

ROBERTSON COUNTY SCHOOLS

2008 – 2009 PERSONNEL REFERENCE GUIDE

*SELECTED POLICIES OF THE
ROBERTSON COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION*



**ROBERTSON COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
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PREFACE

The material covered within this staff handbook is intended as a method of communicating to employees general district information, rules, and regulations and is not intended to enlarge or diminish any Board policy, administrative procedure, or negotiated agreement. Material contained in the policies may therefore be superseded by such Board policy, administrative procedure, negotiated agreement or changes in state or federal law. This handbook contains excerpts from the Robertson County Board of Education Policy Manual and is compiled as a ready reference for the convenience of school personnel. The excerpts should in no way be interpreted to replace the entirety of any specific Board policy. Staff is urged to review the complete policy when additional information is needed. Copies of the complete Robertson County Board of Education Policy Manual and this staff handbook are available at the Robertson County Board of Education (BOE) office, in each school library, or on-line at Robcoschools.org. Any information contained in this staff handbook is subject to unilateral revision or elimination from time to time. Policy revisions and new policies require two readings by the BOE prior to adoption. No information in this document shall be viewed as an offer, expressed or implied, or a guarantee of any employment of any duration.

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. (U.S. Constitution, Amendment XIV; Title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972; Age Discrimination Act of 1967; Section 504 of Rehabilitation Act of 1973., Public Law 101-336; 42 U.S.C. 12101.)

The Robertson County Board of Education is in compliance with legal requirements, including Title VI, Title VII, Title IX and other civil rights or discrimination issues, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Additional information regarding compliance issues may be obtained by contacting the district office.

DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Robertson County School District is to ensure each student is prepared to succeed in life.

DISTRICT BELIEFS

- *We believe all students achieve success in a safe, healthy educational environment that allows for individual differences in learning styles and abilities.*
- *We believe all students can learn and achieve when provided quality instruction.*
- *We believe all students must be educated to utilize and apply emerging technologies.*
- *We believe educators should be empowered, dedicated professionals who appreciate learning as a continual process.*
- *We believe tolerance, diversity, and human rights are issues that lie at the very core of democratic societies and that education is the key to our nation's progress.*
- *We believe the district consists of an educational partnership comprised of educators, staff, students, parents, and community members.*
- *We believe clear, open communication among all stakeholders fosters a productive environment and strengthens a successful organization.*
- *We believe all educational stakeholders must maintain high standards and expectations through a system of accountability for all students, staff, and schools in a climate of mutual respect and cooperation.*
- *We believe the district must be an accountable steward of all resources and the district budget should reflect system needs and priorities.*
- *We believe continuous system improvement is the result of on-going data review, evaluation, and commitment to change.*
- *We believe the district has the responsibility of educating and developing productive citizens who view learning as a continual process of personal development.*
- *We believe the district has the responsibility to provide a working environment that will attract, develop, compensate, and retain quality personnel.*

DISTRICT SHARED VISION

Robertson County Schools will enable all students to reach or exceed high academic and career standards while empowering them to succeed in a technologically advanced and culturally diverse society.

SYSTEM LEADERSHIP

Director of Schools Mr. Daniel P. Whitlow
Mrs. Beverly Corbin, Administrative Assistant
Mrs. Judy Jackson, Receptionist
Assistant Director of Schools Dr. Danny L. Weeks
Mrs. Donna Trice, Administrative Assistant

BOARD OF EDUCATION

District 1 Mr. Allan Heard
(East Robertson Elementary, East Robertson High, Krisle Elementary)
District 2 Mr. Stoney Crockett
(Robert Woodall Elementary, White House Heritage)
District 3 Mr. Larry Fields
(Greenbrier Elementary, Greenbrier Middle, Watauga Elementary)
District 4 Mr. Alfred Boyter
(Coopertown Elementary, Coopertown Middle)
District 5 Mr. Jimmy Ayers
(Cheatham Park Elementary, Jo Byrns, Springfield Middle, Westside Elementary)
District 6 Dr. Geraldine Farmer
(Bransford Elementary, Springfield High)
Student Representative Christopher Vitulli
2472 Union Road
White House, TN 37188
672-7752

SYSTEM ADMINISTRATION

Unless otherwise noted, all phone numbers are 384-5588

Budget and Finance Mrs. Wanda Cohea, Supervisor
Mrs. Sheila Clinard, Administrative Assistant
Mrs. Wenda Hallum, Administrative Assistant
Mrs. Janice Meador, Administrative Assistant
Buildings and Grounds Mr. James Taylor, Supervisor
Mrs. Darlene Davis, Administrative Assistant
384-0213
Career and Technical Education Mr. Barry Baker, Supervisor
382-2318
Coordinated School Health Mrs. Dawn Callas, Coordinator
Mrs. Carrie Cowan, Administrative Assistant
Elementary Education Mrs. Melanie Dickerson, Supervisor
Ms. Gail Thomas, Administrative Assistant
Federal Programs Ms. Stephanie Mason, Supervisor
Mrs. Diane Pearson, Administrative Assistant
Human Resources (Certified) Mrs. Alice Thomas, Supervisor
Mrs. Annette Weeks, Administrative Assistant
Human Resources (Non-Certified) Mrs. Terri Simmons, Supervisor
Mrs. Monica Dorris, Administrative Assistant
School Health Service Mrs. Dana Holt, Coordinator
Mrs. Amy Stark, Administrative Assistant
382-2306
Secondary Education Dr. Bill Locke, Supervisor
Mrs. Donna Trice, Administrative Assistant

Special EducationMrs. Lynnell Darden, Supervisor
Mrs. Elizabeth Morris, Supervisor
Mrs. Pat Collins, Administrative Assistant
Ms. Marion Jane Richardson, Administrative Assistant

Student Nutrition Mrs. Jan Wallace, Supervisor
Mrs. Jane Bush, Administrative Assistant
Ms. Sandy Carney, Administrative Assistant
384-7280

Student Services/Records Ms. Donna Dorris, Supervisor
Mrs. Donna Fryer, Administrative Assistant
Mrs. Cathy Watkins, Administrative Assistant

Technology Mr. James Marshall, Supervisor
Ms. Melinda Thompson, Administrative Assistant
Mrs. Sherri Traughber, Administrative Assistant
382-2318

Textbooks, Materials and MediaMs. Catherine Clark, Supervisor
Mrs. Jessica Holt, Administrative Assistant
384-0238

Transportation..... Mr. David Cohea, Supervisor
Mrs. Debbie Keyt, Administrative Assistant
384-4555

GENERAL INFORMATION

ASSOCIATIONS

The Robertson County Education Association (RCEA) is the bargaining unit for all licensed staff.

- Amanda Fields, PresidentGreenbrier High School**
126 Cuniff Drive
Greenbrier, TN 37073
Phone: 643-4526

- Jane Ligon, 1st Vice-President..... Bransford Elementary School**
700 Bransford Drive
Springfield, TN 37172
Phone: 384-4313

- Samantha Grimes, 2nd Vice-PresidentGreenbrier High School**
126 Cuniff Drive
Greenbrier, TN 37073
Phone: 643-4526

- Sandra Salazar, Secretary.....Springfield High School**
5240 Hwy 76 East
Springfield, TN 37172
Phone: 384-3516

- Mike Brown, Treasurer..... Hill Street Administrative Office**
516 Hill Street
Springfield, TN 37172
Phone: 384-0616

- Michelle Gregory, Communications.....Greenbrier High School**
126 Cuniff Drive
Greenbrier, TN 37073
Phone: 643-4526

- Gail Riley, Website Springfield Middle School**
715 5th Avenue West
Springfield, TN 37172
Phone: 384-4821

- Marilda Smith, TEA ESP Representative..... Watauga Elementary School**

P.O. Box 190
Ridgetop, TN 37152
Phone: 859-5252

BOARD MEMBERS

The legislature of the state of Tennessee delegates to the Board responsibility to manage and control district schools. Board members, as elected by residents of this district, are as follows:

Alfred Boyter, Chairman

401 Fairway Trail
Springfield, TN 37172
Alfred_Boyter@northcrest.com
615-384-5779 (H) 615-384-1549 (W)

Allan B. Heard, Vice-Chairman

6580 Owens Chapel Road
Springfield, TN 37172
deerelandfarms@aol.com
615-384-2684 (H) 615-384-9576 (W)

Jimmy Ayers

3323 Benton Road
Cedar Hill, TN 37032
jimmysberry@bellsouth.net
615-696-2142 (H) 615-696-2091 (W)

Stoney Crockett

318 Cherry Lane
White House, TN 37188
Stoney.Crockett@Penske.com
615-672-9038 615-254-5526 (W)

Christopher Vitulli, Student Representative

2472 Union Road
White House, TN 37188
615-672-7752

Dr. Geraldine Farmer

4649 Lahr Road
Springfield, TN 37172
gerrefarmer@bellsouth.net
615-384-8631 (H)

Larry Fields

1375 Dividing Ridge Road
Goodlettsville, TN 37072
Ephriam1375@comcast.net
615-859-5130 (H)

BOARD MEETINGS/COMMUNICATIONS

Regular Board meetings are held on the second Monday of each month with the exception of October, March, June and July (meetings held these months will be announced). Meetings are held at the Robertson County Board of Education office and begin at 7:00 PM. All regular and special meetings of the Board are open to the public unless as otherwise provided by law.

Staff members are invited to attend Board meetings. All formal communications or reports to the Board are to be submitted through building supervisors and administrators to the Director of Schools in accordance with established lines of authority as approved by the Board.

Official Board communications, policies, and information of staff interest will be communicated to staff through the Director of Schools to supervisors and building administrators.

DISTRICT OFFICE HOURS

The district office is open between the hours of 7:00 AM and 4:00 PM weekdays throughout the year.

SECTION E BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

TOBACCO-FREE SCHOOLS**DESCRIPTOR CODE (3.220)**

All uses of tobacco and tobacco products, including smokeless tobacco, are prohibited in all of the school district's buildings.

The use of tobacco or tobacco products, including smokeless tobacco, will be prohibited in all vehicles, owned, leased or operated by the district.

District employees and students enrolled in the district's schools will not be permitted to use tobacco or tobacco products, including smokeless tobacco, while they are participants in any class or activity in which they represent the school district.

Signs will be posted throughout the district's facilities to notify students, employees and all other persons visiting the school that the use of tobacco and tobacco products is forbidden. (Section 1042 of the Environmental Tobacco Smoke/Pro-Children Act of 1994.)

EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES MANAGEMENT**DESCRIPTOR CODE (3.400)**

Each employee of the system shall be responsible for the materials, equipment and supplies assigned to him/her. In addition, he/she is responsible for the preservation and protection of materials, equipment and supplies not under his/her direct control when such are endangered and when the system employee having direct control is not present or is otherwise unable to act.

Employees transferring from one school to another shall be responsible for reporting to the building principal of the school that they are leaving so the principal can review the inventory of classroom materials, including textbooks, teachers' editions, and other materials purchased with system, school or support organization funds. These materials are designated for that particular school and must remain at that school. The employee transferring is responsible for returning all keys to the building principal.

The Director of Schools shall develop procedures promoting the useful life of equipment and supplies by establishing a thorough, effective and economical operations and maintenance program and providing adequate insurance coverage.

All equipment and materials placed in school buildings by any group or organization become the property of the Board. The Board reserves the right to transfer property to other schools if the school in which it was originally placed is discontinued or if there is no longer any need for the equipment or materials where originally placed.

PRIVATE VEHICLES

DESCRIPTOR CODE (3.503)

The Board recognizes that certain employees may need to use their private vehicles for school purposes. With the use of private vehicles, the following policy shall be observed:

1. To use a private vehicle for school purposes, the employee must have the written permission of the principal or his designee and proof of vehicle liability insurance coverage;
2. The school system shall assume no responsibility for liability in case of accident, unless the employee has the proper authorization described above;
3. The Board specifically forbids any employee to transport students for school purposes without prior authorization by the principal or his/her designee;
4. Privately-owned school buses and drivers of such shall meet all requirements of state law and state Board rules, regulations, and minimum standards;
5. No student shall be sent on errands, personal or school-related, in/on a motor vehicle;
6. No employee may ask for or give permission to students to transport other students to and from any school or school-related activity.

SECTION G PERSONNEL

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

DESCRIPTOR CODE (5.726)

The Board recognizes the importance of continued educational experiences and other professional growth activities as a means to improve job performance. Professional growth experiences may include, but are not limited to, college courses, workshops, curriculum planning, individual research, travel, supervision of teacher trainees and other such activities.

Professional Development Education

Professional development education is a program of planned activities designed to increase the competencies needed by all

personnel in the performance of their responsibilities. Competencies are defined as the knowledge, skills, and attitudes which enable personnel to perform their tasks with maximum effectiveness.

Professional Employees

A system-wide professional development committee, composed of membership from a cross-section of other personnel, shall assess system-wide needs, establish priorities, develop objectives, design activities, and evaluate the professional development program.

Professional development credit shall not be given during teaching hours, while participating in activities paid by the Board, nor while performing duties which are required as part of teaching assignments. Individuals who miss professional development activities without prior approval of the Director of Schools shall have their last salary payment adjusted to compensate for the day(s) missed.

Support Personnel

The immediate supervisor shall be responsible for providing professional development training. Absences to attend meetings relating to the employee's job description may be granted by the Director of Schools without loss of pay to the employee.

Staff Development Program

The Framework for Evaluation and Professional Growth shall be used for teacher improvement plans and shall be included in professional growth activities for all professional personnel.

The Board may pay expenses of selected personnel who participate in the training sessions conducted by the State Department of Education.

COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES

DESCRIPTOR CODE (5.531)

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.

Informal Process

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 next level supervisor or directly to the Director of Schools.

Formal Process

When the informal process fails to satisfy the employee, a certified employee may proceed with the grievance process. The grievance process as agreed through the negotiated teacher contract shall be followed.

The Board shall hear only complaints which have been carried through the proper formal procedure from the point of origin.

COMPLAINTS ABOUT SCHOOL PERSONNEL

DESCRIPTOR CODE (5.532)

Whenever a complaint about an employee is made to the Board as a whole or a board member as an individual, it will be referred to the school administration for study and possible solutions. The employee involved will be advised of the nature of the complaint and given opportunity for explanation, comment, and presentation of the facts as he/she sees them.

If, after such procedure is followed there is still a question or complaint, the matter shall then be referred in writing to the Board, which shall determine whether it will hear the individual or group.

Individuals or groups desiring to speak to the Board shall follow the same procedures as outlined in Board Policy dealing with public participation at Board meetings.

Any complaint regarding a teacher, which shall be used in any formal teacher evaluation or placed in a teacher's file, made to any member of the administration or Board by a parent, student, or other person shall be processed in the following manner:

1. All complaints shall be reduced to writing, dated and signed by the complainant.
2. A copy of the complaint shall be sent immediately to the teacher. The teacher may attach a written reply to the complaint.

3. The teacher shall be given the opportunity to meet with the person making the complaint in an effort to resolve the problem and at any other meeting where the complaint is discussed with the administration or Board.
4. If the complainant refuses to participate in this process, all references to the complaint shall be dropped.
5. All complaints shall be filed at the lowest applicable administrative level. Unresolved complaints shall proceed to the next highest level until the complaint is dropped or resolved.
6. The teacher shall have the right to Association representation if the complaint remains unresolved after the first meeting with the complainant.
7. Except in cases of emergency, the Board shall take no adverse action against a teacher until this procedure is followed.

STAFF-STUDENT RELATIONS

DESCRIPTOR CODE (5.522)

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. The 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. (TEA Code of Ethics of the Education Profession)

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. (TCA 39-13-506; TCA 39-13-527)

STAFF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

DESCRIPTOR CODE (5.511)

Employees of the Board will not engage in, or have a 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;
4. The Board shall make no purchase of supplies, materials, or equipment from a school system employee;
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.

STAFF-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

DESCRIPTOR CODE (5.521)

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.

Political Activities

Employees may, on their own time, campaign for or against any candidate or referendum, but they shall not use the classroom or system position for political forum nor engage in any political promotion or solicitation during school hours.

Any employee who intends to campaign for an elective public office which infringes upon a contracted agreement 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/her services to the school system and the best interests of education.

STAFF GIFTS AND SOLICITATIONS

DESCRIPTOR CODE (5.512)

Staff Gifts

Employees of the Board shall not accept gifts from students unless the gifts are of token value only.

Individual employees of the Board will refrain from giving gifts to staff members who exercise administrative or supervisory jurisdiction over them, either directly or indirectly. The collection of money for group gifts is discouraged except in special circumstances such as bereavement, serious illness, or retirement.

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 employees by the companies through public relations programs.

Solicitations

No organization may solicit funds from employees within the schools. Flyers or other materials related to fund-drives shall not be distributed through the schools without the written approval of the Director of Schools. Employees will not be made responsible for the collection of any money or the distribution of any fund-drive literature within the schools unless such activity has the Director of Schools' written approval.

PERSONNEL RECORDS

DESCRIPTOR CODE (5.130)

The Director of Schools or his designee(s) shall be authorized to maintain personnel records and to permit inspection of the same. The following personnel records shall be maintained for all employees as appropriate:

1. Employee applications and contracts
2. Professional certificates and other documents required by state and federal laws and regulations;
3. Cumulative information files:
 - a. Experience
 - b. Qualifications
 - c. Salary
 - d. Sex
 - e. Names of schools and grades taught
4. INS Form I-9.

The following guidelines shall be followed:

1. Information contained in personnel records shall be limited to job-related matters;
2. The Director of Schools shall be responsible for notifying all employees of the types of records kept and uses made of such records;

3. Employees shall be granted an opportunity to respond in writing to material placed in records;
4. Employee records are public records, except medical records, and shall be open for inspection during regular business hours;
5. Members of the public may not obtain an employee's unpublished telephone number, bank account information, social security number or driver license information, except when driving or operating a vehicle is considered to be a part of the employee's duties, unless release of this information is expressly authorized by the employee;
6. A record of the person inspecting and the date of inspection shall be recorded;
7. Copies of records may be made under rules determined by the Director of Schools.

STAFF RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

DESCRIPTOR CODE (5.510)

In fulfilling any citizenship rights and responsibilities, employees shall give proper consideration to the educational welfare of the students and ensure that no conflict exists with their actual duties.

Academic Freedom

The Board recognizes the right of a teacher to discuss any social, economic, or political problems as well as the right of a student to explore any field or hold any belief without interference from the teacher.

Academic freedom within the confines of state law and Board policy will be guaranteed to teachers in order to create an atmosphere of freedom in the classroom. This permits students to raise questions dealing with critical issues of the time and produces an environment conducive to the study, investigation, presentation, and interpretation of facts.

The teacher is responsible for exercising good judgment in selecting issues for discussion and must balance the relative maturity of his/her students and the students' right to know.

DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE

DESCRIPTOR CODE (5.140)

No employee shall unlawfully manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess or use on or in the workplace any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana or any other controlled substance, as defined in federal law. "Workplace" shall include any school building or any school premise; any school-owned or any other school-approved vehicle used to transport students to and from school or school activities; and off-school property during any school-sponsored or school-approved activity, event or function.

These regulations are promulgated by the Board of Education toward the end of creating a drug-free school environment. Enhanced

productivity, employee safety, and decreased health and accident costs are the intended products of this policy. Moreover, because school district employees supervise and act as role models for the students of this district, these regulations are also intended to promote and protect student health and safety.

The Director of Schools or designee(s) may require an employee to undergo a blood or urinalysis test to determine the presence of alcohol, drugs, or controlled substances in an employee's system under the following circumstances:

1. When such test is administered in connection with a required pre-employment physical,
2. When such test is performed in connection with routine required periodic physicals,
3. When such test is supported by a reasonable suspicion, based on specific facts and reasonable inferences drawn from those facts in light of experience that the employee has been under the influence of drugs, controlled substances, or alcohol on school property or during the workday.

The employee shall submit to an examination under these circumstances, and a refusal to submit shall constitute insubordination and may result in disciplinary action consistent with Board policy and applicable law. The results of such examinations shall be released directly to the district by the physician or other person conducting the examination. The district will pay the cost of the examination.

The test will be administered by a person of the district's choice which person shall be qualified to perform the examination using testing methods that are technologically current and procedures that are legally adequate. These procedures will provide for the following:

1. Proper collection and storage of the sample and documentation of the chain of custody of a sample,
2. Application of the same or an alternative testing method to confirm results that show positive initially,
3. The preservation of a specimen sample by the testing facility for use by the employee.

When a positive test is utilized by the district as a basis for disciplinary action, due process procedures required by district policies and state and federal law shall apply and the employee shall be given an opportunity to rebut or explain the results of the test. Test results and other personally identifiable medical information received by the district as a result of the application of the procedure shall be treated as confidential and will only be disclosed in connection with and as required by the procedures and proceedings contemplated by this regulation.

As a condition of employment, each employee shall notify his/her supervisor of his/her conviction on any criminal drug statute for violation occurring in the workplace as defined above no later than five (5) days after conviction. Any employee who violates the terms of this policy shall be suspended and shall be subject to dismissal. The Director of Schools shall be responsible for providing a copy of this policy to all school system employees.

REASONABLE SUSPICION DRUG TESTING

Administrators/supervisors have the responsibility to observe and document the cause for reasonable suspicion and when appropriate, refer the matter to the Director of Schools/designee. It is not the supervisor's responsibility to attempt diagnosis. All information, facts and circumstances leading to and supporting this suspicion should be included in a written report detailing the basis for the suspicion. After the report is filed, the employee should be notified.

Any employee may be required to submit to substance screening if the following conditions exist: (list is not inclusive)

1. Observed use, possession or sale of illegal drugs and/or use, possession, sale, or abuse of alcohol and/or prescription drugs;
2. Apparent physical state of impairment of motor functions;
3. Marked changes in personal behavior not attributed to other factors;
4. Employee involvement in or contribution to an accident where the use of alcohol or drugs is reasonably suspected or employee involvement in a pattern of repetitive accidents whether or not they involve actual or potential injury;
5. Violation of criminal statutes involving the use of illegal drugs alcohol or prescription drugs and/or violations of drug statutes.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF EMPLOYEES

DESCRIPTOR CODE (5.523)

Sexual harassment activity by any employee will not be tolerated. Sexual harassment is defined as conduct, advances, gestures or words of a sexual nature which:

1. Unreasonably interfere with an individual's work or performance;
2. Creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment;
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.

Victims of sexual harassment should report these conditions to the appropriate school administrator. If the employee's direct administrator or supervisor is the offending person, the report shall be made to the next higher level of administration or supervision. Confidentiality will be maintained and no reprisals or retaliation will occur as a result of good faith reporting of charges of sexual harassment.

In determining whether alleged conduct constitutes sexual harassment, all of the circumstances, including the nature of the conduct

and the context in which the alleged conduct occurred, will be investigated. The Director of Schools shall be responsible for investigating all complaints of sexual harassment. If satisfactory resolution of any complaint is not reached, the complainant may refer the matter to the Board. Any employee found to have engaged in sexual harassment shall be subject to sanctions, including, but not limited to, warning, suspension, or termination.

An employee found to have engaged in sexual harassment shall be subject of sanctions, including, but not limited to warning, suspension, or termination.

COMPENSATION GUIDES & CONTRACTS FOR PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL

DESCRIPTOR CODE (5.721)

All professional personnel must make a written contract with the Board at a fixed salary per month before entering upon their duties.

Contracts of professional personnel shall include two-hundred (200) days of responsibility, plus twenty (20) days for each additional month assigned by the Board. Each contract shall provide:

1. A minimum of one hundred and eighty (180) working days;
2. A minimum of five (5) days for in-service education;
3. One (1) day for parent-teacher conferences;
4. Ten (10) vacation days;
5. Four (4) days as designated by the Board.

QUALIFICATIONS AND DUTIES OF TEACHERS

DESCRIPTOR CODE (5.711)

All teachers shall be certificated in accordance with state law and the regulations of the Tennessee State Department of Education. Such certificate shall be on file in the office of the Director of Schools prior to beginning employment. It is the responsibility of the employee to secure a certificate and to maintain its validity. When a teacher's contract must be terminated because the teacher's certificate has lapsed or otherwise become invalid, the Director of Schools shall immediately suspend the teacher without pay pending disposition of the matter. The teacher shall be notified of the reason for the suspension and given an opportunity for a hearing before the Board.

Duties

In addition to duties specified in other policies and applicable law, teachers shall be responsible for the following duties:

1. To give full, willing and helpful cooperation in carrying out all reasonable instructions or extra assignments which are given

- by the principal before, after and during the school day;
2. To give instruction to the students in the areas assigned by the Board, Director of Schools and principal;
 3. To record accurately the number of students present and absent each day in the manner prescribed by the Board, Director of Schools and principal;
 4. To follow state and local course of study, to follow rules and regulations of the state and policies of the local Board, and to follow school rules and policies established by the principal;
 5. To maintain cordial relationships with the home, parent(s) and community;
 6. To keep parent(s) duly informed of the child's progress and hold conferences with parent(s) when necessary;
 7. To report to the Department of Children's Services knowledge or reasonable suspicion that a child's health or welfare has been or appears to have been harmed as a result of abuse or neglect;
 8. To perform such other duties as may be assigned by the principal.

NON-RENEWAL

DESCRIPTOR CODE (5.210)

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 principal is responsible for discussing deficiencies as part of the evaluation process with the non-tenured teacher and providing assistance for overcoming these deficiencies.

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 non-tenured 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 hand delivered or sent to the employee by registered mail so that it will be received by the employee prior to April 15.

EVALUATION PROCEDURES

DESCRIPTOR CODE (5.741)

In order to ensure a high quality of teacher performance and to advance the instructional programs of Robertson County Schools, a continuous program for teacher evaluation shall be established and regular reports shall be made available upon request to the Director of Schools and to the Robertson County Board of Education concerning outcomes of these evaluations.

The Board shall use the standard evaluation process developed by the State Board of Education, referred to in this policy as the Framework for Evaluation and Professional Growth, to establish minimum standards of teacher evaluation. The minimum number of

times a teacher is evaluated shall be determined by the status (tenured or non-tenured) and performance of the teacher. All apprentice and/or non-tenured teachers shall be evaluated annually, using the Comprehensive Assessment component of the state framework.

The principal shall ensure that each tenured teacher in each school is evaluated at least (but not limited to) once (1) in a five-year (5) period. The Board designates the team approach in evaluating all non-tenured teachers. The team shall consist of the principal (designee) and a supervisor responsible for supervision of the teacher's assigned area. This designee must be approved by the local Board of education, trained in the appropriate evaluation systems, and responsible for the regular evaluation of teachers. The principal is responsible for the final evaluation decision. Evaluation procedures for personnel whose positions require licensure by the Tennessee State Department of Education shall be in accordance with applicable state law and the local plan of evaluation as approved by the State Board of Education.

If a teacher is assigned to teach in an area for which the teacher is not endorsed, any evaluation conducted for the course outside the area of endorsement shall relate only to the improvement of teaching skills and strategies and not a determination of competency.

It shall be the responsibility of the principal to appoint two tenured teachers (mentors) to assist in the professional development of each apprentice teacher.

The principal shall submit a written recommendation to the Director of Schools indicating whether the third year apprentice teacher is recommended for a professional license/tenure. The Director of Schools shall consider the principal's recommendation in making a recommendation to the Board regarding whether the teacher should be licensed. Procedures for re-employment shall be in accordance with applicable state law. The principal shall be responsible for reporting outcomes of evaluations to the Director of Schools. Outcomes of evaluations shall be made available to the Board upon request.

The summative report and growth plan on all teachers evaluated each year shall be forwarded to the office of the Director of Schools (designee) as directed.

ADMINISTRATORS / SUPERVISOR EVALUATIONS

Administrators and supervisors shall be evaluated using the State Model for Local Evaluation. The Board shall use the standard evaluation process developed by the State Board of Education.

VALUE ADDED TEACHER EFFECT (TVAAS)

DESCRIPTOR CODE (5.551)

Each respective building principal is designated as the appropriate administrator to distribute, review, and keep secure and confidential the administrator's copy of teacher effect data for each teacher in his/her school scheduled to receive such data. The Director of

Schools/designee shall maintain a copy of each teacher's data in a file separate and apart from personnel records or any other records subject to review by the public. This copy shall be available for review only by school Board members and by instructional supervisors designated by the Director of Schools.

Application

The following guidelines will be used in applying TVAAS data in formal teacher evaluation:

1. A specific teacher's effect on the educational progress of students may not be used as a part of formal personnel evaluation until data from three (3) complete academic years are obtained;
2. Three-year average estimated mean gains may be used:
 - a. The data may be one of multiple data sources used in the initial state of the evaluation as diagnostic information to identify areas of strength and areas to strengthen for the purpose of focusing professional development plans.
 - b. The data may be one of multiple data sources used by the educator in structuring responses to questions contained in the EIR, particularly in the areas of planning and evaluation, with emphasis on the use of student data to analyze the effectiveness of the curriculum and instructional strategies.
 - c. The data may be one of multiple data sources used to structure the Future Growth Plan at the conclusion of the evaluation.
3. The Summative Conference is to be completed using the appropriate approved rating scale/rubrics.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUSPENSION

DESCRIPTOR CODE (5.760)

A Director of Schools may suspend a teacher at any time when deemed necessary. Under no circumstances shall a Director of Schools suspend a teacher with pay. If reinstated, the teacher shall be paid full salary for the period of suspension.

Before suspending a teacher, the Director of Schools shall (1) provide the teacher with written reasons for the suspension; (2) give the teacher an opportunity to explain his/her position and (3) give the teacher a written decision of the suspension.

PROCEDURES FOR GRANTING TENURE

DESCRIPTOR CODE (5.750)

The Board of Education will grant tenure only to those teachers who can present documentation of a record of excellence as a teacher. The Director of Schools is responsible for documenting and presenting the recommendation for tenure to the Board of Education.

Documentation of a record of excellence in teaching includes:

1. Consistently high ratings on evaluations conducted by the principal and/or other evaluators;
2. Specific evidence of effectiveness in teaching students:
 - a. test scores
 - b. narrative descriptions of specific examples of effectiveness with students
 - c. letters from parents
3. Record of attendance for the last three years;
4. Documentation of strongly favorable student response;
5. Other indicators of effectiveness may be included.

The following additional guidelines will apply:

1. The decision as to whether or not to grant tenure is solely within the discretion of the Board of Education;
2. The Director of Schools will present the names of all persons eligible for tenure including an indication of which are recommended for tenure at a Board meeting in ample time for the Director of Schools to provide notice of non-renewal to each teacher not granted tenure prior to April 15 of the year of eligibility;
3. Only those teachers who receive a majority vote of the membership of the Board will be granted tenure;
4. No person who is eligible for tenure who has not been granted tenure by the Board of Education shall be employed in the school system in any position which requires a license.

PERSONNEL TRANSFERS

DESCRIPTOR CODE (5.731)

ASSIGNMENT

The Director of Schools shall assign licensed personnel to the various schools or departments by May 15 preceding the school year for which such persons are employed while allowing each principal or immediate supervisor to assign more specific responsibilities within each school. (TCA 49-2-301 (f)(12); TCA 49-5-501)

When personnel certification and qualification are equal, seniority within the system shall be considered in the assignment.

With the exception of substitute teachers, members of an immediate family shall not be assigned to the instructional staff in the same school plant unless some unusual circumstance exist which makes it in the best interest of the educational program as determined by the Director of Schools. No teacher shall be under the direct supervision of a member of his/her immediate family.

Immediate family shall be defined as spouse, child, parent, parent-in-law, brother, sister, brother-in-law, and sister-in-law.

Extra assignments for which supplements are provided and upon which initial employment was based may not be relinquished in part by the employee without the approval of the Director of Schools. Other assignments for which supplemental salary is provided shall be made on an annual contract basis.

TRANSFER (to move from one school or administrative unit to another)

The Director of Schools shall transfer employees as necessary for the efficient operation of the schools (TCA 49-2-301(f)(12)(31); TCA 49-5-510; Opinion Tennessee Atty. Gen. 97-107 (July 28, 1997) Transfers shall be non-discriminatory and shall not be arbitrary or capricious The Director of Schools is responsible for developing and disseminating procedures for transfer.

Personnel desiring a change of assignment shall discuss the matter with the principal and submit a request for transfer in writing to the Director of Schools on or before April 15.

The Director of Schools / designee shall discuss all transfers with the affected employee prior to the transfer.

REASSIGNMENTS (to move to another assignment within the same school or administrative unit)

Reassignments shall be non-discriminatory and shall not be arbitrary or capricious. Employees shall be reassigned as necessary for efficient operation on the schools. The Director of Schools is responsible for developing and disseminating procedures for reassignment Reassignments shall be made by the employee's immediate supervisor with approval by the Director of Schools.

DISMISSAL OF TENURED TEACHERS

DESCRIPTOR CODE (5.212)

The causes for which a professional employee may be dismissed are as follows: incompetence, inefficiency, neglect of duty, unprofessional conduct, and insubordination.

When charges are made against an employee, charging the employee with offenses which may justify dismissal, 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 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. An employee who has been given notice of charges against him/her may within thirty (30) days after receipt of notice give written notice to the Director of Schools of his/her request for a hearing before the Board.

The Director of Schools shall within five (5) days after receipt of request, indicate the place of such hearing and set a convenient date, which shall not be later than thirty (30) days following receipt of notice requesting a hearing.

The chairman of the Board shall conduct the hearing and be empowered to issue subpoenas for and administer oaths to witnesses.

The teacher shall be allowed a full, complete, and impartial hearing before the Board, including the right to have evidence deemed relevant by the teacher included in the record of the hearings, even if the chairman objects.

A complete transcript of the hearing shall be prepared and included in the record.

The Board shall within ten (10) days after the hearing decide what disposition to make of the case from the following: (1) dismissal; (2) suspension without pay; (3) reinstatement. The Board shall immediately thereafter give the employee written notice of its findings and decision.

DISMISSAL OF NON-TENURED TEACHERS

DESCRIPTOR CODE (5.212)

The causes for which a professional employee may be dismissed are as follows: incompetence, inefficiency, neglect of duty, unprofessional conduct and insubordination. (TCA 49-5-511 through 513)

When charges are made against an employee, charging the employee with offenses which may justify dismissal, 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 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.

An employee who has been given notice of charges against him/her may within thirty (30) days after receipt of notice give written notice to the Director of Schools of his/her request for a hearing before the Board.

The Director of Schools shall within five (5) days after receipt of request, indicate the place of such hearing and set a convenient date, which shall not be later than thirty (30) days following receipt of notice requesting a hearing.

The chairman of the Board shall conduct the hearing and be empowered to issue subpoenas for and administer oaths to witnesses.

The teacher shall be allowed a full, complete and impartial hearing before the Board, including the right to have evidence deemed relevant by the teacher included in the record of the hearings, even if the chairman objects. (TCA 49-5-512, 513)

A complete transcript of the hearing shall be prepared and included in the record.

The Board shall within ten (10) days after the hearing decide what disposition to make of the case from the following: (1) dismissal; (2) suspension without pay; (Lee v. Franklin, August 5, 1991, not published) or (3) reinstatement. The Board shall immediately thereafter give the employee written notice of its findings and decision.

RESIGNATION

DESCRIPTOR CODE (5.214)

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 the contract as evidenced by the certified statement of a physician approved by the Board
2. The release by the Board of the teacher from the contract 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 breach of contract. Upon a breach of contract, 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 and no more than three hundred sixty-five days.

PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS HIV, AIDS, HBV

DESCRIPTOR CODE (5.411)

To prevent and manage exposure in the workplace, all school system employees will receive in-service training and education annually regarding HIV-AIDS and OSHA's bloodborne Pathogens Standard.

No school system employee diagnosed with HIV infection or AIDS shall be prevented from continuing employment based solely on this diagnosis. No employee shall be required to have any blood test or medical consultation to determine HIV status. This does not preclude school officials from requiring an employee to undergo an examination when another communicable illness is suspected.

HIV - AIDS information will remain confidential. Permissible disclosure will occur pursuant only to a signed authorization for release, appropriate court order, or a lawfully issued subpoena.

As may be required by federal or state law, the school system must make reasonable accommodation to enable the employee to perform employment duties.

In accordance with current law and regulations, the school system will take all reasonable action to prevent any disposed employee from being subjected to adverse or discriminatory treatment.

No disciplinary action or other adverse personnel action may be taken against an employee solely on the basis of HIV infection or AIDS. Action may be taken only if the employee is disabled and the disability interferes with the employee's ability to perform activities involved in employment. Review of employment conditions will include the Director of Schools, the employee's physician, and a physician or nurse from the Department of Health as designated by the Regional Health Officer.

TIME SCHEDULES AND EXTRA DUTY

DESCRIPTOR CODE (5.724)

Daily Schedules

Teachers shall be on duty at least seven and one-half (7 1/2) clock hours each day, including a duty-free lunch period and additional time as the administrative organization requires. Additional time is interpreted to include faculty meetings, in-service programs, committee meetings, general meetings, conferences, school-sponsored activities, and other extra duties before and after school.

Extra Duties

Extra duties shall be fairly distributed among the staff. At least one (1) principal or teacher must be on the school grounds when a bus arrives and at least one (1) teacher must remain after the close of the school day until all buses depart.

Planning Times

An unencumbered schedule for any teacher is to provide time for planning, student and/or parent conferences, preparation for effective teaching and attention to major program improvement.

Leaving Classroom

Teachers shall not be called from their classroom, unit or area while students are under their immediate supervision for any purpose other than an emergency concerning the teacher's immediate family or property or for purposes, as deemed by the principal, to be official school business needing immediate attention.

Leaving Campus

Any Robertson County Board of Education employee/teacher who must leave the campus during the regular school day must obtain approval each time from the building administration.

STAFF CELL PHONE POLICY

DESCRIPTOR CODE (5.561)

Except in cases of emergency, staff members shall use cell phones for personal calls only during their planning / duty-free time.

STAFF MEETINGS

DESCRIPTOR CODE (5.725)

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.

Meetings shall not be called on Fridays or any day immediately preceding any holiday or other day upon which teacher attendance is not required at school except in case of emergency.

The notice and agenda for any faculty meeting shall be given to the teacher involved at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the meetings, except in an emergency. Teachers shall have the opportunity to suggest items for the agenda.

All staff members are expected to attend all meetings called by the administration and all in-service programs designed to improve the total school, unless excused by the person calling the meeting.

Teachers' meetings may include but not be limited to:

1. Meetings of the entire staff of school;
2. Meetings of teachers in the same subject area or on the same grade level;
3. System-wide in-service meetings;
4. Committee meetings dealing with specific problems.

All professional personnel have the same responsibility to attend faculty meetings, in-service meetings, assemblies and other school

activities, as do other teachers.

NON-SCHOOL EMPLOYMENT

DESCRIPTOR CODE (5.513)

A given professional position may require additional hours during evenings or other times when offices may be closed. Outside employment is regarded as employment for compensation which is not within the duties and responsibilities of the employee's regular position with the school system. An employee will not perform any duties related to an outside job during his/her regular working hours or during the additional time that the responsibilities of the position require, nor will an employee use any district facilities, equipment or materials in performing outside work.

When the periods of work are such that certain evenings, days or vacation periods are duty-free, the employee may use such off-duty time for the purposes of remuneration, provided all the following conditions are met:

1. The work in no way interferes with the degree of effectiveness of his/her work in the school system;
2. The work in no way reflects detrimentally upon the school system or its prestige;
3. Such outside obligations do not prevent the individual from assuming duties required by the regular position;
4. The individual does not receive remuneration for work which is customarily within his/her regular position.

TUTORING FOR PAY

DESCRIPTOR CODE (5.514)

With prior approval of the school administration, any teacher may enter into an agreement with the parents for tutoring children for a fee. Teachers tutoring for pay must be after the teacher's regular workday. Teachers may not tutor for pay any student taught by said teacher during the regular school day without prior approval of the building principal and Director of Schools. Private instruction for students may not be held during the regular school day. School facilities may not be used for private profit.

EMERGENCY AND LEGAL LEAVE

DESCRIPTOR CODE (5.311)

Emergency Leave

An immediate supervisor may grant a certificated 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.

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;
2. The teacher shall be entitled to the usual compensation, less the amount paid by the court.

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.

SICK LEAVE

DESCRIPTOR CODE (5.312)

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. (TCA 49-5-710)

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, and sister-in-law. (TRR/MS 0520-1-2-.04(2))

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.

A certificate from the physician on forms furnished by the Board may be required in support of any claim for sick leave pay. (TCA 49-5-710)

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. (TCA 49-5-710)

Sick leave for maternity purposes may be taken during the period of physical disability only. (TCA 49-5-710)

PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL LEAVE

DESCRIPTOR CODE (5.313)

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.

Certificated 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. (TCA 49-5-711; TRR/MS 0520-1-2-.04(3))

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 of the school shall be required:
 1. If more than ten percent (10%) of the teachers in any given school request its use on the same day;
 2. If requested during any prior established student examination period;
 3. If requested on the day immediately preceding or following a holiday or vacation period. (TCA 49-5-711; TRR/MS 0520-1-2-.04(3))

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. (TCA 49-5-205)

Requests shall be submitted to the principal at least five (5) days prior to requested leave of absence.

In addition, certificated 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. (TCA 49-5-205)

LONG-TERM LEAVES OF ABSENCE FOR PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL

DESCRIPTOR CODE (5.314)

Any person holding a position requiring a license to teach shall be granted leave for military service, legislative service, maternity, adoption, 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. The request for leave shall require:

1. A description of the type of leave requested;
2. The requested dates for beginning and ending the leave;
3. A statement of intent to return to the position from which leave is granted.

The Director of Schools must act upon each request. Each applicant shall be notified in writing of the director's action. All leaves, except military leave, shall be from a specific date to a specific date. However, the director, upon written request, may extend any leave requested by the teacher. Military leave shall be granted for whatever period may be required. The procedure and condition for extending a leave are the same as those used when originally requesting and granting the leave.

Positions vacated for less than twelve (12) months by teachers on leave shall be filled with an interim teacher while the teacher is on leave. If the teacher returns from leave within twelve (12) months, the interim teacher shall relinquish the position. If the leave exceeds twelve (12) months, the teacher shall be placed in the same or a comparable position upon return.

Part-time leaves may be granted by the Board upon written request for the same conditions as for full-time leave.

Any teacher on leave shall notify the Director of Schools 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 is on leave. Failure to give such notice shall be considered breach of contract.

Any professional personnel returning to employment after a period of two (2) years shall be subject to current employment standards.

FEDERAL FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (FMLA)

DESCRIPTOR (5.315)

PURPOSE

To entitle employees to take reasonable leave for medical reasons, for the birth or adoption of a child, and for the care of a child, spouse or parent who has a serious health condition.

ELIGIBILITY

Anyone who has been employed for at least twelve (12) months by the Board or anyone who has at least 1,250 hours of service during the previous twelve month period. (Federal Family and Medical Leave Act 1993)

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1. Any licensed employee shall be granted, upon request, up to twelve (12) weeks unpaid leave for the birth or adoption of a child or the care of a child, spouse, or parent who has a serious health condition. (Any female requesting leave due to pregnancy and childbirth shall be granted at least four (4) months leave.) (TCA 49-5-702; TCA 4-21-408)
2. Any licensed employee on maternity leave shall be permitted to use accumulated sick leave during the period of actual physical disability only. (TCA 49-5-710) Otherwise, the maternity leave shall be unpaid leave.
3. A physician's statement may be required by the Board when determining the period of actual physical disability.
4. Requests for leaves and extension of leaves shall conform to state law governing all leaves of absence. (TCA 49-5-704)

RESTRICTIONS

1. For foreseeable leave, the employee shall provide the Board with at least thirty (30) days written notice before the beginning of the anticipated leave.
2. The Board may require that a request for leave be supported by certification issued by a health care provider with the following information:

1. the date on which the serious health condition commenced;
 2. the probable duration of the condition;
 3. the appropriate medical facts within the knowledge of the health care provider regarding the condition; and
 4. a statement that the eligible employee is needed to care for the son, daughter, spouse or parent and an estimate of the amount of time that such employee is needed.
3. If there is any reason to doubt the validity of the certification provided, the Board may require, at the expense of the Board, an opinion of a second health care provider.
 4. Any employee requesting leave under the Family & Medical Leave Act shall include in the leave any applicable accumulated sick leave.
 5. Intermittent Leave - When a licensed employee requests foreseeable leave for planned medical treatment and the employee would be on leave for greater than 20% of the total number of working days in the period during which the leave would extend, the school may require that such employee elect either to take the leave for periods of a particular duration, not to exceed the duration of the planned medical treatment or to transfer temporarily to an available alternative position offered by the Board for which the employee is qualified, and that has equivalent pay and benefits and better accommodates recurring periods of leave.
 6. Period Near the End of an Academic Term - If leave is taken more than five (5) weeks prior to the end of the term, the Board may require the employee to continue taking leave until the end of the term if the leave is at least three (3) weeks of duration and the return of employment would occur during the three (3) week period before the end of the term.

If the leave is taken five (5) weeks prior to the end of the term, the Board may require the employee to continue taking leave until the end of the term if the leave is greater than two (2) weeks duration and the return to employment would occur during the two (2) week period before the end of the term.

REQUIREMENTS OF THE BOARD

1. The employee shall be restored to the same position of employment or an equivalent position with no loss of benefits, pay or other terms of employment.
2. The employee shall be kept under any group health plan for the duration of the leave.

3. The Board may recover the premium paid under the following conditions:
 1. the employee fails to return from leave after the period of leave has expired.
 2. the employee fails to return to work for a reason other than the continuation, recurrence, or onset of a serious health condition or other circumstances beyond the control of the employee.

LEGISLATIVE LEAVE

DESCRIPTOR CODE (5.317)

Certificated employees who have been elected to state or local law-making bodies shall be granted personal leave or leave without pay for the time those law-making bodies are in official session or while attending official meetings outside the session.

In addition, certificated 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.

PHYSICAL ASSAULT LEAVE

DESCRIPTOR CODE (5.318)

A teacher who is absent from assigned duties as a result of personal injury caused by physical assault or other violent criminal acts committed in the course of the teacher's employment activities shall receive workers' compensation or comparable benefits without loss of accumulated or granted sick, personal or professional leave.

A signed statement listing the cause of the 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.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHER

DESCRIPTOR CODE (5.871)

Substitute teachers are those teachers used to replace teachers on leave or to fill temporary vacancies. (TRR/MS 0520-1-2-.04(5); TCA 49-2-30, TCA 49-5-709) All substitute teachers shall be employed by the Director of Schools and paid by the Board. (TCA 49-5-709)

All persons making application to substitute must have a principal's recommendation.

Substitute teachers with the best training and most experience will be included on the preferred substitute list. For planned absences, a substitute with a teacher's certificate shall be selected from the preferred list if possible. (TCA 49-3-312(c); TRR/MS 0520-1-2-.04(5)(b) Each principal shall be provided names of all approved substitute teachers.

All substitutes shall be responsible for providing correct addresses and phone numbers and for notifying the principal if they wish to terminate their service as substitutes.

When a teacher is unable to meet classes for any reason, the following procedures shall be observed:

1. The teacher shall notify the principal/designee as soon as possible;
2. The principal/designee shall secure a qualified substitute teacher who has been approved by the Board; (TRR/MS 0520-1-2-.04(5); TCA 49-2-301) and
3. The regular teacher shall notify the principal/designee the day before intending to return to the classroom; upon receipt of notice the principal shall notify the substitute teacher.

Substitute teachers shall assume the same responsibilities and have the same authority as the regular teacher, including bus duty and playground supervision. Substitute teachers may not administer corporal punishment.

When substituting for a regular teacher who has been absent for twenty (20) consecutive days, a substitute teacher must possess a teaching certificate with endorsement in the discipline(s) to be taught. (TCA 49-3-312(c); TRR/MS 0520-1-2-.04(5)(b) When substituting for a teacher without sick leave, the substitute shall be certified and paid according to the state salary schedule. (TRR/MS 0520-1-2-.04(5); TCA 49-2-301)

Retired teachers may substitute one-hundred (100) days per year without loss of retirement benefits, (1) and may substitute for additional ninety (90) days if the Director of Schools certifies in writing to the State Board of Education that no other qualified personnel are available to substitute teach. (TCA 8-36-805)

All teacher aides, secretaries and clerks are approved substitute teachers for use in emergency situations. Emergency use shall be defined as less than a full day due to the regular or substitute teacher being unable to arrive on time or remain for the full day.

Such substitutes shall receive the proportionate equivalent salary regular substitute teachers would receive under similar circumstances or their regular salary, if higher; however, they shall not receive pay for both positions at the same time.

In order to make the work of the substitute teacher as satisfactory as possible, the regular teacher shall make available:

1. Daily schedule (academic and supervisory);
2. Class rolls; and

3. Lesson plans and other information for the day's activities. In case of emergency when plans are not provided, the principal shall provide the substitute with directions for the day.

The Director of Schools shall be responsible for providing appropriate training and development programs for substitute teachers.

All substitute teachers shall be required to attend an orientation session to provide instructions regarding reporting, pay schedules, and other pertinent information and to answer questions. These in-services shall be held at the beginning of the school year, in December, and again in April if new applicants are on file.

The Director of Schools or personnel director may approve the use of substitutes on an emergency basis when regular approved substitute are unavailable.

All substitute teachers will be given a copy of the local school's guidelines on the first day they substitute in the school. These guidelines shall contain, but shall not be limited to:

1. Attendance procedures;
2. Lunchroom schedule and procedures;
3. Procedures for supervising student behavior;
4. Names and assignments of regular staff members;
5. Emergency evacuation procedures; and
6. Other helpful information particular to the local school.

On an annual basis, the Director of Schools, with input from the principals, shall determine which substitute teachers performed at an acceptable level. Substitute teachers who performed below an acceptable level shall not be re-employed..

SECTION I INSTRUCTION

GROUPING FOR INSTRUCTION

DESCRIPTOR CODE (4.280)

To the greatest extent possible, students should be grouped in order to provide the opportunity for them to benefit from a diversity of individual strengths and intellects.

Students shall not be grouped in homogeneous classes except for the purpose of remediation or acceleration and grouping of students shall be considered only when the needs of the individual cannot be met in a heterogeneous group. The impact on student achievement, social/emotional development, and motivation shall be considered over organizational considerations.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

DESCRIPTOR CODE (4.300)

Instructional materials refer to any material and/or supplies used by teachers and/or students in the learning and teaching process.

The Board of Education recognizes the students' right of access to a variety of instructional materials and the right of the professional staff to make selections of instructional materials, provided all materials and/ or supplies selected support the state standards and curriculum guide, and/or IEP goals.

The Board will provide funds to each school for the purpose of instructional materials.

Each teacher will be provided funds to purchase instructional materials. Additional pooled funds will be provided to each school. The faculty of each school shall annually elect a committee of teachers to determine how to spend the pooled amount.

A committee report of expected expenditures will be submitted to the office of Director of Schools by October 15 of any school year. The purpose of this pool is to permit purchase of items or equipment that may exceed an individual teacher's allocation, for the benefit of all such teachers at the school and the enhancement of the instructional program, and shall not be used for the building needs such as HVAC, carpets, furniture, items or equipment for the teacher's lounge, or the like. (TCA 49-3-359)

As much as possible materials and supplies for the classroom should be purchased with school or teacher instructional funds. A limit of \$25.00 is placed on personal materials and/or supplies purchased by students in grades K-8, excluding pencils and paper.

Exceptions to this limit requirement will include band and/or music instruments, clothing and/or shoes required to dress for physical education classes, and materials and supplies necessary for participation in extra-curricular clubs and activities.

All school fees for activities and materials and/or supplies required to participate in all courses offered for grade or credit shall be waived for all students qualifying through the waiver process. (TCA 49-2-114)

TEXTBOOK SELECTION, DISTRIBUTION, AND CARE

DESCRIPTOR CODE (4.310)

SELECTION

The selection of textbooks shall be completed according to the laws and policies required by the State of Tennessee and the State Textbook Commission. The responsibility for textbook selection rests with the local textbook selection committees subject to approval by the Board. The Director of Schools/designee shall establish a procedure for providing the citizens of the community an opportunity to examine proposed textbooks prior to their final adoption, including public notice of time and location at which textbooks may be examined.

DISTRIBUTION

The Supervisor of Media and Materials shall be responsible for the purchase and distribution of textbooks to each school. The principal shall be responsible for ensuring each student receives the required textbooks at no cost to the student.

CARE OF TEXTBOOKS

Textbooks are property of the Board and shall be returned at the end of the school year, upon completion of the course or upon withdrawal from a course or from school. Fees for damaged, lost, or destroyed books shall be assessed at replacement cost. Any student found to be responsible for the loss or damage of another student's textbook shall be held liable for replacement or fine. Failure to pay the fine imposed within a reasonable time may result in the imposition of one or both of the following sanctions:

1. Refusal to issue any additional textbooks until restitution is made; and
2. Withholding of all grade cards, diplomas, certificates of progress, or transcripts until restitution is made.

The principal may waive the assessment of fines when in his/her judgment the student is the victim of uncontrollable circumstances and not responsible for the damages. Teacher's editions are the property of the School System and not the individual teacher.

RECONSIDERATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS AND TEXTBOOKS

DESCRIPTOR CODE (4.312)

The Board supports principles of intellectual freedom inherent in the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States and expressed in the Library Bill of Rights of the American Library Association.

Because opinions differ, there may be questions concerning some instructional and library materials despite the quality of the selection process. If a complaint is made, the following procedure is to be followed:

1. Inform the complainant of the selection procedures and make no commitments
2. Request the complainant to submit a formal "Request for Reconsideration of Instructional Materials"
3. Inform the principal (and other appropriate personnel)
4. Keep challenged materials available for use during the reconsideration process
5. Upon receipt of the completed form, the principal requests review of the challenged materials by an ad hoc materials review committee within fifteen (15) working days and notifies the appropriate supervisor and Director of Schools that such review is being done. The review committee is appointed by the principal, and includes certificated library media personnel, representatives from classroom teachers, one or more parents, and may include one or more students
6. The review committee shall take the following steps after receiving the challenged materials:
 - a. Read, view or listen to the material in its entirety
 - b. Check general acceptance of the material by reading recognized and evaluative reviews
 - c. Determine the extent to which the material supports the curriculum
 - d. Complete the appropriate "Checklist for Reconsideration of Instructional Materials", judging the material for its strength and value
 - e. Present recommendation to principal for further action and to the Director of Schools for purposes of information
7. If the complainant desires further action after receiving the recommendation of the committee and the decision of the principal, an appeal may be made to the Board

USE OF COPYRIGHTED MATERIALS

DESCRIPTOR CODE (4.313)

In order to define the fair and reasonable use that employees may make of copyrighted work for educational purposes without the permission of the copyright owner and to reduce the risk of copyright infringement, the Board shall require the following:

1. All employees shall adhere to the provisions of the United States Code regarding the copying and/ or the use of copyrighted materials
2. In the case of computer software, the ethical and practical problems caused by computer software piracy shall be taught in all computer courses

3. The Director of Schools shall establish specific regulations regarding the copying, distribution and use of copyrighted materials for instructional purposes
4. The principal of each school shall establish practices which will enforce this policy at the school level.

EMPLOYEE-DEVELOPED MATERIALS

DESCRIPTOR CODE (4.314)

Materials developed as part of regular employment are equally the properties of the school system and the employee.

School-owned equipment, including computers, may be used for developing and writing programs that will be used as part of the instructional program or for administrative purposes. The school system shall maintain full permanent use of all educational or administrative materials, software, manuals and related materials developed by school system employees during which time they were being compensated. No other compensation to the school system shall be required.

The Director of Schools shall ensure that a contractual agreement shall be executed between the employee and the Board when requested by the Board and/or the employee.

Educational materials created by the employee during the employee's leisure hours when the employee is not fulfilling contractual duties to the school system are the property of the employee.

VIDEOS

DESCRIPTOR CODE (4.315)

Educational videos are those which were developed for use in the educational setting for the purpose of introducing and/or reinforcing concepts and skills taught in the curriculum.

Educational videos may be used as supplemental resources to enhance instruction in the curricular areas. Videos shall be used to support the directed instruction of the teacher and shall not be used in lieu of instruction by the teacher. This shall include, but shall not be limited to, video taped reproductions of television programs designed to educate and/or inform the public.

Education videos must be appropriate to the age of the learner and must be previewed by the teacher prior to viewing by the students.

Videotapes and movies produced for the purpose of entertainment shall include, but shall not be limited to, movie rentals and video reproductions of television programs designed for entertainment.

The use of movie and video tapes for the purpose of entertainment, reward, or incidental learning shall be strictly controlled by the school administration, shall be used in accordance with all copyright and viewing restrictions of law, and shall be scheduled so as not

to usurp the regular academic classes of the students.

Movies shown must be appropriate for the age of the student as determined by the rating. No movies shall be shown to students in grades K-5 which require parental guidance (PG) without the written or verbal permission of the parents. PG 13 shall not be shown below the ninth grade. R-rated movies may not be shown in any school, except as approved by the Board. Movies which have been edited in such a way as to significantly affect the rating may be shown with parental notification of such editing.

Consideration should be given to the amount of time an individual student spends watching movies, especially in non-self contained programs. Movie viewing should be minimized in any class which meets less than daily, such as music, art, guidance, or physical education. An individual student shall spend no more than three (3) hours of instructional time per six (6) weeks watching movies. This does not preclude movies being shown during non-instructional time such as early/late bus, rest time for young children, or homeroom/activity period.

Movies which are a part of a holiday celebration should be shown during the last two hours of the day.

Students who do not attend movies should use the time to make up work, to receive individual or small group instruction, or to participate in equally rewarding activities if a reward has been earned.

All movies shown must be prior approved by the principal.

FIELD TRIPS AND EXCURSIONS

DESCRIPTOR CODE (4.340)

Field trips and excursions designed to stimulate student interest and inquiry and to provide opportunities for social growth and development are considered appropriate extensions of the classroom. Organizations that utilize extended excursions as a part of their program or curriculum must make every effort to ensure that all students are actively recruited to be a part of such organizations and that opportunities to belong are not limited due to the cost of such excursions.

To be educationally beneficial, a field trip and/or excursion requires thoughtful selection, careful advance preparation of the class, and opportunities for students to summarize at the conclusion of the trip. To this end, teachers and principals will be expected to consider the following factors in selecting trips:

1. Value of the activity to the particular class or groups
2. Relationship of the trip activity to a particular aspect of classroom instruction
3. Suitability of the activity and distance traveled in terms of the age level of the students and in terms of safety of the facilities to be used

4. Mode and availability of transportation
5. The cost of the trip so as not to limit the opportunities for any student and not to place financial burden on the family.

Field Trip and Excursion Guidelines

Definitions:

Field Trip - Travel within the same day

Excursion - Travel involving overnight stay

Educational Field Trip/Excursion - Travel related to the curriculum of the class or subject

Reward Trip - A trip with preset goals or limitations on who may attend

The following guidelines shall be followed in planning and conducting trips:

1. Any teacher desiring to take a group of students on a field trip or excursion must obtain advanced approval of the principal
2. The trip must have a definite purpose and reflect careful planning. Students should be prepared by general class discussion and/or research.
3. If bus transportation is required, the principal or his/her designee shall make the necessary arrangements. Adequate seating must be provided for all students. A fee will be charged to the school for mileage when school system buses are used. Notice of all trips/excursions that require system buses for transportation shall be received by the director of transportation ten (10) days prior to the activity. (Exception: TSSAA tournament competitions and circumstances approved by the Director of Schools.
4. Excursions that require a financial output (not including out-of-pocket) by students/parents of more than one-hundred dollars (\$100) must (a) be pre-approved by the principal and Director of Schools, then (b) supported by a majority of parents in the class or organization (documented by written survey), prior to any commitment by the sponsor to the students or to any institution, travel group, or agency.
5. Signed parental permission forms must be obtained for every student making an off- campus trip beyond the vicinity of the school.
6. Overnight educational excursions and chaperones must be approved by the principal, the Director of Schools, and the Board (if two or more instructional days are missed) in advance. These groups must be accompanied by at least one regular staff member and others from the school that are appropriate for adequate supervision and shall be responsible for student conduct while away. There must be at least one female and one male chaperone if the trip is for a mixed group.
7. Overnight excursions as a part of TSSAA tournament competitions must be approved by the principal and the Director of Schools.
8. All excursions with zero (0) instructional days (i.e. weekend trips) or one (1) instructional day missed may be approved by the

principal and Director of Schools.

9. An extended excursion of two (2) or more instructional days must have Board approval. Unless pursuing academic, athletic, or band/choral competitions, or a vocational convention which is documented, all extended excursions must occur over spring break, Christmas vacation, or summer vacation, etc. Emergency trips may be approved by the Board's executive committee.
10. Students shall not be penalized for participating in approved school-sponsored trips and activities. Teachers shall permit students to make up class assignments missed because of a trip or excursion. Assignments must be made up in accordance with the Board's attendance policy.
11. Students may not be denied opportunities to attend educational field trips or excursions because of academic performance or behavior, unless under suspension or current disciplinary action by the principal.
12. All accidents that occur on a school-sponsored trip must be reported by the teacher to the principal immediately upon return to school. Serious accidents involving personal injury must be reported immediately to the principal and/or the Director of Schools. An emergency shall be dealt with promptly by the teacher or other members of the school staff by taking appropriate action, including sending the student to the hospital or summoning medical aid or ambulance. In cases where it is necessary to send the student to the hospital, reasonable effort must be made to notify the parents. Students that require Individualized Health Plans and/or Permission to Treat Forms (notarized originals) must have these plans accompany them on all trips of more than thirty-five miles.
13. Each school requesting permission for an overnight trip (excursion) must submit a completed Travel Request for Field Trips and Competitive Events form. This form must be submitted seven (7) days prior to the Board meeting.
14. Sideline trips not included on the itinerary are not permitted without permission of the principal. In cases of emergency, reasonable efforts must be made to notify school officials. Any trip to a location that poses a problem in supervision (i.e. shopping malls) is not permitted.
15. Field trips and/or excursions may not be taken:
 - a. During the first week of school
 - b. The week prior and the week of final exams
 - c. Two weeks prior to TCAP testing
 - d. During TCAP testing

GRADING SYSTEM

DESCRIPTOR CODE (4.400)

Academic grades shall reflect the student's progress toward the attainment of the knowledge and skills in the subject area. Academic grades shall not be reduced as punishment for inappropriate behavior, except in such incidents where the student's grade is affected by cheating or failure to complete work. Attendance shall not be a factor in determining academic grades, except that credit for assignments may be denied or the value reduced for unexcused absences.

In kindergarten, grades shall reflect the student's progress toward the mastery of basic skills and knowledge.

In grades 1-12, academic grades shall be expressed by the following:

- A=93-100%
- B=85-92%
- C=75-84%
- D=70-74%
- F=Below 70%

Grades may include a plus or minus except that no plus or minus shall be added to the final grade in any course.

The grade of a student who has made satisfactory progress but has failed to complete assigned work may be recorded as incomplete (I). If the work is not completed within the time designated by the teacher, the grade for that work will then become an "F".

Grades given at the end of each nine-week period will be determined from daily work, homework, written assignments and tests. The teacher will weigh the value of grades given for various assignments and tests within the applicable period in computing the grade. This procedure will enable the teacher to allow for individual student differences in the grading process.

Secondary Honors/Advanced Courses

The weighting of honors and advanced courses will be accomplished through the addition of points to the final semester average. Final grades of honors courses or National Industry Certification courses will be raised by 3 points. Final grades of AP courses will be raised by 5 points.

Students wishing to appeal a grade should first discuss the issue with the teacher. If the issue is not resolved, then the grade may be further appealed to the principal. Grade appeals must be made within 45 days of the issuance of a grade.

After a thorough investigation by the principal, one of these final decisions shall be made:

- No changed shall be made to the grade issued by the teacher;
- The grade may be corrected by the teacher; or
- The grade may be overturned by the principal.

Any decision to overturn a grade shall be based solely on the merit of the grade, the accuracy of the calculation, or lack of evidence present to support the grade. Complete documentation of the decision shall be signed by the principal, teacher, and student/parent and placed in the student's permanent record.

REPORTING STUDENT PROGRESS

DESCRIPTOR CODE (4.410)

Report Cards

Student progress shall be reported to parents on a regular basis and on such forms as shall be approved by the Director of Schools. System-wide reporting shall be scheduled at regular nine (9) week intervals in all schools according to dates published at the beginning of the school year. Any change in reporting periods must be approved by the Director of Schools.

Student report cards shall include the student's academic progress, conduct, and attendance and other information that may be necessary to communicate effectively with parents.

Progress Reports

Parents of all students shall receive a written progress report at the mid- term of each grading period. This progress report should be presented in a system-wide consistent format on such forms as approved by the Director of Schools.

Student progress reports shall include the student's academic progress, conduct, and attendance and other information that may be necessary to communicate effectively with parents. Progress reports indicating unacceptable performance shall be signed and returned promptly. Teachers shall make every effort to contact parent(s) personally when signed progress reports are not returned and/or when there is a marked or sudden deterioration in performance.

Parent Conferences

Conferences shall be scheduled in which parents and teachers may discuss any pertinent problems or other matters of concern regarding the development and education of each student.

Conferences shall be physically accessible to all parents/guardians. A minimum of three (3) of the required six (6) hours shall be scheduled after 5:00 p.m. The Director of Schools shall approve dates and times.

No curricular or extra-curricular activity shall be scheduled to interfere with the teacher's ability to be present for parent-teacher conferences.

Teachers shall be available during their normally scheduled planning times to meet with parents to discuss student progress.

HOMEWORK

DESCRIPTOR CODE (4.290)

Homework shall be assigned to reinforce and strengthen specific areas of interest and opportunities. It must never be given for punishment. All homework shall be received by the teacher making the assignment and credit/feedback given within a reasonable period of time. Credit is not required to be a numerical score or letter grade.

Homework assignments shall take into consideration individual differences of students such as health, ability, home conditions, and educational resources at home. Homework shall not require the use of reference materials not readily available in most homes, school libraries, or the public library.

Homework shall not be in continuing conflict for time with the home and other community agencies having primary responsibility for certain aspects of the student's development. All extra-credit work which does not directly relate to course content must be approved by the principal. Modifications in assignments in a regular class shall be made in accordance with the individualized plan of a handicapped student.

CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

DESCRIPTOR CODE (4.320)

The discussion of issues in the classroom which are politically, philosophically or socially controversial shall be relevant to the subject matter being taught, related to educational objectives, appropriate for the age and maturity of students, and shall not materially or substantially disrupt or threaten to disrupt the discipline of the school.

To ensure that controversial issues are presented and discussed fairly and objectively and with instruction as their goal, the following guidelines shall be observed:

1. All personnel will seek to create an atmosphere in which differences of opinion can be voiced without fear and hostility and with mutual respect for all viewpoints;
2. Teachers will encourage students to withhold judgment and to avoid making of conclusions until all relevant and significant facts have been assembled, critically examined, and checked for accuracy.
3. Teachers will seek to develop in students a sense of responsibility for their beliefs, opinions, attitudes and actions;
4. Teachers shall place major emphasis upon "why" and "how" to think rather than "what" to think; and
5. If the subject matter being taught involves conflicting opinions, theories, or schools of thought, the teacher will allow differing sides of an issue to be explored in order to help students develop their own critical faculties.

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4. Teachers shall place major emphasis upon "why" and "how" to think rather than "what" to think;
5. If the subject matter being taught involves conflicting opinions, theories, or schools of thought, the teacher will allow differing sides of an issue to be explored in order to help students develop their own critical faculties.

CONTROVERSIAL MATERIALS

DESCRIPTOR CODE (4.321)

Parent(s) may request that a student not be required to read a book, use certain materials, or participate in an activity.

No student who is granted such a request shall be penalized academically for such request.

The teacher shall provide an alternate activity for the student which requires substantially the same amount of work and covers the same curriculum standards and goals of the original activity.

RECOGNITION OF RELIGIOUS BELIEFS, CUSTOMS & HOLIDAYS

DESCRIPTOR CODE (4.270)

No religious belief or non-belief shall be promoted by the school system or its employees, and none shall be belittled. All students and staff members shall be tolerant of each other's views. The school system shall use its opportunity to foster understanding and mutual respect among students and parents, whether it involves race, culture, economic background, or religious beliefs. In that spirit of tolerance, students and staff members shall be excused from participating in practices which are contrary to their religious beliefs.

Religious Holidays

Observance of religious holidays shall be as follows:

1. The several holidays throughout the year which have both a religious and a secular basis may be observed in the public schools.
2. The historical and contemporary values and the origin of religious holidays may be explained in an unbiased and objective manner without sectarian indoctrination.
3. Music, art, literature and drama having religious themes or basis are permitted as part of the curriculum for school-sponsored activities and programs if presented in a prudent and objective manner and as a traditional part of the cultural and religious heritage of the particular holiday.
4. The use of religious symbols that are part of a religious holiday are permitted as a teaching aid or resource, provided such symbols are displayed as an example of the cultural and religious heritage of the holiday and are temporary in nature. These holidays include Christmas, Easter, Passover, Hanukkah, St. Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day, Thanksgiving and Halloween.
5. The school district's calendar shall be prepared so as to minimize conflicts with religious holidays of all faiths.

RELIGION IN THE CURRICULUM

DESCRIPTOR CODE (4.271)

It is essential that the teaching about religion--and not of a religion be conducted in a factual, objective, and respectful manner in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. Music, art, literature, or drama with a religious theme or basis is permitted as part of the curriculum for school-sponsored activities and programs provided it is essential to the learning experience in the various fields of study and is presented objectively.
2. The emphasis on religious themes in the arts, literature, and history should be only as extensive as necessary for a balanced and comprehensive study of these areas. Such studies shall never foster any particular religious tenets or demean any religious beliefs.
3. Student-initiated expressions to questions or assignments that reflect their beliefs or non-beliefs about a religious theme shall be accommodated. For example, students are free to express religious belief or non-belief in compositions, art forms, music, speech, and debate.

PRAYER AND PERIOD OF SILENCE**DESCRIPTOR CODE (4.272)**

Schools shall establish a daily time for students to observe a moment of silence. No other action shall be taken by a teacher other than to maintain silence for the full time.

There shall be no school-sponsored or school-directed public prayer at any school-sponsored or school directed activity (Lee v. Weisman, 505 U.S. 112 S. Ct. 2649, 120 L. Ed.2d 467 (1992)), but a period of silence (TCA 49-6-1004) shall be observed.

Receipt of Robertson County Employee Handbook

I hereby acknowledge receipt of a copy of the Robertson County Employee Handbook.

I understand that no information in this document shall be viewed as an offer, expressed or implied, as a guarantee of any employment of any duration.

I understand that any rules, policies and procedures described in the handbook may be modified, varied, or deleted by Robertson County at any time.

I understand that this Employee Handbook contains excerpts of selected Board policies, which may be accessed in entirety through individual school libraries, the Robertson County District Office, or the district's website at www.rcstn.net.

Daniel P. Whitlow, Director of Schools

August 5, 2008

Date

Employee Signature

Date