately.

Director of Technology:

Joel Padgett

joel.padgett@tallapoosak12.org

TALLAPOOSA COUNTY SCHOOLS ACCOUNTING OFFICE CONTACTS**Chief School Finance Officer**

Tommy Thweatt

Email: tommy.thweatt@tallapoosak12.org

Phone: 256-825-0746 EXT. 111

Assistant CFSO

Mike Gardner

Email: mike.gardner@tallapoosak12.org

Phone: 256-825-0746 ext. 112

Payroll Specialist

Fran Coker

Email: fran.coker@tallapoosak12.org

Phone: 256-825-0746 ext. 105

Accounts Payable

Tiffany Keel

Email: tiffany.keel@tallapoosak12.org

Phone: 256-825-0764 ext. 110

HARASSMENT PREVENTION

Tallapoosa County Board of Education is committed to promoting harmonious working relationships and a safe work environment that is free of any form of harassment in the workplace. To support that commitment, TCBOE strictly prohibits harassment and any other form of discrimination, including but not limited to harassment based on race, color, national origin, ancestry, citizenship status, sex, sexual orientation, transgender identity or expression, pregnancy, marital status, parental status, religion, age, disability, past or present service in the uniformed services of the United States, genetic makeup, or any other legally protected basis. TCBOE also prohibits discrimination or harassment against any individual based upon that individual's association with an individual in a protected class. In addition, TCBOE prohibits any form of harassment or bullying against any employee or applicant for employment, or by an employee against anyone, including anyone with whom we do business, or visitors, regardless of whether the victim is a member of protected class.

All executives, managers, administrators, supervisors, and employees are required to maintain a work environment free from such discrimination, harassment and intimidation. Jasper City Schools will investigate all complaints of discrimination or harassment and preserve confidentiality to the maximum extent possible. Any employee who violates this policy may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

Employees and applicants for employment will not be subjected to any retaliation or adverse consequences because they have 9a) filed a legitimate complaint of discrimination or harassment; (b) assisted or participated in an investigation of such a complaint, or in any hearing or legal proceeding involving such a complaint; 9c) opposed any unlawful conduct involving discrimination or harassment; or (d) exercised any other legal right protected by law that involves discrimination or harassment. Jasper City Schools' policy is to strongly encourage discussion of the matter to help protect others from being subjected to similar inappropriate behavior.

Reporting Harassment, Complaint Procedure and Investigation

Any employee who believes he or she has been subjected to any type of discrimination or harassment should immediately tell the other person to "stop" or make it clear that the conduct is not welcome or acceptable. In addition, the employee should inform his or her supervisor of the perceived discrimination or harassment as soon as possible. This will provide the best opportunity to prevent further discrimination or harassment and take effective corrective measures. Failure to report possible harassment which would enable the organization to correct the problem also may prevent further legal action that an individual may otherwise be entitled to take. In the event that you are uncomfortable, for any reasons, with discussing the matter with your supervisor, you should contact the Superintendent.

In addition, it is the responsibility of any employee who has witnessed or been subjected to any discrimination or harassment as described above to report the incident to his or her supervisor, or the Superintendent. Any supervisor or administrator who receives a report of potential harassment must promptly notify the Superintendent. The employee may be asked to state the complaint in writing. The administrator and/or Superintendent will promptly and thoroughly investigate your complaint and inform the employee of the findings and resolution relative to the complaint. The organization also will take steps to ensure that information obtained during the investigation is shared only with those who have a business need to know about it.

Everyone involved in the investigation will be told of the need for confidentiality and will be expected to maintain confidentiality.

Retaliation against any employee for complaining about harassment on a basis of sex, race, color, religion, national origin, or age is prohibited under this policy and illegal under state and federal law.

Harassment is a serious act of misconduct. If an investigation results in a finding that a person has knowingly, or in a malicious manner, falsely accused another of statement(s) or conduct that did not occur, that person will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

WORK SCHEDULES AND SIGN IN/SIGN OUT PROCEDURES

Work Schedules (Teachers) – Supervisory and instructional duties of teachers commence fifteen (15) minutes prior to the instructional day and conclude fifteen (15) minutes after the departure of students. Except as may otherwise be provided by the Board or required, the instructional day for teachers is seven and one-half (7.5) hours. Assignments and duties may extend beyond the instructional day and may include off-campus functions, events, and activities; conferences and meetings with parents; supervision of student arrival and departure; and preparation for the following instructional day. Teachers will be provided a minimum of thirty (30) minutes free of instructional and supervisory responsibilities each instructional day.

Certified employees **must** sign in on the designated sign in sheet upon arrival each day to certify their attendance. When an absence occurs, employees will be asked to select the reason for the absence upon returning to work. Signing in for another employee is strictly prohibited and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Work Schedules (Support Personnel) – The Superintendent is authorized to establish work schedules, including minimum work times, for support personnel. Work schedules are subject to change anytime during the year based on building level needs, such as revisions to summer hours' schedule.

Classified employees **must** sign in on the designated sign in sheet upon arrival each day to certify their attendance. Classified employees must sign out for required lunch period, a minimum of 30 minutes/day unless supervisor approves employee to work through lunch for special circumstances, and sign back in upon returning. A final sign out must occur at the end of the work day. Failure to comply with sign in/sign out procedures could result in further disciplinary action. When an absence occurs the employee will be asked to select the reason for the absence upon returning to work. Classified employees will be asked to review his/her time sheet at the end of each month to verify the accuracy of their work hours and absences. An employee's signature validates the accuracy of the time sheet. If an error is found on the time sheet, it should be reported to the supervisor or payroll bookkeeper immediately to be resolved. A revised time sheet will be provided for employee validation. Signing in and out for another employee is strictly prohibited. Failure to adhere to sign in/sign out procedures may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

EMPLOYEE CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Employees may only engage in outside employment under the following provisions:

- Employees will not engage in outside business activities or render any service for another employer during such time as duties and responsibilities have been assigned by the Board;
- Employees will not accept outside employment that would interfere with or impair the ability of the employee to perform duties effectively;
- Employees may not accept work that could compromise the employee's independent judgment in the exercise of duties for the Board;
- Employees may not use or disclose confidential or personally identifiable information acquired through Board employment for their personal gain or benefit of a third party;
- Employees shall not receive pay or other compensation for private tutoring of students enrolled in classes they teach. If they tutor other students in the school district not enrolled in their classes, written notice of such activity must be given to the building principal and must not be conducted during regular school hours.
- Under no circumstances shall an employee lend, rent, or lease School System-owned equipment or system-owned vehicle to a non-employee or use such equipment or vehicle for personal gain.
- Use of School System-owned equipment with a Fixed Asset Inventory List or electronic equipment with a per unit cost of \$50.00 or more may be taken from the premises as long as the equipment is checked out properly and returned to the work site/ classroom on a daily basis. However, when school is not in session, the principal may approve the use of the equipment away from the classroom/work site for longer periods of time.

Bus drivers/CDL personnel must submit to random drug testing as required by law, and engagement in outside employment cannot interfere with drug testing procedures. Failure to comply with this policy could result in further disciplinary action.

EVALUATIONS

All Tallapoosa County Schools' employees will be evaluated. ATOT/ELEOT/LEAD Alabama will be required for all applicable personnel. Tallapoosa County Schools requires an evaluation addendum or other support personnel evaluation to be submitted the first three years of employment, as well as every three years at a minimum. An administrator/supervisor may choose to conduct a formal evaluation on any employee that is not on the evaluation cycle. Employees not covered under Alabama Teacher Observation Tool and ELEOT and LEAD Alabama will be required to be evaluated under other assessment measures.

PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION AND PROCEDURES

In addition to requirements established by the State Board of Education and the pertinent job description, professional employees must hold a degree from an accredited college or university and hold a current, valid, and properly endorsed Alabama Teacher's Certificate. A teacher who has completed the certification process but has not received the certificate may be employed on

tentative or temporary compensation pending verification of certification from the State Department of Education. Upon receipt of such verification, appropriate adjustments will be made to the teacher's salary. If a teacher earns a higher degree from a regionally accredited institution that merits increased compensation under the approved salary schedule, any salary increase will become effective the month following recognition of the new degree from the State Superintendent.

Professional Certification Reminders:

- All Alternative Level Certificate applications must be submitted after July 1st and be received in the Teacher Certification Office at the Alabama State Department of Education by October 1st of the application year.
- If an employee is renewing an instructional leader/administrative certificate that expires on or after June 30, he or she must earn PLU's (Professional Learning Units) regardless of his or her position or role in which they serve in order to renew that certificate.
- If an employee is renewing a teaching certificate that expires at the end of the five-year period, he or she must earn a minimum of 50 hours of professional development and meet the employment/experience requirement.
- Teachers will be notified to submit appropriate documentation to the system's certification officer when the certification renewal application portal opens. ***It is ultimately the teacher or staff member's responsibility to maintain and renew their certificates so that they remain current and do not expire.***

SUBSTITUTES

Substitute teachers are required to follow policies/procedures outlined in the Tallapoosa County Schools' Handbook. Attendance at mandatory substitute orientation sessions may be required for continued substitute employment. Principals may request the removal of a substitute under EEOC guidelines and provide the rationale for the removal.

No reemployment is presumed for substitute teachers who are considered temporary employees and are appointed only to meet a temporary emergency. In no case will employment be deemed to extend beyond the end of the school year, and all such positions will expire on or before the end of the school year.

Substitutes must hold a valid teacher's certificate or valid substitute's license, be at least twenty-one (21) years of age unless otherwise approved by the Superintendent, and attend required substitute training provided by the Tallapoosa County Board of Education designee.

WORK VERIFICATION PROCEDURES

Official verification of prior work experience submitted for review to determine placement on the salary schedule must be received within six (6) months of an employee's hire date in order to have this experience paid retroactive to the start date. It is the employee's responsibility to obtain work experience from prior employers. If a letter from the Superintendent verifying receipt and salary schedule adjustment for experience is not received, contact the Department of Human

Resources. In the event an employee has documentation of attempts to verify work experience from other employers that were unsuccessful, the six (6) months deadline may be modified depending on the circumstances.

Official verification of prior work experience submitted for review to determine placement on the salary schedule that is received after six (6) months from the employee's hire date will be effective the date the verification is received in the Human Resources Department. All submission of official verification of prior work experience must meet the Tallapoosa County Schools' guidelines in order to receive credit.

EMPLOYEE ABSENCES

All employees are required to enter absences in **Frontline**. It is the employee's responsibility to register an absence when he/she will not be reporting to work or notify the building administrator/supervisor of the absence in a timely manner. Notification shall be given in advance unless conditions beyond the control of the employee make such advance notification impossible. Any Tallapoosa County employee who is willfully absent from duty without leave may be subject to dismissal from employment and shall forfeit compensation for the time of the absence.

ON-THE-JOB INJURY LEAVE PROCEDURES

On-the-job injury is defined as any accident or injury to the employee occurring during the performance of duties for the employer, which prevents the employee from working or returning to his/her job. This does not include a serious medical situation that occurs while working on the job (i.e. heart attack, stroke, etc.). Employees who are injured due to personal negligence may not qualify for on-the-job injury leave. The following regulations, procedures and rights are established pertaining to employees who are injured while on the job:

1. **Notice of Injury**-The employee shall make proper notification of the injury to his or her immediate supervisor within (24) hours after the injury occurred. Where the employee is not clinically able to make notification, it shall be permissible for another person who is reasonably knowledgeable to make the notification of the injury. A Tallapoosa County Schools ***Employee Injury Report*** must be completed for all employee injuries and signed by the employee and his/her supervisor. The form should be sent to the Payroll/Personnel Department at the Central Office via TalentEd.
2. **Physician Certification**-The Board requires that an employee reporting an on-the-job injury submit a Tallapoosa County Schools *Physician Certification Form* to certify that the employee's injury would not allow the employee to return to work. Any missed days must have this form submitted for sick leave reimbursement. This form should be attached to the Employee Injury Report and be sent to the Payroll/Personnel Department within 5 working days of the injury. Upon receipt of the Physicians Certification Form, the Payroll/Personnel Department will send the employee a letter regarding how to file a claim with the State of Alabama Board of Adjustments. **There is a one (1) year statute of limitations from the date of the injury to file a claim with the State of Alabama. Alabama public schools are ineligible for Workman's Compensation.**
3. **Salary Continued and Sick Leave Reimbursement**- Upon the determination of the Human Resource Director that an employee has been injured on the job and cannot return to work as a

result of the injury, sick days of the employee shall be reinstated for a period of up to ninety (90) working days. The local Administrator (Principal/Supervisor) must send a signed memo stating the dates of absence due to the injury and request that the employee's sick days not be utilized along with a copy of the injury report and physician statement to the Human Resource Director for approval.

SICK LEAVE

The sick leave plan for all employees shall be in accordance with the rules and regulations established by the State of Alabama and the Board of Education and are outlined as follows:

A. All employees shall be allowed sick leave at the rate of one day per contracted month and shall be permitted to accumulate these days to the maximum the state allows.

B. Full pay for sick leave shall be allowed only if the absences fall within the definition of sick leave established by the State Board of Education and outlined below:

1. Personal illness.
2. Bodily injury which incapacitates the employee.
3. Attendance upon an ill member of the employee's immediate family (parent, spouse, child, foster child currently in the care and custody of the employee, sibling); or an individual with a close personal tie.
4. Death in the employee's immediate family, i.e., husband, wife, father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, in-laws, nephew, niece, grandparents, grandchildren, or a person standing in loco parentis.
5. Where unusually strong personal ties exist, due to an employee having been supported or educated by person of some relationship other than those listed, this relationship may be recognized for leave purposes. In each of such cases, the employee shall file with the Superintendent a written statement of the circumstances which justify an exception to the general rule.

C. If an employee of the Board of Education is absent from his or her job due to personal illness or illness in the immediate family as described above, he or she shall enter the absence in Frontline/ Aesop, and notify his/her supervisor as required. If after a period of five (5) consecutive working days of absence an employee has failed to enter the absence into Frontline and/or notify his/her supervisor, then the Tallapoosa County Board of Education may consider such absences as a resignation, unless circumstances beyond the control of the employee prevent the employee from giving notice.

Note: Employees who are absent from work without personal leave or sick leave may be terminated depending on the circumstances.

D. If an employee of the Board of Education is absent from his or her job due to personal illness or illness in the immediate family as described above for more than five (5) consecutive working days, a physician's certificate may be required, stating the nature of the illness and the approximate date the employee should be able to return to his/her job, and such statement should be attached to the proper payroll form for the Payroll Specialist. Documentation may also be required if sick leave is used in an unusual manner. Sick leave is not transferable to another individual unless specifically allowed by state statute.

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

Employees who are eligible under the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) may take leave for up to 12 weeks during a calendar year for any one or more of the following reasons:

1. The birth of the employee's child, and to care for the newborn child during the first year after the birth;
2. The placement with the employee of a child for adoption or foster care, and to care for the newly placed child during the first year after the placement;
3. To care for the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent (but not for parent-in-law), who has a serious health condition; or

4. Because of a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform one or more of the essential functions of his/her job.

From the inception of the qualifying event, the 12-week FMLA leave entitlement is to be charged concurrently with accumulated sick leave, annual leave, or leave without pay. Any FMLA leave taken for a single condition should be taken all at one time. An employee may take FMLA leave intermittently or by reducing his/her work schedule to care for a family member with a serious health condition or for the employee's own serious health condition, only if medically necessary and with proper medical certification. An intermittent leave schedule must be approved by his or her supervisor and the superintendent.

The Board may require the employee to provide medical certification of the serious health condition from the attending health care provider. The certification must be submitted within 15 calendar days after the Board requests it. Failure to provide the certification in a timely manner according to policy may result in denial of taking leave and/or discipline up to and including termination. The Board may require, at its discretion and expense, a second medical opinion. If the first and second opinions differ, the Board, at its own expense, may require the binding opinion of a third health care provider approved jointly by the employee and the Board. The Board may require periodic recertification on a reasonable basis. The Board may also require, as a condition of reinstatement, certification from a health care provider that the employee is able to resume work.

Spouses who are both employed by the Board are limited to a combined total of twelve (12) weeks of family leave (rather than twelve (12) weeks each) for the birth or placement of a child for adoption or foster care. However, if an employee's child or spouse is seriously ill, both the employee and his or her spouse are each entitled to twelve (12) weeks of leave. Leave may begin prior to the birth or placement, as circumstances dictate. An employee's FMLA entitlement to leave for the birth or placement of a child for adoption or foster care shall expire at the end of the twelve (12) month period beginning on the date of such birth or placement.

During FMLA leave, the Board will maintain the employee's individual group insurance benefits at the same level and under the same conditions as if the employee had been working. Dependent insurance coverage must be paid by the employee. If an employee fails to return to work at the conclusion of the approved leave, he/she may be required to reimburse the Board for the employer's portion of the premium paid on their behalf during the leave.

Should an employee request FMLA-qualifying leave, the employee must give the Board at least thirty (30) days' advance notice of the need for leave when it is foreseeable, such as a birth, placement of a child for adoption or foster care, or planned medical treatment for a serious health condition of the employee or of a family member, and must set forth:

1. The reasons for the requested leave;
2. The anticipated duration of the leave; and
3. The anticipated start of the leave.

If 30 days' notice is not practicable, such as a medical emergency, notice must be given as soon as practicable (which ordinarily means at least verbal notification of the employee's supervisor within 1 or 2 business days of when the need for leave becomes known to the employee). Reasonable efforts must also be made to schedule foreseeable leave so as not to unduly disrupt work operations, subject to the doctor's approval. Failure to give the required notice may delay the taking of FMLA leave until at least 30 days after the date the employee provides notice to the board of the need for FMLA leave.

To be eligible for the leave, an employee must:

1. Have been employed by the Board for at least one year as of the date leave commences, and
2. Have worked for the Board at least 1,250 hours in the past 12 months.

Upon timely return from FMLA-qualifying leave and proper certification, an eligible employee who has not been designated a key employee by the Board, will be restored to his/her last position or an equivalent position with equal pay, benefits, and other conditions and terms of employment.

Employees involved in disciplinary actions from management will still be under those actions after returning to work from FMLA leave of absence.

It is the policy of the Board not to unlawfully interfere with, restrain, or deny the exercise of any right provided under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). It is not the intent of the Board to discharge or discriminate against any person for enforcing the FMLA or opposing practices made unlawful by FMLA; nor is it the Board's intent to discharge or discriminate against any person because of involvement in any proceeding under or related to FMLA. FMLA's enforcement procedures parallel those of the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act. The FMLA will be enforced by the U.S. Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division. If an eligible employee has a complaint regarding an FMLA violation, he or she should discuss it with his/her supervisor, following the chain of command leading to the Superintendent.

PERSONAL LEAVE

Personal leave must be requested in writing in accordance with Tallapoosa County Schools' Board Policy. Employees should attempt to plan personal leave so that the educational process will experience a minimum of disruption. Fulltime classified employees are eligible for two paid personal leave days during one scholastic year. Fulltime certified employees are eligible for two paid personal leave days during one scholastic year. Classified and Certified employees have three additional personal leave days available which will result in being charged an amount equal to the average daily rate of pay for a substitute. Classified and certified employees may choose to convert unused personal days into sick leave days at the end of the school year.

VACATION

Vacation will be accrued from July 1-June 30.

An employee may carry over 10 days of vacation into the next year. At no time shall the employee's account balance of vacation days be more than their annual accrual plus 10 days (20 days).

Vacation days are deemed to be earned on the last working day of the month. Vacation days may not be used before they are earned. Vacation time may not extend beyond the termination of an employee's contract. No compensation will be paid in lieu of vacation time upon the resignation or retirement of an employee. All vacation leave dates must be approved in advance by principals/work site supervisors and the Superintendent. Any vacation in excess of 10 consecutive working days must be approved by the Superintendent.

No employee shall be paid for unused vacation leave days under any circumstance. Such leave days are non-cumulative. No employee shall be granted permission to take his/her vacation leave on Institute Day or in increments of less than one-half day. Vacation days may not be bought, sold or donated. Employees will not be paid for earned vacation time if not used prior to the effective date of resignation or retirement. No vacation days will be granted before earned.

Vacations must be scheduled with the knowledge and approval of the employee's department head. All eligible employees with direct supervisory responsibilities for students must take vacations during the months of June and July. The Superintendent, in the case of extraordinary circumstances, may approve alternate vacation times for such personnel when all other leave days have been exhausted.

PROFESSIONAL LEAVE AND LEAVE FOR TRAINING

Professional leave requests should be submitted no later than 10 days prior to the requested leave date. The request should be submitted using appropriate TCBOE "Request for Professional Leave" form and submitted to principal (or immediate supervisor) for approval. If approved at the school level, the form shall then be submitted to the Central Office for approval/non approval by the appropriate administrator (Director of Curriculum, Federal Programs Director, Superintendent, etc.).

All professional leave and leave for training requests **must** be approved by the Superintendent of

Education before utilization.

Professional Leave may be granted to personnel for participation in educational activities related to instructional improvement in the Tallapoosa County School system or to support personnel to participate in activities that will enrich the Tallapoosa County School System's program and improve skills or understandings of the employee.

MILITARY LEAVE

Military leave is available to all eligible employees in accordance with state and federal law. Military paid leave will be utilized for up to 21 days after verification has been provided to the Payroll/Benefits Department. Employees who are ordered to duty shall provide a copy of their orders to the Superintendent. Leave will be without loss of benefits. Activated employees requesting the difference in pay restoration of leave or continuation of health coverage on active duty are required to have the length of their active duty determined by the Adjutant General. Activated employees must provide the Superintendent of Education with a set of Mobilization/Homeland Security orders or Military Records of Service (DD214) that reflects the length of duty. The Adjutant General will determine the validity of the orders and certify to the Superintendent of Education that pay, leave or insurance is proper in accordance with Act 92-430.

LEGAL SERVICE – JURY DUTY LEAVE

Permanent and full-time employees are entitled to regular compensation while performing jury duty (ALA. CODE §12-8-25) or when the employee is summoned under subpoena or other legal requirement to testify at trial in a court of law or in administrative proceedings constituted under the statutory authority of the agency conducting the proceeding. Paid leave is not authorized for employees to meet with attorneys, to attend depositions, or to otherwise prepare for legal proceedings unless the presence of the employee is requested or required by the Board.

An employee must submit the summons for jury duty prior to the date to appear for this service. This will suffice for the first day of jury duty. If services are required for more than one day, a copy of the jury certificate that an employee receives from the court at the completion of their jury service must be submitted. These documents must be given to the payroll bookkeeper at the employee's work location. Failure to provide this documentation will result in utilizing the employee's accumulated personal, vacation, or compensatory days to cover the absence. In the event the employee has no accumulated days, a pay deduction equivalent to their daily rate will be docked for each day.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE PROCEDURES

Use of Accumulated Paid Leave - If an employee has available sick, personal, or vacation leave, the employee must utilize those forms of leave before taking unpaid leave.

Leave of Absences Five to Ten Days - If an employee is absent five consecutive days, the principal/supervisor may require a doctor's excuse or other justification if there is probable cause

to believe that sick leave is being abused or misused. Abuse of sick leave may subject the employee to disciplinary action, including possible loss of pay.

Medical Leave - If an employee is going to be absent **10 or more consecutive days**, a request in writing must be submitted to the principal/supervisor with the beginning and ending dates of anticipated leave. A physician's statement/medical certification must be attached to the letter requesting the leave of absence. The principal/supervisor will send a Personnel Recommendation Form to the Department of Human Resources who presents leave requests to the Superintendent for further board approval. If a medical leave extension is needed beyond 12 weeks, the employee must acquire updated medical certification and submit a letter requesting additional leave. Additional leave must be approved by the Superintendent and Board, but is not guaranteed. Benefits will be discontinued after 12 weeks of leave under the Family Medical Leave Act.

To apply for **Catastrophic Leave**, the employee must be a member of the Sick Leave Bank and should complete the necessary form "Catastrophic Sick Leave Approval Form" in TalentEd. The Payroll/Benefits Department will submit the request to members of the sick bank committee for approval. Employees may request donated days from Alabama public school employees to cover absences. For additional information regarding catastrophic illness procedures, please review Tallapoosa County Schools Policy Manual 6.71 and Tallapoosa County Schools Sick Leave Bank Guidelines **GALBF-R1** for further instructions.

Catastrophic Leave for Maternity Leave Requests - If an employee does not have accumulated sick leave to cover the amount of time the physician certifies the employee will not be able to perform regular job duties, and is a member of the sick bank, a request in writing for catastrophic leave may be submitted to the Coordinator of Payroll/Benefits to cover the amount of time the physician states the employee must remain off work for recovery only. **Catastrophic donations cannot be applied past the amount of time the physician states is needed for personal recovery.**

Intermittent Medical Leave is available for individuals with certain medical conditions that may not require an employee to be absent 10 consecutive days or longer, but frequent absences may result from a serious health condition. Intermittent leave should be scheduled to the extent practicable so as not to unduly disrupt the operations of the Board. Intermittent leave may be further limited for teachers in accordance with federal law. Refer to Tallapoosa County Schools Policy Manual 6.70.1 for additional information.

Maternity/Paternity Leaves - Maternity/Paternity leave requests must be made in writing to the principal/supervisor at least 60 days before the beginning of leave or delivery due date. These requests must be accompanied by a physician's form that may be obtained from your school office, district website, or Department of Human Resources. Up to 12 weeks of unpaid maternity/paternity leave under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) is available if an employee meets eligibility under the regulations of the law, which is working a minimum of 1,250 hours during the previous 12 months. If an employee has available sick leave, vacation leave, or other applicable paid leave, the employee must utilize those forms of leave before taking unpaid leave under FMLA. *The paid leave and FMLA leave will run concurrently from the first absence.* Accumulated sick leave will be used during the duration

of the leave of absence. Employees who are not eligible for FMLA, can request maternity leave for the amount of time the physician states the employee needs for personal recovery only. If an employee chooses to not return after FMLA leave is exhausted, a letter of resignation must be submitted to the Human Resources Department as other leave is not available. Refer to Section 5.10 in the Tallapoosa County Schools Policy Manual for additional information.

Spouses Employed by the Tallapoosa County Board of Education Requesting Maternity and Paternity Leave - Under the FMLA, a combined total of twelve (12) weeks of unpaid leave (or applicable paid leave described previously) for a husband and wife employed by the same board of education is allowed.

Other Relevant Information Concerning Medical and Maternity/Paternity Leaves under FMLA Leave and End of Academic Term Rules - An employee may be required to take leave through the end of an academic term, or semester, when the following circumstances exist:

- If the leave exceeds 5 weeks before the end of the semester and the employee would return within 3 weeks of the term end
- If the leave is less than 5 weeks before the end of the term and the leave is more than 2 weeks with the employee returning within 2 weeks of the term end; or
- If the leave is less than 3 weeks before the end of the term and is longer than 5 working days

One Year Leave of Absence - Full-time, tenured employees may be granted a leave of absence without pay, for one entire academic year (August through May which may not include portions of two separate academic years), for the birth and first year care of a newborn child or adoption of a child. Other reasons for requesting a year's leave of absence are for study, personal improvement, travel, sabbatical, family obligations, wellness or illness. Certain provisions apply that are listed under policy 6.70.1. This leave would not count towards experience in the determination of placement on the salary schedule.

- An employee returning from a year's leave of absence is not guaranteed their original position, but is subject to transfer and reassignment to another vacant position in the school district. Tenure/Non-probationary status will be retained upon return.
- Benefits are continued through FMLA leave, but employees must contact the Payroll/Benefits Department if the leave exceeds this time frame to verify continued benefits coverage, specifically PEEHIP.

Leaves Extending Beyond One Year - If a medical condition continues to exist after extenuation of medical leaves, the employee is unable to perform the job duties and responsibilities designated on the job description, and all paid leave has been exhausted, the employee must consider separation of employment. A resignation and/or filing for long term disability may be warranted. Questions regarding how to apply for disability should be directed to the Payroll/Benefits Department at 256-825-0746.

Return to Work Release – The board may require an employee who has taken leave due to employee’s own serious medical condition to provide the healthcare provider’s certification to return to duty. Please see Tallapoosa County Policy Manual 6.70.10 for additional information.

SICK LEAVE BANK

Purpose

The school system sick leave bank for Tallapoosa County Board of Education employees (hereinafter referred to as SLB) is established to provide a means for loaning sick leave days to participating members after all sick and state paid personal leave days have been exhausted. This action is authorized by the Code of Alabama and official resolution of the Board of Education.

Sick Leave Bank Committee

- A. The SLB Committee shall consist of five employees, one representing the authority and four representing the participating members.
- B. At the beginning of each scholastic year, an election shall be held among the sick leave bank members to determine by secret ballot the four members who are to serve on the SLB committee.
- C. The term of office shall be one year. No representative on the committee shall serve for a term longer than five years.
- D. The chief executive officer of the authority shall be responsible for conducting the election in a fair and equitable manner, and ensuring the confidentiality of the secret ballot process. The chief executive officer of the authority shall also appoint the authority's representative on the committee, subject to Board approval.

Duties of the SLB Committee

- a. The SLB committee will elect, by majority vote, a chair person from among its members at the beginning of each year.
- b. Meetings of the SLB committee shall be conducted on an "as needed" basis as determined by the committee chair person or by a majority of the committee members.
- c. The SLB committee shall have the authority to reopen the bank in case of emergency or need and/or take any other action deemed necessary for the effective and efficient operation of the SLB.
- d. The SLB Committee is charged with the responsibility of developing and distributing the necessary forms so that all eligible employees have reasonable access to the forms and membership. All forms developed by the SLB Committee shall be available at the principal's/supervisor's office at each work site, the central office, from the SLB Committee members, and the local association presidents. The forms include: application for membership to the SLB, application for catastrophic leave, physician's certification of illness, physician's certification of catastrophic illness or injury, resignation from the SLB.
- E. The sick leave bank committee will develop administrative procedures for the sick leave bank.**
- F. Decisions affecting the SLB and catastrophic leave are to be made exclusively by the SLB Committee by a majority recorded vote. Committee members shall refrain from voting on matters that affect them personally.**

Eligibility and Participation in the Sick Leave Bank

1. Days from the SLB shall not be awarded until all the sick and state paid personal leave of the participating employee has been exhausted. The maximum number of days that can be borrowed by

- an individual from the bank shall be 15 days, which includes the five days the individual has on deposit, unless over 50 percent of the participating members of the bank vote to extend said limit.
2. Enrollment in the SLB shall be open during the months of August and January. Membership in the SLB begins on September 1st and ends on August 31st of each year. New employees will be advanced 5 sick leave days to enable them to join the sick leave bank if they choose to do so. These days will be paid back monthly as earned by the new employee. If the employee has more than one job, he/she must choose to either deposit 5 days per job or designate the highest paying job to be covered under the SLB.
 3. A participating employee who no longer wishes to participate in the SLB shall be eligible to withdraw during the month of December. Upon retirement or transfer of the sick leave bank member, days on deposit with the sick leave bank shall be withdrawn and transferred with the employee or made accessible for retirement credit, as applicable.
 4. The Board payroll department shall maintain records of all members' contributions to the SLB, withdrawals from the SLB, and the status of the SLB. Reports shall be provided on a timely basis and at the request of the SLB committee, Superintendent, or Board.
 5. In cases where the contributor has been incapacitated, his/her designated agent may apply to the SLB Committee on the contributor's behalf.
 6. The SLB committee will require a statement from the applicant's physician certifying the nature of the illness or disability as a prerequisite for awarding a loan if the loan exceeds 5 days in a 30 calendar-day period and the absence is due to illness or disability. If the physician's statement is not included, the request will be denied.
 7. Request for loans must be turned into the SLB committee by the 15th of the month. The committee chairperson shall screen the requests. Approval or disapproval of requests for days from the SLB will be based on the criteria established by the SLB committee. Exceptions to the established criteria must be considered by the committee as a whole and recommended to the participating members. Upon the receipt of more than 50% of the votes of the participating members, the requests shall be granted. The SLB committee shall furnish the Tallapoosa County Schools payroll office needed information on prescribed forms and prior to established deadlines.
 8. All allegations of abuse of the SLB shall be investigated by the committee. Should there be any finding of wrongdoing, the employee shall repay all of the sick leave credits drawn from the bank and be subject to other appropriate disciplinary action as determined by the local Board of Education.
 9. An individual cannot leave the school system without repaying any outstanding debt of leave days to the SLB. If the employee has no sick leave days remaining, then his/her final check shall be garnished at prevailing rate for the number of days owed to the SLB. **No employee may owe more days to the Bank than can be repaid by the earnings of one pay period.** Any monies collected from the employees as a result of the SLB operation shall be held by the Board as other funds. In turn, the Board shall notify the SLB committee of the number of days due to be credited in the SLB as a result of the receipt of such funds. It is expected that the Board shall take such action as is appropriate to recover from any employees or ex-employee those sums of money as would equate the value of sick days advanced or borrowed for which the employee did not earn a sick day or otherwise compensate the Board.

Procedures for Sick Leave Due to Catastrophic Illness

Catastrophic illness defined-The Code of Alabama 16-22-9, defines catastrophic illness as any illness, injury, or pregnancy or medical condition related to childbirth certified by a licensed physician which causes the employee to be absent from work for an extended period of time. The extended period of time will be determined on a case by-case basis by the SLB committee.

Eligibility- in order for an employee to participate in the catastrophic sick leave plan as defined in the Code of Alabama 16-22-9; he/she must meet the following eligibility criteria:

1. Be a member of the Tallapoosa County School Board's sick leave bank.
2. Have used all regular sick and state paid personal leave days.
3. Before being eligible to use catastrophic sick leave days, the member of the SLB shall first borrow and utilize days from the sick leave bank, up to a maximum of 15 days. However, if the member later qualifies for catastrophic sick leave, donated catastrophic sick leave days may be used to repay days owed to the SLB to the credit of the affected member. Any request made after an employee returns to work will not be considered.
4. Be an employee of the Board of Education: (a) beneficiary employee eligibility-In order for an employee to receive and used donated catastrophic sick leave days from employees of the Tallapoosa County school system or from employees of another Alabama school system, the beneficiary employee must be a member of the SLB. (b) Donating employee eligibility-An employee of the Tallapoosa County school system must be a member of the SLB to donate catastrophic sick leave days to an employee in the Tallapoosa County school system or to an employee of another Alabama school system. The transfer of sick leave days by a school system employee to an employee of another Alabama school system must be from the school system's SLB to and through the beneficiary's school system sick leave bank.

Donating limits-an employee who is a member of the SLB, at his/her discretion, may donate up to 30 days to be used by an employee of the Tallapoosa County school system and/or to an employee of another Alabama public school system.

Beneficiary limits- there is no limit on the number of sick leave days a beneficiary employee may receive under the catastrophic sick leave plan. However, a Tallapoosa County school system employee who uses catastrophic sick leave days is required to reapply (completion of Catastrophic Sick Leave Approval Form and attending physician statement) at the end of 90 school days. In the event reasonable cause exists to believe that illegal use is being made of catastrophic sick leave days, the school system may require the employee to submit to an examination by physician chosen and paid for by the Board.

Donated days defined-the sick leave days donated by an employee to the SLB or an employee in another Alabama public school system for catastrophic illness purposes are regular sick leave days and are deducted from the donating employee's state accumulated sick leave days. Therefore, the individual employees donating such days will not be able to recover donated days. However, if the beneficiary employee is employed in the Tallapoosa County school system and does not use all sick leave days donated to him/her, the days will revert to the credit of those employees who donated the days in accordance with the following guidelines: (1) any remaining days will be totaled, prorated, and restored in one-half or one day increments to the accounts of the donating employees. (2) increments of less than one-half days will not be restored.

Procedures for obtaining approval: intra-system, Prior to participating in the catastrophic sick leave plan, employees of the Tallapoosa County school system must receive approval from the SLB committee. To initiate the approval process, employees must:

1. Complete sections I and II of the Catastrophic Sick Leave Approval Form.
2. Have the attending physician complete Section III of the Catastrophic Sick Leave Approval Form.
3. Transmit the completed Catastrophic Sick Leave Approval Form to the SLB committee for review and approval.

Procedures for donating days: intra-system-To donate catastrophic sick leave days to another employee of the Tallapoosa County school system employees should:

1. Determine if the employee to whom the days are to be donated has been approved for catastrophic leave by the SLB committee.
2. Complete sections I, II, and III on the Catastrophic Sick Leave Transfer Authorization Form. All items should be completed to include dates, signatures of the donating employee, and the witness.
3. Transmit the completed form to the Superintendent's office.

Procedures for obtaining approval and donating days: inter-system-All sick leave days donated for use by employees in another Alabama public school system must be transferred through the Tallapoosa County school system SLB, i.e., no days may be transferred employee to employee. An employee of the Tallapoosa County school system who desires to transfer catastrophic sick leave days to an employee in another Alabama public school system must:

1. Complete and submit form GALBF-FS to the chairman of the SLB.
2. After receipt of verifying information, the Tallapoosa County Superintendent or designee will notify the Tallapoosa County school system employee of receipt of verifying forms.

Earning sick leave days while on such leave

A beneficiary employee on catastrophic sick leave will earn regular sick leave days while on such leave at the rate of one per month; however, the earned sick leave day must be used each month as it is earned.

Application Procedure for Loans from the Sick Leave Bank

- A. Members who wish to borrow days from the bank must complete the sick leave bank form. If borrowing in excess of five days, a physician's statement must also be turned in with the sick leave bank form. All forms and statements must be submitted to the central office.
- B. Application for loan forms will be available at the central office and in the principal's office at each school.
- C. Any individual who disagrees with the decision of the SLB committee may appeal that decision in writing to the Board.

Paying Back Days owed to the Sick Leave Bank

A. Sick leave days owed to the sick leave bank shall be paid back at the rate of one per month beginning with the next sick leave day earned after the loan was granted by the sick leave bank and continuing until the loan has been completely repaid.

B. Obligations to the Bank must be repaid before additional days will accrue to the employee's sick leave account.

Ref: Code of Alabama 16-1-18, 16-8-25, 16-22-9; Title 16, Chapter 25; Legislative Acts, 84-251; 84-253; and 84-383. State Board of Education regulations (February 9th, 1984).

DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING PROCEDURES

The Board will conduct employee drug and alcohol testing for employees in safety sensitive positions as required by and in accordance with federal law, or in the event there is reasonable suspicion that an employee is under the influence of drugs/alcohol that effect job performance. Any employee may be subject to reasonable suspicion drug testing, as well as follow up drug testing, in accordance with policy 6.80. Failure to comply with drug testing may result in further disciplinary action including, but not limited to termination. Non-compliance with SAP or EAP referrals may also result in further disciplinary action.

Testing will be required for all employees holding a Commercial Drivers License (CDL) or who occupy a safety sensitive position as designated by the Board. In compliance with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration regulations and U.S. Department of Transportation, all transportation personnel will be randomly drug tested as designated by the Superintendent. In addition, any Operations/Maintenance personnel who occupy safety sensitive positions will also be subject to random drug testing.

If an employee holding a CDL tests positive during a random drug screening, he/she will be subject to immediate administrative leave pending board approval of termination or enrollment and treatment in a U.S. Department of Transportation professionally certified Substance Abuse Professional (SAP). If termination is not recommended by the Superintendent based on information provided by the Medical Review Officer, the employee must meet all requirements specified by federal law and the SAP Evaluator to be eligible to return to duty and will be responsible for covering the cost of the SAP evaluation, recommended treatment, and any follow up testing.

COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Section I: Purpose

The Board recognizes the harmonious relations with its employees can be maintained and improved through effective communications. The interests of all parties can best be served by sincere efforts of all concerned to promote understanding and cooperation. The following grievance procedure is approved as a means to examine and resolve possible problems that relate to the administration of policies of the School District. These procedures can also be used by personnel for complaints on the basis of sex or disability. Informal and formal grievances are issues an employee wishes to file against an administrator/supervisor as defined below. Complaints against another employee should be addressed with the immediate supervisor for resolution.

Section II: Definitions

- A. Grievance - *Grievance* is a claim or dispute concerning the interpretation, application, or claimed violation of the personnel policies, procedures, or regulations of the School District. Grievances are objections to a specific act or condition. Other matters for which other means of resolution are provided or foreclosed by statute or administrative procedures shall not be considered grievances. A grievance does not include matters involving the Board's right to establish educational policy and prescribe rules and regulations for the conduct and management of the Schools.
- B. Employee - Employee shall indicate any staff member employed on an annual basis by the Board to perform services, either full- or part-time, with the exception of the Superintendent.
- C. Supervisor - Supervisor is the employee possessing administrative authority next in rank above any grievant.
- D. Days - Days shall mean working days exclusive of Saturday, Sunday, or official holidays, as established by the school calendar.
- E. Complainant – Any employee or group of employees, directly affected by the alleged misinterpretation or violation, filing a complaint.
- F. Representative - The term representative refers to any person chosen, if desired, by the aggrieved party to serve as the liaison with supervisor.

Section III: Informal Procedures

Under most circumstances, most grievances can be resolved informally and at the most immediate administrative level. With this objective in mind, simple, honest, and straightforward communication is encouraged between the employee, the principal, and/or the superintendent. An employee who feels he/she has a grievance against an administrator or supervisor should present the matter verbally to the immediate supervisor. The immediate supervisor to whom the grievance is presented shall hear and attempt to resolve the grievance within ten (10) days from the time presented and advise the grievant of the decision within ten (10) days thereafter. If the grievance is resolved, or if no further action is needed, the matter is closed.

If an employee feels his/her grievance has not been resolved, he/she may resort to the formal procedure as outlined in Section IV. Please see Tallapoosa County Policy Manual Section 6.41 for additional information.

Section IV: Formal Procedure

In order to resolve grievances in the most appropriate fashion and in the shortest period of time possible, each grievant shall start at the most immediate level of administration (level one in most cases) and progress to the next level until the matter is resolved. If level one does not apply to a particular grievant, such as a supervisor in the central office, that level should be omitted from the process.

The grievance must be filed in writing at each level. The written grievance must indicate the claim or dispute and the grievant's anticipated action for resolution to the claim or dispute. The grievant shall indicate with his/her filing at each level whom will accompany or represent him/her in any meetings or hearings that might be conducted.

All decisions rendered at each level shall be set forth in writing and promptly disseminated to all parties in interest.

Scheduled meetings or hearings can be changed with mutual consent of the parties in interest. All records of meetings and hearings shall be maintained in confidence; however, this shall not be interpreted to prevent such records from becoming a part of the grievant's personnel file.

Level One - Principal or Immediate Supervisor

1. The grievant must present the grievance and may be accompanied by a fellow employee or representative.
2. The principal or supervisor will schedule a conference after receipt of notice no later than ten (10) working days after the date on which the alleged grievance occurred or ten (10) working days following the date of decision for the informal procedure. If the grievance is not submitted within the time prescribed, the employee shall be deemed not to have further rights with respect to said grievance.
 3. The immediate supervisor will issue a written decision to the grievant within five working days after the conference.
4. Unless the grievance is appealed as outlined in Level Two, it shall be deemed to have been settled and the employee shall have no further rights with respect to said grievance.

Level Two – Superintendent or Superintendent’s Designee

1. In the event the employee wishes to appeal the decision at Level One, the appeal must be presented in writing to an administration officer of higher rank than the employee’s immediate supervisor (Superintendent or Superintendent’s designee {s}) within five (5) working days of the decision rendered at Level One.
2. Written notice must include the original written grievance, written decisions rendered at Level One, and any additional information the grievant deems important.
3. A meeting with the grievant and administrator(s) will be scheduled within ten (10) working days from the receipt of the written grievance.
4. The grievant may appear alone or may choose to include others in the conference. Identification of representatives must be included in the written notice at Level Two.
5. The administrative officer shall issue a written decision to the employee within five (5) working days after the conference.
6. Unless the grievance is appealed as outlined in Level Three, it shall be deemed to have been settled and the employee shall have no further rights with respect to said grievance.

Level Three – Board of Education

1. Within ten (10) days after the receipt of the decision at Level two, the aggrieved party may appeal to the Board of Education.
2. The aggrieved party must file a written request with the Superintendent for a hearing before the Board. The request must contain a detailed description of the grievance, as well as documentation of actions/decisions from Levels One and Two. The names of employee counsel or representatives, if any, must be included in the written request.
3. Within ten (10) days following the receipt of the written request, the Board shall set a time, date and place for the hearing. The Board may decide a grievance appeal based upon a review of the administrative and evidentiary record without providing a de novo hearing.
4. The Board shall issue a written decision within thirty (30) days after the hearing with the employee or after the review of the administrative and evidentiary record.
5. The decision of the Board of Education shall be final unless the grievant decides to appeal to the courts or to utilize any other duly recognized procedure as established by law.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

Persons who believe that they have been discriminated against on the basis of disability in the provision of services, activities, programs, or benefits covered by the Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act may file a written complaint with the Director of Human Resources. *Persons alleging such discrimination shall use the grievance procedure outline in Tallapoosa County Policy Manual 6.41.*

TRANSFER REQUEST PROCEDURES

All requests for voluntary transfers should be submitted through TalentEd Records:

1. Current building administrator/supervisor
2. Department of Human Resources

All requests for voluntary transfers shall be carefully considered and reviewed in accordance with Board policies concerning prohibited discrimination practices. Hiring recommendations will be submitted from the building administrators or departmental supervisors to the Superintendent for consideration. No employee should expect a transfer based on seniority, service years, etc.

END OF YEAR EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION

Employment Renewal – During the first two years of employment, all **non-tenured teachers** will be rehired unless given notice by the superintendent by June 15th. However, in the tenure year notice will be given by the last working day for teachers to report to duty. Certified employees must be hired by October 1st of a scholastic year to be counted towards acquisition of tenure.

Probationary classified employees may be terminated at the discretion of the employer upon written recommendation of the superintendent and majority vote of the board. A written notice of termination to the classified employee may occur at any time on or before June 15th. After the employee's third consecutive, complete school year of employment, non-probationary status will be issued. Classified employees must be hired by October 1st of a scholastic year to be counted towards acquisition of non-probationary status. The employee will receive 15 days' notice before ending pay and benefits. Non-probationary status is no longer granted based on original hire date or 36 months of cumulative service. If any certified or classified employee leaves employment with Tallapoosa County Schools, tenure/non-probationary status starts over.

If an employee is hired as an **End of Year Only Appointment** or **One Year Only Appointment**, his/her employment will automatically expire at the end of the academic school year. Future employment options must be directed to the principal/departmental supervisor. These finite appointments may or may not be counted towards tenure/non-probationary status depending on the funding and other employment circumstances relevant to the position. Seek additional clarification from the Department of Human Resources or supervisor/principal if questionable.

Resignations - Teachers must notify the board 30 calendar days in advance of the next scholastic year of the decision to not return. During the scholastic year, teacher resignations require a five day written notice to Tallapoosa County Board of Education. Failure to provide proper notice is considered unprofessional conduct and the State Superintendent of Education may revoke or suspend a teacher's certificate.

Retirement - If considering retirement at the end of the current school year, an employee must contact the Teacher Retirement System (TRS) to verify eligibility. The employee must contact the Payroll/Benefits Department to complete necessary paperwork by the deadlines specified by TRS in

order to avoid missing a paycheck. A letter indicating the decision to retire/resign must be submitted to the Human Resources Department. As of January 1, 2013, all NEW hires after this date will be ineligible to collect retirement pensions after becoming vested until age 62 (Senate Bill 388).

One Year Leave of Absence Requests - If a **tenured** employee plans to request a leave of absence for the following full academic year, he/she must submit a written request to the principal no less than sixty (60) calendar days before the first teacher working day of the next school year. Provisions outlined in Tallapoosa County Schools Policy Manual 6.70 are applicable below:

- The request for absence must be submitted to the Superintendent, in writing, with the additional approval and signature of the employee's direct supervisor. Requests must be received by the Superintendent at least one (1) week prior to a monthly Board meeting.
- An employee returning from a year's leave of absence is not guaranteed their original position, but is subject to reassignment or transfer to another vacant position in the district.
- A year's leave of absence shall not be counted as experience in determination of placement on the salary schedule.

Benefits – All local benefits (dental, long-term disability, and life insurance) will be discontinued at the end of the month following an employee's last day to work/resign, with the exception of PEEHIP benefits. If an employee (excluding 12 month personnel) resigns at the end of the scholastic year, PEEHIP benefits only will continue through August 31st. If an employee resigns or is terminated during the year, contact the Payroll & Benefits Department to determine when PEEHIP benefits will end. Employees will receive COBRA notifications on benefits from an entity representing Tallapoosa County Schools. COBRA notification will come directly from them for medical insurance or supplemental plans.