



**Employee Handbook**  
**Weakley County Schools**  
**General Information, Policies, and Guidelines**  
**Updated August 2023**

## Important Information

In the event of a discrepancy between any of the information contained in our handbook and the Weakley County board policy, the board policy will govern. The purpose of this handbook is to provide answers to frequently asked questions and enable our employees to have a successful experience with Weakley County Schools. Not all board policies and procedures are contained in this handbook; however, those that are included have been summarized.

This handbook serves as neither a contract nor a substitute for the official Weakley County board policy. It is only meant to be a guide for that policy manual. This handbook does not alter the at-will status of any employee and does not create a contract for employment.

Board policies and procedures may change at any time. For more information, please refer to the online board policy section, confer with a supervisor, or contact the appropriate Central Office department. It is the employee's responsibility to be knowledgeable of and adhere to the board policies and procedures.

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## District Information

### School Board

The Weakley County School Board is comprised of individuals representing the residents of Weakley County communities. The Board is elected to provide oversight and governance for Weakley County Schools. The members serve four-year terms, and they are responsible for setting district policy and selecting the Director of Schools. The Director of Schools is the only employee hired by the Board. The current members of the School Board are below:



Greenfield



Martin



Dresden/Palmersville



Dresden

Weakley County Schools does not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment or training on the basis of race, creed, color, handicap, national origin, sex, age, political affiliation, or beliefs. The district adheres to the provisions of the Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).



Martin



Gleason



Martin



Sharon



Martin

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## District Overview

Detailed demographic information by state, school system, and individual school(s) is available on the Tennessee Department of Education online Report Card.

### School

### Principal

Dresden Elementary School	Melanie Needham
Dresden Middle School	David Lewellen
Dresden High School	Scott Killebrew
Gleason School	Lee Lawrence
Greenfield School	Jamie Doster
Martin Primary School	Tracey Bell
Martin Elementary School	Patresa Rogers
Martin Middle School	John Lifsey
Sharon School	Michelle Clements
Westview High School	Brian Allen

### Additional Services

Personal Development Center	Krystle Smith
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All Weakley County Schools are accredited/approved by the Tennessee Department of Education.

## Administration/District Staff

### Jeff Cupples

Director of Schools

[Jeff.Cupples@wcsk12tn.net](mailto:Jeff.Cupples@wcsk12tn.net)

General Administration

Financial Management

Instructional Leadership

Community Relations

### Betsi Foster

Deputy Director of Schools

[Betsi.Foster@wcsk12tn.net](mailto:Betsi.Foster@wcsk12tn.net)

Personnel Administration

Employee Management

District Testing

Student Affairs, Discipline

ESSER 1.0, 2.0

### John Liggett

Finance Director

[John.Liggett@wcsk12tn.net](mailto:John.Liggett@wcsk12tn.net)

Finances, Payroll

Accounting

Budget

### Donald Ray High

Supervisor of Instruction, Grades 6-12

[DonaldRay.High@wcsk12tn.net](mailto:DonaldRay.High@wcsk12tn.net)

Curriculum

Teachers, Teacher Leaders

Teacher Evaluations

### Terri Stephenson

Supervisor of Instruction, Grades PK-5

[Terri.Stephenson@wcsk12tn.net](mailto:Terri.Stephenson@wcsk12tn.net)

Curriculum

Teachers, Teacher Leaders

Teacher Evaluations

### Eva Essary

Director of Special Education

[Eva.Essary@wcsk12tn.net](mailto:Eva.Essary@wcsk12tn.net)

Special Education

### Kandace Jackson

Career/Technology Education Supervisor

[Kandace.Jackson@wcsk12tn.net](mailto:Kandace.Jackson@wcsk12tn.net)

CTE

Textbooks

### Jon Gardner

Federal Programs Director

[Jon.Gardner@wcsk12tn.net](mailto:Jon.Gardner@wcsk12tn.net)

Titles I, II, IV, V

Student and School Data

Board Policy

ESL

### Angie Rushing

ESSER 3.0 and ISM Director

[Angie.Rushing@wcsk12tn.net](mailto:Angie.Rushing@wcsk12tn.net)

ESSER 3.0 Grant

ISM Grant

### Trista Snider

School Nutrition Director

[Trista.Snider@wcsk12tn.net](mailto:Trista.Snider@wcsk12tn.net)

School Nutrition

After-School Program

### Lorna Benson

Safe Schools Coordinator

[Lorna.Benson@wcsk12tn.net](mailto:Lorna.Benson@wcsk12tn.net)

Federal Rights Coordinator

Student Safety

Emergency Operations

504 Plans

**Krystle Smith**

Attendance Director

[Krystle.Smith@wcsk12tn.net](mailto:Krystle.Smith@wcsk12tn.net)

Attendance

**Kris Bodwell**

Technology Director

[Kris.Bodwell@wcsk12tn.net](mailto:Kris.Bodwell@wcsk12tn.net)

Technology

**Anthony Stewart**

Student Services

[Anthony.Stewart@wcsk12tn.net](mailto:Anthony.Stewart@wcsk12tn.net)

Database

Student Management System

**Wayne Reynolds**

Maintenance Supervisor

[Wayne.Reynolds@wcsk12tn.net](mailto:Wayne.Reynolds@wcsk12tn.net)

Physical Plant

Planning

**Tim Barker**

Transportation Supervisor

[Tim.Barker@wcsk12tn.net](mailto:Tim.Barker@wcsk12tn.net)

Transportation

## WEAKLEY COUNTY SCHOOLS CALENDAR 2023-2024

July 31 (Mon.)	In-Service
August 1 (Tues.)	In-Service (1/2 day) Work Day (1/2 day)
August 2 (Wed.)	Registration (8:00 – 11:30) - 1/2 Day In-Service
August 3 (Thurs.)	In-Service
August 4 (Fri.)	Work Day for Teachers
August 7 (Mon.)	School Begins (1 <sup>st</sup> Full Day for Students)
September 1 (Fri.)	Professional/Staff Development/No School for Students
September 4 (Mon.)	Labor Day (No School)
September 26 (Tues.)	Early Dismissal for Students/Parent-Teacher Conference 12:00 – 6:00
October 9-13 (Mon.-Fri.)	Fall Break (No School)
November 22-24 (Wed.-Fri.)	Thanksgiving (No School)
December 15 (Fri.)	Christmas Break – Early Dismissal - No Lunch Served
January 2 (Tue.)	Professional/Staff Development/No School for Students
January 3 (Wed.)	Students Return – Begin 2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester
January 15 (Mon.)	Martin Luther King Day (No School)
January (to be announced)	Parent Teacher Conference (Three Hours after School)
February 19 (Mon.)	All Presidents’ Day (No School)
March 5 (Tues.)	Professional Staff Development/No School for Students
March 25-March 29 (Mon.-Fri.)	Spring Break (No School)
May 21 (Tues.)	Last Day of School for All Students – Early Dismissal – No Lunch Served
May 22 (Wed.)	Work Day for Teachers (No School for Students)
May 23 (Thurs.)	½ Day Work Day (Report Cards-Buses Will Not Run)

The first five snow days will not be made up. Any subsequent snow days will be made up as follows: (1) Jan. 16; (2) Feb. 20; Spring Break (March 20-24) will be used as make-up days in emergency situations.

ACT Testing (Grade 11) 2<sup>nd</sup> Semester (TBA)

Achievement (Grades 3-8) &  
End of Course Testing (High School) 2<sup>nd</sup> Semester (TBA)

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**In-Service**

1 day July 31  
 ½ day August 1  
 ½ day August 2  
 1 day August 3  
 2 days planned by Principal (to be determined)

**Work Days**

½ day August 1  
 ½ day August 2  
 1 day August 4  
 1 day Sept. 26 PTC  
 ½ day (to be announced – PTC)  
 1 day May 22  
 ½ day May 23

**Professional/Staff Development**

1 day September 1  
 1 day January 2  
 1 day March 5

**Days of Instruction:**

August	19
September	19
October	17
November	19
December	11

1 <sup>st</sup> Sem. Days	85
Prof/Staff Dev. Days	<u>1</u>
	86

January	20
February	20
March	15
April	22
May	15

2 <sup>nd</sup> Sem. Days	92
Prof/Staff Dev. Day	<u>2</u>
	94

Total Days	180
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## Helpful Contact Information

<b>WEAKLEY COUNTY SCHOOLS</b>	<b>Phone (731)</b>	<b>PRINCIPAL/DIRECTOR</b>
Dresden Elementary School (PreK-4th grades)	364-3401	Melanie Needham
Dresden Middle School (5-8th grades)	364-2407	David Lewellen
Dresden High School (9-12th grades)	364-2949	Scott Killebrew
Gleason School (PreK-12th grades)	648-5351	Lee Lawrence
Greenfield School (PreK-12th grades)	235-3424	Jamie Doster
Martin Primary School (PreK-2nd)	587-9033	Tracey Bell
Martin Elementary School (3-5th grades)	587-2290	Patresa Rogers
Martin Middle School (6-8th grades)	587-2346	John Lifsey
Westview High School (9-12th grades)	587-4202	Brian Allen
Sharon School (PreK-8th grades)	456-2672	Michelle Clements
Weakley County Personal Development Center	364-3580	Krystle Smith, Director
<i>Alternative School/Attendance</i>	364-3580	Krystle Smith, Director
<i>Technology Department</i>	364-3580	Kris Bodwell, Director
<i>Student Services</i>	364-3580	Anthony Stewart
<i>Coordinated School Health</i>	364-9945	Bethany Allen, Director
Weakley County Schools	364-2247	Jeff Cupples, Director
<i>Career Technical Ed./Textbooks</i>	364-6992	Kandace Jackson, Supervisor
<i>Special Education Department</i>	364-5554	Eva Essary, Supervisor
<i>School Nutrition Department</i>	364-3347	Trista Snider, Supervisor
<i>Finance &amp; Payroll Department</i>	364-5429	John Liggett, Director
<i>Federal Programs/Parental Involvement</i>	364-2247	Jon Gardner, Director
<i>Safe Schools</i>	364-2247	Lorna Benson, Director
<i>School Nurses</i>	364-2949	Diane Lillegard, Director
<i>Public Communications</i>	364-2247	Erica Moore, Director
Weakley County Shop/Bus Garage	364-2578	Tim Barker, Transportation
	364-3284	Wayne Reynolds, Maintenance

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## Staff Ethics

An effective educational program requires the services of those with integrity, high ideals and human understanding. To maintain and promote these essentials, all employees are expected to maintain high standards in their school relationships. These standards include the following:

1. The maintenance of just and courteous professional relationships with student, parent(s), staff members and others;
2. The maintenance of their own efficiency and knowledge of the developments in their fields of work;
3. The transaction of all official business with the properly designated authorities of the school system;
4. The establishment of friendly and intelligent cooperation between the community and the school system;
5. The representation of the school system on all occasions that the contributions of the school system to the community are recognized;
6. The welfare of children as the first concern of the school system when placing professional personnel. The use of pressure on school officials for appointments or transfers is unethical;
7. Restraint from using school contacts and privileges to promote partisan politics, sectarian religious views or selfish propaganda of any kind;
8. The responsibility to make any criticism of other staff members or of the school system directly to the particular school administrator who has the administrative responsibility for improving the situation and then to the director of schools, if necessary; and
9. The proper use and protection of all school properties, equipment and materials.
10. The adherence to the Educator's Obligations to Students as outlined by TCA 49-5-1003 and the Educator's Obligations to the Education Profession as outlined by TCA 49-5-1004.2

*Board Policy 5.611*

*Appendix B*

## Employment and Hiring Practices

**Equal Employment Opportunity Statement:** Opportunity for employment, as well as continuation and advancement in employment, shall be afforded equally to members of all races, creeds, colors, sexes, religions, ages, national origins, and individuals with disabilities or veteran status with regard only for qualifications for the positions involved. *Board Policy 5.104*

**Job Postings and Application:** All open certified positions for Weakley County Schools will be posted online for a minimum of five (5) business days on our website under Employment Opportunities. The application process requires an online application submitted through TalentEd. For additional questions and clarifications, please contact the Deputy Director of Schools.

**Criminal History Background Check:** To ensure the safety and welfare of students and staff, the district shall require criminal history background checks and fingerprinting as a pre-condition of employment and for all current employees every five (5) years. Knowingly providing false information or falsifying records shall be sufficient grounds for termination of employment and shall also constitute a Class A misdemeanor, which must be reported to the District Attorney General for prosecution. The cost of background checks and fingerprinting for hired employees shall be reimbursed to the employee by the district with proper documentation. For additional questions and clarifications, please contact the Deputy Director of Schools. *Board Policy 5.118*

**Payroll:** Employees are paid once per month. If payday falls on a non-working day, employees will be paid on the last working day prior to payday. All payroll is done through direct deposit. If there is a discrepancy in pay or questions about payroll, contact the Finance Department. *Board Policy 2.802*

**Employee Badges:** Employee ID badges should be worn during all scheduled work hours. Lost ID badges are replaced by the School Nutrition Department: 731-364-3347.

**Personnel Records:** Personnel records are kept for all employees pursuant to local policy, state and federal law. Employee records are public records except for matters deemed confidential by law. *Board Policy 5.114*

**Performance Evaluations:** Newly hired non-licensed administrative/support personnel shall be evaluated once during the evaluation period (up to 90 days) and at least one (1) additional time following successful completion of the evaluation period during the first year of employment. Support personnel employed for more than one (1) year shall be evaluated at least once a year.

Annual evaluations are mandated by the Tennessee Department of Education for teachers and other certified employees. Weakley County Schools has adopted the Tennessee Educator Acceleration Model (TEAM). *Board Policy 5.109*

**Employee Transfer Procedure:** Any employee, regardless of tenure status or years of service, may apply for a transfer to a position within Weakley County Schools for which they qualify. The employee must request transfer no later than March 15 of any academic year. The statement shall include the grade or subject and the school to which the employee wishes to transfer. Transfer requests may be considered by the Director of Schools for positions posted after the March 15 deadline.

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## Key Personnel Standards and Policies

**Cell Phones:** Employees may use their cell phones during their scheduled planning time, assigned lunch or designated break times. Cell phones for non-educational purposes are not to be used during assigned work time.

**Dress Code:** It is the belief of the Weakley County Board of Education that teachers and other staff should dress in a manner that will be professional and non-disruptive to the educational learning environment. With this in mind, the following guidelines will apply:

1. No wind suits or sweat suits\*
2. Male staff members will wear shirts tucked in (does not include sweaters, pullovers, etc.)
3. Dresses/skirts must come to the top of the knee or longer when standing.
4. If leggings/tights are worn, tops must rest at the top of the knee when standing.
5. No flip flops
6. Staff members are expected to follow student piercing rules (two per ear, no other visible piercings)
7. Tattoos: principal discretion
8. Shirts, blouses, and tops must cover backs and shoulders. No low cut necklines.
9. No jeans or shorts.\* Capri pants are acceptable attire.

\* Physical Education/Wellness teachers can be an exception and may wear appropriate shorts/wind pants and suits in gym classes. Classroom teachers should not wear shorts.

\* Teachers are allowed to wear appropriate denim jeans at times designated by the school administrator. Jeans should meet or exceed jean requirements of students.

**Confidentiality:** A student's information is confidential and protected by law. Employees working within Weakley County Schools have the responsibility to maintain the confidentiality of all student information. There may be consequences for any breach of confidentiality up to and including termination of employment.

**Political Activities:** Employees have a right to express their views on any issue but must, in each case, make clear that the view expressed is not the official view of the Board or school system. Teachers should refrain from sharing their personal views during academic classes except as allowed by law.

Employees may, on their own time, campaign for or against any candidate or referendum, but they shall not use the schools, equipment, classroom or their system position for political forum nor engage in any political promotion or solicitation during school hours. Non-compliance with these requirements shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Any employee who intends to campaign for an elective public office which infringes upon a contracted agreement or work schedule of the employee shall present a proposed solution to the Board for consideration. The essential element to be determined by the Board is whether the activities proposed by the employee are consistent with his services to the school system and the best interests of education. *Board Policy 5.606*

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**Complaints and Grievances:** The Board believes that differences of opinions arising in the course of employment should be resolved as quickly as possible and at the lowest supervisory level. In instances of questions by an individual staff member concerning the interpretation of policies and procedures to that staff member, administrative practices within his/her particular school, and relationships with other employees, the staff member concerned must consult the administrative or supervisory personnel to whom he/she is responsible. If a satisfactory resolution of the problem cannot be reached after ample opportunity for consideration of the matter, the staff member concerned may discuss the matter with the next level of supervision up to and including the director of schools. In instances where an individual staff member feels for personal reasons that he/she cannot discuss a problem with his/her immediate superior, he/she may take the problem directly to the director of schools.

The employee should notify the Federal Rights Coordinator if they believe the Board, its employees, or agents have violated rights guaranteed by the state or federal constitution, state or federal statute, or Board policy. *Board policy 5.501*

**Use of Technology:** All classroom technology is the property of Weakley County Schools. All teachers are expected to abide by the Acceptable Use Policy (Appendix A).

Email: Users with network access shall not utilize district resources to establish electronic mail accounts through third-party providers or any other nonstandard electronic mail system. All data including email communications stored or transmitted on school system computers shall be monitored.

Employees/students have no expectation of privacy regarding such data. Email correspondence may be a public record under the public records law and may be subject to public inspection. *Board Policy 4.406*

**Conflict of Interest:** Employees of the Board will not engage in, or have financial interest in, any activity that raises a reasonable question of conflict of interest with their duties and responsibilities as members of the school staff. This includes but is not limited to the following:

1. School employees may not purchase for sale to students any goods or equipment or render any service to the school system on a commission basis;
2. Employees who have patented or copyrighted any device, publication, or other item will not receive royalties for use of such item in the school system;
3. Employees will not engage in any type of work where the source of information concerning a customer, client, or employer originates from information obtained through the school system and is not public knowledge;
4. The Board shall make no purchase of supplies, materials, or equipment from a school system employee; and
5. Employees shall not solicit for the purpose of selling instructional supplies, equipment and reference books in a territory that includes the parents of the children of the school in which the employee is assigned.

Administrative and supervisory personnel shall have no financial interest, directly or indirectly, in supplying books, maps, school furniture, or apparatus for the schools or to act as agent for any author,

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publisher, bookseller, or dealer in school furniture or apparatus, however a spouse or family member of a principal, teacher or other school administrative employee may participate in business transactions with the school system where a sealed competitive bid system is used, provided that the employee does not have discretion in the selection of bids or specifications. *Board Policy 5.601*

**Drug Free Workplace:** Weakley County Schools and its employees share a commitment to create and maintain a drug-free workplace. Weakley County Schools is responsible for the instruction and wellbeing of the students entrusted to its care. All employees are subject to randomized or periodic drug screening and trained supervisors have a responsibility to observe and document any cause for reasonable suspicion of drug or alcohol use and refer such matters to the director of schools, as appropriate. See *Board Policy 5.403* for more details.

**Non-School Employment:** Employees shall be permitted to hold employment outside the school system as long as such activities do not (a) occur during the employees regularly scheduled work hours, (b) interfere with the employees regularly scheduled or appropriately assigned duties for the school system, (c) reflect unfavorably on the school system, or (d) interfere with the degree of effectiveness of the employee's work in the school system.

Employment with an institution of higher education as a teacher must be limited to certain teaching responsibilities. *Board Policy 5.607*.

Any teacher may enter into an agreement with parents for tutoring children for a fee, but this practice must be limited to children other than those for whom the teacher is currently exercising teaching, administrative, or supervisory responsibility. School facilities may not be used for private profit. *Board Policies 5.607 and 5.608*

Support personnel shall not be prohibited from holding employment outside the school system so long as such employment does not interfere with regular and overtime scheduled duties for the school system. *Board Policy 5.607*.

**Discrimination/Harassment:** Weakley County Schools is committed to providing a work environment free from sexual, racial, ethnic and religious discrimination/harassment. It shall be a violation of this policy for any employee or any student to discriminate against or harass an employee through disparaging conduct or communication that is sexual, racial, ethnic, or religious in nature. The following guidelines are set forth to protect employees from discrimination/harassment.

Employee discrimination/harassment will not be tolerated. Discrimination/harassment is defined as conduct, advances, gestures or words either written or spoken of a sexual, racial, ethnic or religious nature which:

1. Unreasonably interfere with the individual's work or performance; or
2. Create an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment; or
3. Imply that submission to such conduct is made an explicit or implicit term of employment;
4. Imply that submission to or rejection of such conduct will be used as a basis for an employment decision affecting the harassed employee.

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Alleged victims of sexual, racial, ethnic and religious discrimination/harassment shall report these incidents immediately. This report should be made to the immediate supervisor except when the immediate supervisor is the offending party. If the immediate supervisor is the offending party, the report may be made to the Federal Rights Coordinator or the Special Education Supervisor. Allegations of discrimination/harassment shall be fully investigated (as set forth in *Complaints and Grievances 5.501*). An oral complaint may be submitted; however such complaint must be reduced to writing to ensure a more complete investigation. *Board Policy 5.500*.

**Smoking/Vaping/Tobacco:** Weakley County Schools prohibits smoking, vaping, or other tobacco use by all staff, students, visitors, and guests on all school property, in all school buildings, and in all school vehicles. *Board Policy 1.803*

**Annual Training:** Weakley County Schools, in compliance with state and federal regulations, requires certain trainings be completed by staff each year. These trainings include but are not limited to health and first aid, safety, ethics, civil rights, child abuse/human trafficking, homelessness, and suicide prevention.

## Money/Asset Management

**Collecting Cash:** Money collected by staff as a result of fundraisers or other school related purposes shall be deposited with the school office at the end of each day, no matter the amount. At no time is money to be kept overnight or held during holidays or for long periods of time in classrooms. Staff members should emphasize to students the importance of promptly depositing money collected with appropriate school officials. Refer to the school bookkeeper for specific guidance regarding collecting and spending funds for your classroom, organization, or team.

**Gifts, Fundraising, Wish Lists, Donations:** Employees shall not accept gifts from students unless the gifts are of token value.

Employees are prohibited from accepting things of material value from individuals, companies or organizations doing business with the school system. Exceptions to this policy are the acceptance of minor items which are generally distributed to all by the companies through public relations programs.

Individual teachers may not accept cash donations for the school or classroom. Teachers may create Wish Lists, but not solicit monetary donations to the classroom. Gifts and bequests must adhere to *Board Policy 2.401*.

**District Property:** All staff members are expected to exercise continuous and vigilant care of all district-owned property. Such items as computers, video equipment and musical instruments are priority items for theft and damage. Incidents of theft or willful destruction of district property through vandalism or malicious mischief should be reported immediately to the building principal or the appropriate administrator. Upon a staff member's separation from employment, all district-owned property, (laptops, keys, etc.) must be returned on the last day of employment.

**Keys:** Keys are issued to staff by the principal. In order to protect property, students and staff and to ensure the building is adequately secured when no authorized personnel are present, all staff members are expected to adhere to the following key control procedures:

1. The duplication of keys is prohibited;
2. Keys are not to be left unattended. Avoid leaving keys on desks, tables, in mailboxes, unattended coat pockets, etc.
3. Keys may not be loaned to students or to individuals not employed by the district. Under no circumstances should staff provide keys to students to "run errands", "unlock/lock" doors, etc.
4. Upon the last day of employment, all keys and badges must be returned to the staff member's immediate supervisor.

## Employee Relations

**Student-Staff Relations:** Staff members shall maintain professional relationships with students at all times and develop wholesome and constructive relationships with them. Staff members shall be expected to regard each student as an individual and to accord each student the rights and respect that is due.

Staff members shall promote a learning environment that encourages fulfillment of each student's potential in regard to his/her program, consistent with district goals and with optimal opportunities for students. This goal may be reached by adapting instruction to individual needs by:

1. Insisting on reasonable standards of scholastic accomplishment for all students;
2. Creating a positive atmosphere in and out of the classroom;
3. Extending courtesy and respect to students; and,
4. Treating all students with consistent fairness.

Staff members shall use good judgment in their relationships with students beyond their work responsibilities and/or outside the school setting and shall avoid excessive informal and social involvement with individual students. Any appearance of impropriety shall be avoided. Sexual relationships between employees and students shall be prohibited. *Board Policy 5.610*

**Attendance of Employee's Children:** There is no tuition charge for the children of any employee to attend Weakley County Schools. Requests to attend must be made to the director of schools. *Board Policy 6.204*

**Staff Time Schedules:** The workday for full-time licensed and professional staff will continue until professional responsibilities to the students and the school are completed. Administrative meetings, curriculum development, student supervision, assigned duties, parent-teacher conferences, group or individual planning and extracurricular activities may require hours beyond the stated minimum. The principal at each school will be responsible for setting the work hours for all employees. At the central office, the director of schools or designee will set working hours.

All employees are expected to be present during all work hours, including planning time. Absence without prior approval, chronic absences, habitual tardiness or abuses of designated working hours are all considered neglect of duty and will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Staff meetings shall be held in each school for the purpose of promoting school improvement and professional growth and may be conducted by the principal, teachers, or committees.

All staff members are expected to attend all meetings and in-services called by the administration unless excused by the person calling the meeting. *Board Policies 5.602 and 5.603*

**Lunch Time:** All non-certified employees shall be allowed a thirty (30) minute unpaid meal period. The employee shall be relieved of all work responsibilities for the purpose of eating a meal. The authorized meal period must be taken during the work shift and may not be used to alter arrival or

departure time by not using the meal period or any part thereof. The principal or building administrator sets the lunch schedule for employees.

**Break Time for Nursing Mothers:** Any employee who needs to pump milk for a nursing child shall be allowed a reasonable break time and a space to do so that is not a bathroom, is shielded from view and is free from intrusion from coworkers and the public. Break time for nursing mothers shall be allowed in addition to other breaks provided, if needed, and shall not be used to alter the employee's scheduled arrival or departure time. The employee must contact their immediate supervisor to make them aware of the need.

**Employee Assistance Program:** Emotional Wellbeing. If you are experiencing personal, emotional, legal, family, or other problems you need to know there are resources available. Weakley County Schools employees, insured through the county, may be eligible for Employee Assistance Program (EAP) benefits. Contact the finance department for more information.

## Employee Welfare

**Inclement Weather Procedures:** When the director of schools closes schools or the central office due to inclement weather before the school day begins, hourly employees will be paid up to five (5) days during the current school year. If the schools are closed but the central office is open, central office employees are expected to report to work.

If schools are closed and students and employees are already at school, employees will be paid their daily rate for a full day of work. Staff must remain until all students have safely exited the school. Principals must remain until all buses have been cleared.

If the school or central office is open and the employee doesn't report for work due to weather, personal days or days without pay must be used.

**Emergency/Crisis Management:** Each school has developed an Emergency Plan for use in times of such things as natural disasters, student crises, and grief events. All school employees are trained on these plans annually during in-service.

**Safety:** All staff members shall report current and potential hazards to their immediate supervisors. At each school, the principal shall develop procedures for keeping school facilities safe and free from hazards.

Only persons with lawful and valid business on the building premises shall enter onto the grounds or into the buildings. All staff members shall report all person appearing to be improperly on school premises. The SRO and/or law enforcement officials should be engaged, if necessary, to maintain order or security. All visitors must report to the school's office to sign in and receive a badge.

Interior and exterior doors must be locked at all times. Propping open exterior doors is prohibited.

**Investigations/Searches:** When a supervisor has a reasonable cause to suspect that an employee has violated the substance abuse policy, s/he may inspect vehicles on campus, lockers, work areas, desks, purses, etc. and all work locations where school related activities are being conducted without prior notice in order to ensure a safe work environment. See *Board Policy 5.403* for more details

## Workers' Compensation

In order to qualify for any Workers' Compensation benefits, an employee must give notice of the accident to his/her immediate supervisor on the day the accident occurs unless the employee is prevented by injury from giving such notice. Employees can contact 731-364-3347 with questions regarding workers compensation. *Board Policy 3.602*

### PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING WORKERS' COMPENSATION

- All claims must be reported the same day they occur to the immediate supervisor or administrator.
- You must complete an Employee Injury Report and a Choice of Physician form within 24 hours after the injury and email them to Brenda Scott [Brenda.Scott@wcsk12tn.net](mailto:Brenda.Scott@wcsk12tn.net) or fax them to 731-364-3347. Failure to complete these forms could result in your claim being denied.
- If the injury is not life threatening, the employee must first go to one of the clinics on the panel provided by the Workers' Compensation insurance provider.
- If the employee needs critical emergency treatment and an ambulance is called, the employee should be taken to the nearest emergency room. The employee will direct the hospital to send the bill to: Weakley County Board of Education, 8319 Hwy 22 Suite A, Dresden, TN 38225. The employee should not provide their personal medical insurance.
- If an employee needs additional treatment from a specialist, the treating physician will send the order to the Workers' Compensation insurance provider and they will assign a panel of specialists for the employee to choose from.
- Workers' Compensation does not pay until seven (7) calendar days have been missed. If sick days have been used, the seven (7) calendar days start the day after the last sick day used. After fourteen (14) calendar days have been missed, Workers' Compensation will pick up the first seven (7) days as well. Workers' Compensation pay is based on the previous year's income from the date of injury and pays approximately 66% of that salary.

## Time Away from Work

**Emergency Leave:** An immediate supervisor may grant a certified employee emergency leave during the workday for a sudden, unexpected occurrence demanding immediate attention. Leave shall be taken as personal leave, sick leave or leave without pay. The employee who uses emergency leave shall confirm said leave on appropriate forms the day after returning to work. Principals or administrative supervisors shall keep a tally of the amount of time individual employees are released under this policy and when the total time reaches one (1) day, the employee shall be charged with one (1) day of applicable leave. The minimum amount of time granted for emergency leave shall be one-half (1/2) day. *Board Policy 5.301*

**Jury Duty:** When a teacher is summoned for jury duty s/he shall appear in court and specify a seven (7) day period within twelve months that s/he will be available for jury duty. The following procedures shall regulate the leave for jury duty for teachers:

1. The teacher shall present written evidence that s/he had been summoned to serve on a jury; and,
2. The teacher shall be entitled to the usual compensation, less the amount paid by the court. *Board Policy 5.301*

**Court Appearances:** If a teacher appears in state court because of a personal interest, whether as a plaintiff, defendant or witness or voluntarily appears in behalf of family or friends, or when a teacher is required to appear in court either as a defendant or plaintiff in a civil case, personal leave or leave without pay shall be granted in accordance with the established board policies on leaves.

*Classified Employees – Non-certified personnel called for jury duty or who serve as court witnesses shall present the subpoena or other documents which give reporting instructions to the immediate supervisor. The employee shall obtain a form indicating the days served and the court pay to be received from the court's clerk for submitting to the payroll office. The employee shall receive the usual compensation less the amount paid by the court. Board Policy 5.301*

**Military Leave:** Employees who are members of any reserve component of the Armed Forces of the United States shall be granted leave of absence for all periods of military service during which they are engaged in the performance of duty or training in the service of the state or the United States. Reservists who anticipate military duty during the school year must give written notice to the director of schools, within thirty (30) days of the beginning of the school year, of the dates of the anticipated duty. While performing such duty or training, the employee shall be paid his/her regular salary up to a maximum of twenty (20) working days in any one (1) calendar year, plus such additional days as may result from any call to active state duty. An employee called to active duty by the governor to enforce the laws of the state shall be paid his/her regular salary for such time as he/she is engaged in the performance of his/her duty, and any time spent in active state duty shall not count against the fifteen-day period of leave allowed for military service.

Request for leaves and extension of leaves shall conform to state law and board policy governing all leaves of absence. Failure to comply with applicable laws and policies shall constitute grounds for dismissal. The employee shall supply a copy of the orders for duty, including the dates of departure and return it to the director of schools prior to, or simultaneous with, requesting leave. *Board Policy 5.306*

Weakley County Schools does not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment or training on the basis of race, creed, color, handicap, national origin, sex, age, political affiliation, or beliefs. The district adheres to the provisions of the Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

**Personal and Professional Leave:** Personal and professional leave shall be granted in accordance with laws of the State of Tennessee and rules and regulations of the State Board of Education. Certified employees shall earn personal and professional leave at the rate of one day for each half year employed for a total of two (2) days per year. Any personal and professional leave remaining unused at the end of a year shall be credited to sick leave. If, at the termination of services, any employee has been absent for more days than leave has been earned, an amount sufficient to cover the excess days used shall be deducted from the employee's final salary payment.

Subject to the following conditions, personal leave may be taken at the discretion of the employee:

1. Except in emergency, each employee shall give the principal at least one day's notice in writing of intent to take leave;
2. The approval of the principal and Director of Schools shall be required:
  - a. If more than ten percent (10%) of the teachers in any given school request its use on the same day;
  - b. If requested during any prior established student examination period;
  - c. If requested on the day immediately preceding or following a holiday or vacation period.
  - d. Except in an emergency, a teacher shall give at least one (1) days' notice of intent to take personal leave.
  - e. Teachers shall not take Personal Leave on scheduled In-Service Days.
  - f. If requested for days scheduled for parent-teacher conferences, according to the school calendar adopted by the Board prior to the commencement of the school year.

Professional leave is a short, temporary absence for the purpose of attending workshops and other meetings relating to school business or serving on boards and commissions which meet during daytime hours when appointed by a mayor, city council, county executive or county commission. Requests shall be submitted to the principal at least five (5) days prior to requested leave of absence.

In addition, certified employees shall be granted leave to serve on any board or commission of the state when the appointment is made by the Governor or General Assembly. Such leave shall not be counted against any other accumulated leave credits. The employee shall notify the principal at least five (5) days prior to leave being taken. *Board Policy 5.303*

*Classified Employees: 9/10-month employees earn five (5) paid holidays. 12-month employees earn 13 paid holidays, one (1) vacation day per work month (maximum accumulation: 15 vacation days), and one additional paid floating holiday approved by the department head or principal.*

**Sick Leave:** The time allowed for sick leave for professional personnel shall be one (1) day for each month employed during the school year and shall accumulate for an unlimited number of days. Sick leave shall be defined as: illness of a teacher from natural causes or accident, quarantine, or illness or death of a member of the immediate family of a teacher, including the teacher's wife or husband, parents, grandparents, children, grandchildren, brothers, sisters, mother-in-law, father-in-law, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, or other as approved by administrator. A signed statement listing the cause of absence shall be provided by the employee on forms furnished by the director of schools and shall promptly be given to the immediate supervisor in support of all claims for sick leave pay. A falsified statement shall be grounds for dismissal.

Weakley County Schools does not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment or training on the basis of race, creed, color, handicap, national origin, sex, age, political affiliation, or beliefs. The district adheres to the provisions of the Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

A certificate from the physician on forms furnished by the Board may be required in support of any claim for sick leave pay.

A teacher in need of sick leave shall be allowed to use unearned sick leave up to the amount of days which such teacher may accumulate during the remainder of the school year in which he/she is employed. Such advance use of sick leave shall be charged to sick leave accumulated in the same school year. Upon termination of the employment of such teacher before such days are earned or at the end of the school year, there shall be deducted from the final salary of such teacher an amount based on his/her daily rate of pay sufficient to cover the excess sick leave days used by him/her and if such final salary is insufficient for this purpose, the teacher shall be liable for reimbursement of any amount in excess of his/her final salary payment.

The principal shall notify the director of schools' office at once if an employee is sick beyond the limit of his/her sick leave accumulation. The substitute teacher, beyond this point, must have a certificate or permit and must be paid according to the state salary scale. Permanent, cumulative sick leave records for each active professional employee shall be kept in the director of schools' office.

A teacher, upon employment, may transfer his/her accumulated sick leave from another Tennessee school system, provided that the director of schools of the system in which the accumulated leave was held provides notarized verification.

**PARENTAL LEAVE:** The federal and state governments have accommodations in place for employees who plan to take a leave of absence for childbirth or adoption placement of a minor child. Each accommodation explained below can run concurrently.

The Tennessee Senate Bill 1458 provides eligible employees with up to six (6) paid workweeks of leave for childbirth, stillbirth, or placement of adoption. An eligible employee is a teacher, principal, supervisor or other individual required by law to hold a **valid license** or qualification for employment in a local education agency. In addition, to be eligible, the employee must have been employed with Weakley County Schools for at least twelve (12) consecutive months. The six (6) paid workweeks do not need to be consecutively taken as long as the leave is used within the twelve (12) months of the birth, stillbirth, or adoption. An employee cannot receive more than six (6) workweeks of paid leave within a 12-month period. Required documentation is a birth certificate for childbirth, a medical record of stillbirth for a stillborn baby, or the final adoption decree for placement of adoption of a minor child.

The Federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) provides eligible employees with up to twelve (12) workweeks of job-protected leave for birth, adoption, or foster placement of a child. An eligible employee is one who has been employed with Weakley County Schools for at least twelve (12) consecutive months and has worked at least 1,250 hours in the previous year. Weakley County Schools requires an employee to use accrued leave concurrently with FMLA leave.

The Tennessee Parental Leave Act provides eligible employees with up to four (4) months or sixteen (16) workweeks of job-protected leave for adoption, childbirth, or nursing an infant. To be eligible, the employee must be full-time and must have been employed with Weakley County Schools for at least twelve (12) consecutive months. Weakley County Schools requires an employee to use accrued leave concurrently with TN Parental leave.

Weakley County Schools does not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment or training on the basis of race, creed, color, handicap, national origin, sex, age, political affiliation, or beliefs. The district adheres to the provisions of the Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

For each accommodation, the employee must notify Weakley County Schools within thirty (30) days. If advance notice is not possible, give notice as soon as possible.

While covered under FMLA and the TN Parental Leave Act, group health plan coverage will continue on the same basis as if the employee had not taken the leave. Upon the end of FMLA and TN Parental Leave Act coverage, the employee will be liable for both the employee and employer insurance premiums.

*Classified Employees: 9/10-month employees earn ½ sick day per month worked. 12-month employees earn one sick day per work month with no maximum accumulation.*

**FMLA:** All employees who qualify for Family and Medical Leave in accordance with Weakley County Board Policy 5.305 may follow established procedures to request leave. Approved leave shall not exceed 12 weeks. Employees who require more than 12 weeks of leave time will be required to resign in good standing and will be eligible to apply for future positions for which they are qualified.

**Job Abandonment:** Employees who do not show up for work, do not contact their supervisor about taking leave, or do not file appropriate leave forms will be considered to have abandoned their job. This abandonment may be treated as a resignation and benefits will end in the same manner as if the person had turned in a resignation letter.

**Long-Term Leave for Professional Personnel:** Any person holding a position requiring a license to teach shall be granted leave for military service, legislative service, maternity, adoption, and recuperation of health, educational improvements or other sufficient reason without loss of accumulated leave credits, tenure status, or other fringe benefits. All leaves shall be requested in writing at least thirty (30) days in advance on forms provided by the director of schools. The 30-day notice may be waived or reduced by the director of schools upon submission of a certified statement by a physician.  
*Board Policy 5.30*

## Termination of Employment

**Classified Employees:** All non-certified (classified) employees are employed at the will of the director of schools. The director or designee may dismiss any non-certified employee during the year for any lawful reason. *Board Policy 5.202*

**Non-Tenured Teachers:** Non-tenured teachers are subject to the same rules and regulations and are entitled to the privileges of employment enjoyed by tenured teachers except that they have no claim upon continuing employment or tenure protections. The director of schools is under no obligation to re-employ non-tenured teachers at the end of their contract period. If the director of schools determines not to renew the contract of a nontenured teacher, the following action shall be taken:

1. The Board shall be notified at the next regular board meeting; and
2. Written notice of non-renewal shall be sent to the teacher within five (5) business days following the last instructional day, which is defined as the last day of the regular school year for students. The written notice of nonrenewal must be sent by certified mail or overnight carrier to the teacher's physical mailing address on record with the LEA or transmitted via electronic mail to the email address used by the LEA to communicate with the teacher. *Board Policy 5.201*

**Tenured Teachers:** When charges are made against a tenured teacher, charging the teacher with offenses which may justify dismissal or a suspension greater than three days, the charges shall be made in writing, specifically stating the offenses which are charged and shall be signed by the party or parties making the charges. If, in the opinion of the Board, the charges are of such nature as to warrant the release or a suspension greater than three days of the teacher, the director of schools shall give the teacher a written notice of this decision, a copy of the charges against the teacher, and a copy of a form provided by the Commissioner of Education advising the teacher of his/her legal duties, rights and recourse. *Board Policy 5.200*

## Resignations

**Classified Employees:** Non-certified staff shall give the immediate supervisor written notice of resignation at least two (2) weeks (ten (10) working days) in advance of the effective date of voluntary termination. The ten (10) working days may be waived by the director of schools for justifiable reason. The immediate supervisor shall forward copies the day received to the director of schools' office. The payroll office will prepare final payment for the next appropriate scheduled pay day. *Board Policy 5.202*

**Teachers/Certified Employees:** A teacher shall give the director of schools notice of resignation at least thirty (30) days before the effective date of the resignation. A teacher, who fails to give such notice, in the absence of justifiable extenuating circumstances, shall forfeit all tenure status. The Board may waive the thirty (30) days notice requirement and permit a teacher to resign in good standing.

The conditions under which it is permissible to break a contract with the Board are as follows:

1. The incapacity on the part of the teacher to perform his/her work-related duties or responsibilities as evidenced by the certified statement of a physician approved by the Board;
2. The release by the Board of the teacher from the employment agreement which the teacher has entered into with the Board.

Any teacher on leave shall notify the director of schools in writing at least thirty (30) days prior to the date of return if the teacher does not intend to return to the position from which he/she has taken leave. Failure to render such notice may be considered a violation of policy and result in termination.

Upon a breach of an employment agreement, the Board, upon a motion recorded in its minutes, may file a complaint with the Commissioner and request the suspension of a teacher's certificate. After the Commissioner has provided the teacher an opportunity for defense during a hearing, the Commissioner may suspend the certificate for no less than thirty (30) and no more than 365 days. *Board Policies 5.200 and 5.201*

## Retirement

**Classified Employees:** Retirement shall mean a termination of services under conditions which will allow the employee to draw benefits from retirement plans and/or social security benefits. Employees eligible for retirement benefits may elect to retire at any age according to the provisions of the Weakley County Schools retirement system. Finance office personnel shall assist employees in securing retirement benefits; however, it shall be the responsibility of the retiring employee to provide verification of eligibility in writing from TCRS to the central office. It shall be the responsibility of the retiring employee to file for benefits. Employees who retire under TCRS may be employed up to one hundred twenty (120) days per year without loss of retirement benefits. *Board Policy 5.202*

**Teachers/Certified Employees:** Retirement shall mean a termination of services under conditions which will allow the employee to draw benefits from retirement plans and/or social security benefits. Employees eligible for retirement benefits may elect to retire at any age according to the provisions of the retirement system.

Finance office personnel shall assist employees in securing retirement benefits; however, it shall be the responsibility of the retiring employee to provide verification of eligibility in writing from TCRS to the central office. It shall be the responsibility of the retiring employee to file for benefits.

Employees who retire under TCRS may be employed up to one-hundred twenty (120) days per year without loss of retirement benefits. Retired teachers may substitute teach for an additional ninety (90) days if the director of schools certifies in writing to the Board that no other qualified personnel are available to substitute teach. *Board Policies 5.200 and 5.201*

## APPENDIX A

**ELECTRONIC MEDIA****ACCESS AND ACCEPTABLE USE FOR STUDENTS AND STAFF**

The Weakley County Board of Education supports the privilege of students and staff (hereafter called users) to have reasonable access to various information formats and believes it incumbent upon users to use this privilege in an appropriate and responsible manner.

The Weakley County Board of Education intends to: (a) prevent user access over its computer network to, or transmission of, inappropriate material via Internet, electronic mail, or other forms of direct electronic communications; (b) prevent unauthorized access and other unlawful online activity; (c) prevent unauthorized online disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal identification information of minors; and (d) comply with the Children’s Internet Protection Act [Pub. L. No. 106-554 and 47 USC 254(h)].

To the extent practical, technology protection measures (or “Internet filters”) shall be used to block or filter Internet access to inappropriate information. Specifically, as required by the Children’s Internet Protection Act, blocking shall be applied to visual depictions of material deemed obscene or child pornography, or to any material deemed harmful to minors. Subject to staff supervision, technology protection measures may be disabled for adults or, in the case of minors, minimized only for bona fide research or other lawful purposes. Specifically, as required by the Children’s Internet Protection Act, prevention of inappropriate network usage includes unauthorized access, including so-called ‘hacking,’ and other unlawful activities; and unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors. It shall be the responsibility of all members of Weakley County Schools’ staff to educate, supervise and monitor appropriate usage of the online computer network and access to the Internet in accordance with this policy.

A written parental request shall be required prior to the student being granted independent access to electronic media involving district technology resources. The Parent and Student Acknowledgement Card delivered with this handbook shall serve as parental agreement to student access to electronic media.

Access is a privilege, not a right, and entails responsibility. Users are responsible for good behavior using school technology resources. Communications on the network are public in nature. General school rules for behavior and communications apply.

When using electronic media, students, staff and teachers should understand:

1. **The Technology Department must approve the installation of all hardware and software.**
2. Malicious attempts to harm or destroy hardware, software, or data are prohibited. Destruction of hardware or software is vandalism and will be addressed according to the discipline policy of Weakley County Schools.
3. The illegal installation or transmission of copyrighted materials is prohibited.

Weakley County Schools does not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment or training on the basis of race, creed, color, handicap, national origin, sex, age, political affiliation, or beliefs. The district adheres to the provisions of the Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

4. All files and messages are subject to review by Weakley County Schools personnel.
5. Materials that are obscene, offensive, threatening, or otherwise intended to harass or demean recipients should not be transmitted.
6. Private, commercial, or illegal use is prohibited.
7. Files, data, or information of others must not be improperly accessed or misused.
8. Backup copies of documents are the responsibility of the user.
9. Personal information should never be given on the Internet except in the performance of the business of Weakley County Schools.
10. Everyone has the responsibility to take precautions to prevent the spread of software viruses.

In order to modify or rescind the agreement to access electronic media the parent or guardian (or the student who is at least 18 years old) must provide the school principal with a written request.

School officials shall apply the same criterion of educational suitability used to review other educational resources when questions arise concerning access to specific databases or other electronic media.

## APPENDIX B

**TENNESSEE TEACHER CODE OF ETHICS****49-5-1003. Educator's obligations to students.**

**(a)** An educator shall strive to help each student realize the student's potential as a worthy and effective member of society. An educator therefore works to stimulate the spirit of inquiry, the acquisition of knowledge and understanding, and the thoughtful formulation of worthy goals.

**(b)** In fulfillment of this obligation to the student, an educator shall:

- (1)** Abide by all applicable federal and state laws;
- (2)** Not unreasonably restrain the student from independent action in the pursuit of learning;
- (3)** Provide the student with professional education services in a nondiscriminatory manner and in consonance with accepted best practices known to the educator;
- (4)** Respect the constitutional rights of the student;
- (5)** Not unreasonably deny the student access to varying points of view;
- (6)** Not deliberately suppress or distort subject matter relevant to the student's progress;
- (7)** Make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to learning or to health and safety;
- (8)** Make reasonable effort to protect the emotional well-being of the student;
- (9)** Not intentionally expose the student to embarrassment or disparagement;
- (10)** Not on the basis of race; color; creed; disability; sex; national origin; marital status; political or religious beliefs; family, social, or cultural background; or sexual orientation, unfairly:
  - (A)** Exclude the student from participation in any program;
  - (B)** Deny benefits to the student; or
  - (C)** Grant any advantage to the student;
- (11)** Not use the educator's professional relationship with the student for private advantage;
- (12)** Not disclose information about the student obtained in the course of the educator's professional service, unless disclosure of the information is permitted, serves a compelling professional purpose, or is required by law;
- (13)** Not knowingly make false or malicious statements about students or colleagues;
- (14)** Ensure interactions with the student take place in transparent and appropriate settings;
- (15)** Not engage in any sexually related behavior with the student, whether verbal, written, physical, or electronic, with or without the student's consent. Sexually related behavior includes, but is not limited to, behaviors such as making sexual jokes or sexual remarks; engaging in sexual kidding, sexual teasing, or sexual innuendo; pressuring the student for dates or sexual favors; engaging in inappropriate physical touching, groping, or grabbing; kissing; rape; threatening physical harm; and committing sexual assault;
- (16)** Not furnish alcohol or illegal or unauthorized drugs to the student;

- (17) Strive to prevent the use of alcohol or illegal or unauthorized drugs by the student when the student is under the educator's supervision on school or LEA premises, during school activities, or in any private setting;
- (18) Refrain from the use of alcohol while on school or LEA premises or during a school activity at which students are present; and
- (19) Maintain a professional approach with the student at all times.

## 49-5-1004. Educator's obligations to the education profession.

- (a) The education profession is vested by the public with a trust and responsibility requiring the highest ideals of professional service. In the belief that the quality of the services of the education profession directly influences the nation and its citizens, the educator shall exert every effort to raise professional standards, to promote a climate that encourages the exercise of professional judgment, to achieve conditions which attract persons worthy of the trust to careers in education, and to assist in preventing the practice of the profession by unqualified persons.
- (b) In fulfillment of this obligation to the profession, an educator shall not:
  - (1) Deliberately make a false statement or fail to disclose a material fact related to competency and qualifications in an application for a professional position;
  - (2) Misrepresent the educator's professional qualifications;
  - (3) Assist entry into the profession of a person known to be unqualified in respect to character, education, or other relevant attribute;
  - (4) Knowingly make a false statement concerning the qualifications of a candidate for a professional position;
  - (5) Assist a noneducator in the unauthorized practice of teaching;
  - (6) Disclose information about colleagues obtained in the course of professional service unless the disclosure serves a compelling professional purpose or is required by law;
  - (7) Knowingly make false or malicious statements about a colleague;
  - (8) Accept any gratuity, gift, or favor that might impair or appear to influence professional decisions or actions; and
  - (9) Use illegal or unauthorized drugs.
- (c) In fulfillment of this obligation to the profession, educators shall:
  - (1) Administer state-mandated assessments fairly and ethically; and
  - (2) Conduct themselves in a manner that preserves the dignity and integrity of the education profession.

## 49-5-1006. Report of breach of teacher code of ethics — Failure to report.

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**(a)** An educator who has personal knowledge of a breach by another educator of the teacher code of ethics prescribed in §§ 49-5-1003 and 49-5-1004 shall report the breach to the educator's immediate supervisor, director of schools, or local board of education within thirty (30) days of discovering the breach.

**(b)** Failure to report a breach of the teacher code of ethics, or to file a report of any criminal activity or other misconduct that is required by federal or state law, is a breach of the teacher code of ethics.