



Horry County Schools



**Personnel Handbook
2011-12 School Year**



Horry County Schools

Personnel Handbook School Year 2011-12

IMPORTANT NOTICE

NOTHING IN THE DISTRICT POLICIES (“POLICIES”) OR THE PERSONNEL HANDBOOK (“HANDBOOK”) OF HORRY COUNTY SCHOOLS (“DISTRICT”) CONSTITUTES OR CREATES AN EXPRESSED OR IMPLIED CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT. RATHER, THIS HANDBOOK SHOULD BE UNDERSTOOD AS A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DISTRICT POLICIES, BENEFITS, RULES, AND OTHER INFORMATION OF IMPORTANCE TO PERSONNEL.

THE POLICIES AND HANDBOOK FOR THE 2011-2012 FISCAL YEAR SUPERSEDE ALL PREVIOUS MANUALS, HANDBOOKS, OR OTHER DOCUMENTS THAT ADDRESS THE SAME SUBJECT MATTER. IN ADDITION, THE POLICIES AND HANDBOOK CAN BE MODIFIED OR ALTERED AT ANY TIME BY THE DISTRICT.

I have read and I understand the “IMPORTANT NOTICE” presented above. Also, I understand that:

- the District Policies (“policies”) and the Personnel Handbook (“handbook”) for Horry County Schools (“District”) are located online on the District’s website at www.horrycountyschools.net;
- I can contact my supervisor to gain access to policies and handbook;
- the policies and handbook are not contracts of employment and do not create or imply a contract of employment;
- additional information regarding employment in Horry County Schools is available for employees on the District website

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Preface

This handbook is prepared for the employees of Horry County Schools (“District”) and contains general personnel policies and procedures that govern our daily operations. The content supersedes all previous handbooks, pamphlets, manuals, statements, or other representations (written or oral) regarding the term, conditions, and nature of a person’s employment with Horry County Schools. Nothing in this handbook or in the District’s policy manual shall be deemed to constitute an expressed or implied contract of employment.

This handbook and any policies, procedures, and benefits to which it may refer can be modified, altered, or discontinued at any time by the District at its discretion. Whenever such changes occur, the administration will notify employees through appropriate school or District-level channels. In addition to the handbook, there are other resources that are available to you. Your principal or District-level administrators are available to help you with interpretation and clarification of policies or procedures. Technology will be a vehicle for communicating current and updated personnel information to our employees on a frequent and consistent basis. Employees are encouraged to check the district webpage and the district portal for personnel information, forms, procedures and practices.

This handbook is not intended to replace the actual policies established by the Horry County Board of Education (“Board”) or the District administration. If a policy or rule is abbreviated or in error, the document in the official policy manual or the administrative directive document shall always take precedence. Hard copies of *District Policies* are available in each school’s main office, and the policy manual may be accessed through the District’s website. Employees have a responsibility to familiarize themselves with and abide by, the policies and procedures set forth to carry out their assigned responsibilities with conscientious concern and professional behavior. This is essential to the success of ongoing school operations and the achievement of the district’s vision.

Additionally the District’s *Parent/Student Handbook*, which includes summaries of selected policies and rules pertaining to students, their parents, teachers, and other staff members, is available to employees through the schools. The District expects all teachers and other staff to be knowledgeable about the information contained in the *Parent/Student Handbook* and to require students to abide by the standards of conduct contained therein.

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Our vision...

Horry County Schools' vision is to be a premier, world-class school system in which every student acquires an excellent education. Our schools will be welcoming centers organized around high-quality teaching and learning.

We believe...

- Our purpose is to develop the potential of each student and ensure that all graduates become productive members of their community, able to adapt to a diverse, ever-changing world.
- We have the obligation to challenge every student to meet higher academic standards than his/her current level.
- Our students deserve exceptional and passionate staff who share our core values. Our core values are stated as expectations for staff members:
 - We put service to students above all else.
 - We take responsibility for the success of all students.
 - We care passionately about our work with children.
 - We build strong positive relationships with students, staff, parents, and community.
 - We model and promote civility and integrity.
- Our students' learning opportunities are enhanced when multiple approaches for learning are provided and positive relationships are formed. And... All who share our schools deserve a safe, respectful and nurturing environment.
- Partnerships among family, community and school are imperative to students' social and academic success.

We will...

- Provide research-based curriculum and instructional methods that facilitate achievement for all students.
- Provide a comprehensive assessment system that monitors and documents performance and uses these results to improve student performance and school effectiveness.
- Provide the human, financial, and physical resources and services necessary to support our vision and purpose of achievement for all students.
- Foster effective communications and relationships with and among our stakeholders.
- Provide governance and leadership that promote student performance and school/system effectiveness.

We welcome you to a new school year!

If you are a new employee, we are glad you have chosen to begin or continue your career in the Horry County Schools. If you are a current employee, we appreciate your dedication and contribution to our students' success. The Division of Human Resources encourages you to provide us with recommendations or suggestions for improvement that will ultimately benefit our students.

Please visit us on our website at www.horrycountyschools.net/departments/human_resources/ to obtain current and more detailed information regarding your employment in our district or call us at (843) 488-6924.

Our purpose is to recruit, hire and retain employees that serve our current staff members, students and the community. To support our District's vision and beliefs we are dedicated to the employment and retention of high quality personnel. Our main focus is to provide support for our employees so our students receive maximum learning opportunities in a positive learning environment.

The following represents some of the services provided by the Division of Human Resources:

- Recruitment
- Job/information fairs
- Substitute recruitment and workshops
- Employment opportunities
- Employment verification
- Applicant management system
- New employee orientation
- Benefit information and management
- Certification oversight
- Leadership retention
- Employee retention
- Beginning teacher support
- Criminal background checks
- Address changes
- Teacher of the Year
- Employment issues regarding performance and disciplinary actions

Equal Employment Opportunity

The District provides equal employment opportunities to otherwise qualified individuals without regard to race, sex, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, military status, English-speaking status, or any other characteristic protected by applicable federal or S.C. law.

The District will make reasonable accommodations for an individual with a disability who is otherwise qualified for a position unless the accommodation would impose an undue hardship upon the District.

The District will employ only U.S. citizens and aliens lawfully authorized to work in the U.S.

Staff Development and Work Days 2011 – 2012

	Date	Purpose
	August 1	New Teacher Academy
	August 2	New Teacher Academy
	August 2	District-Wide Registration
	August 3	A-TEAM Meeting (Instruction 7:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.)
	August 4	A-TEAM Meeting (Instruction 7:30–11:30) Lunch 11:30–12:15 (Support Services 12:15 – 5:30)
12	August 11	District Staff Development Day
11	August 12	District Staff Development Day
1	August 15	School Staff Development/Work Day *** and Meeting w/Superintendent by Area – Schedule Attached
2	August 16	School Staff Development/Work Day *** and Meeting w/Superintendent by Area – Schedule Attached
3	August 17	School Staff Development/Work Day ***
4	August 18	District Staff Development Day
5	August 19	School Staff Development/Work Day ***
	August 22	First Day of School
6	October 10	School Work Day ***
7	January 3	School Work Day ***
8	January 17	School Work Day ***
9	February 20	District Staff Development Day
10	June 4	School Work Day ***
13	June 5	School Work Day *** (If Parent/Teacher Conferences Not Conducted During School Year)

*****Please note that no district staff development may be scheduled during designated school work and school staff development times that are marked with asterisks.**

Pay Schedule for Additional Staff Development Days

Additional Staff Development Days	Roster Due in Payroll	Pay Dates
August 11 and 12, 2011	August 17, 2011	August 31, 2011
June 5, 2012	June 11, 2012	June 29, 2012

Responsibilities, Ethics, and Conflict of Interest

Staff members have a responsibility to familiarize themselves with, and abide by, federal and state laws, as well as regulations designed to implement these laws, as these affect their work. Staff members must know, understand, and follow District policies and rules. Ignorance of the provisions of District policies and rules will not be acceptable as a defense in the event of an infraction by a staff member. The District expects all staff members to carry out their assigned responsibilities with conscientious concern and professional behavior.

Essential to the success of ongoing school operations are the following specific responsibilities, which the District requires of all personnel:

1. Professional behavior including, but not limited to, adherence to:
 - a. community standards of honesty, integrity, and morality;
 - b. the District's organizational culture that: (1) treats people, including parents, citizens and staff, with respect, dignity and courtesy, (2) values individual differences of opinion, (3) reasonably includes people in decisions that affect them, (4) requires appropriate open and honest communications in written and interpersonal interactions, (5) focuses on common achievement of the Board's governance policies on "Results," and (6) requires an open, responsive, and welcoming environment;
2. Support of, enforcement of, and adherence to federal laws and regulations, state laws and regulations, and District policies, rules, and procedures;
3. Faithfulness and promptness in attendance at work;
4. Care and protection of school property;
5. Attendance at school functions in accordance with the expectations of the District;
6. Concern and attention toward their own and the Board's legal responsibility for the safety and welfare of students, including the need to ensure that students are supervised at all times;
7. Annually viewing the District's required Safe Schools Training Courses.
8. Inspecting, verifying, and assuming responsibility for, the content of documents signed by the employee – documents including, but not limited to, information concerning: taxes, direct deposits, insurance, savings plans, flexible spending accounts, and retirement;
9. Adherence to the District's guidelines set forth in the District's program to prevent workplace injuries caused by, but not limited to, slips, trips, and falls (information is available in the "Workplace Safety Guidelines" manual provided by Health and Safety Services and located in the front office of each work location or online under the "Workplace Safety" quick link on the District's "For Staff" web page); staff members who fail to abide by the guidelines may be subject to disciplinary action.

In addition, the District:

1. Prohibits the use of corporal punishment;
2. Prohibits sexual harassment of students or staff members (This includes any action of conduct communicated or performed in person, in writing, or electronically through such means as a telephone, cell phone, computer, personal data assistant, or other telecommunication device, including text messaging, instant messaging and social networking.);
3. Prohibits the illegal transfer of alcohol or illegal substances to students or staff;
4. Prohibits the use, possession, or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances while on the job; and
5. Prohibits employees, volunteers, and visitors from carrying or possessing on school property, in a school-related vehicle, or at District-related or school-related functions any weapon including, but not limited to, a pocket or sheath knife (with a blade over two inches long), blackjack, metal pipe or pole, firearm, or any other type of weapon, device, or object, which may be used to inflict bodily injury or death. A firearm is generally defined as a gun or destructive device and will be construed in accordance with Federal and State law (starter pistols which may chamber a live round capable of injuring a person are included in the definition of a firearm). No vehicles parked on District or school property may contain weapons of any type. Violators will incur appropriate sanctions and may face penalties under the law.

Classroom instruction and student activities, including instructional materials and displays, must be designed and implemented consistent with District goals, curriculum, and policies. Therefore, in the course of their employment, staff members must not participate in uncontrolled expression inconsistent with District goals, curriculum, and policies.

Certain “inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature” that District employees direct towards students may also be criminal conduct as defined by State law, including S.C. Code Section 16-3-755. However, the District will take appropriate action against any employee who engages in inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature, as defined in District policies, regardless of whether the conduct rises to the level of a crime.

In their association with students, employees are to exhibit an appropriate and professional demeanor through their manner, dress, courteousness, industry, and attitude in order to establish themselves as role models for young people. The District expects the staff to be exemplary models, as well as providing exemplary instruction and modeling the prevailing mores of the community. The use of profanity is in direct conflict with this concept and will not be condoned. Staff members are not to engage in any activity that conflicts or raises a reasonable question of conflict with their responsibilities in the District.

1. No employee of the District will engage in or have a financial interest, directly or indirectly, in any activity that conflicts or raises a reasonable question of conflict with his/her duties and responsibilities in the District.

2. An employee will not engage in work of any type where information concerning a customer, client, or employer originates from any information available to him/her through District sources.
3. A professional employee will not sell instructional supplies, equipment, or reference books in the District nor will the employee furnish the names of students or parents to anyone selling these materials.
4. Any intellectual property prepared by an employee within the scope of his/her employment is the sole property of the District. An employee violating this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including a recommendation for termination of his/her employment relationship with the District.

The personal life of an employee, including the employee's personal use of non-District issued electronic equipment outside of working hours (such as through social networking sites and personal portrayal on the Internet), will be the concern of and warrant the attention of the District if it impairs the employee's ability to effectively perform his/her job responsibilities or if it violates local, State, or federal law or contractual agreements. Unprofessional conduct may subject the employee to disciplinary actions consistent with State law, federal law, and/or District policy.

Staff members are expected to adhere to reasonable time schedules as established by the District or their supervisors.

Arrest of an employee

The Board delegates specific authority to the Superintendent to take appropriate employment action with regard to an employee who has been arrested, consistent with State law. An employee must notify his or her supervisor immediately if he or she is arrested.

Confidentiality

As part of employees' duties and responsibilities, it may be necessary for them to maintain, process, handle, review, and/or be privy to student information, personnel information, and other information which is considered private and confidential. Unless mandated for legal reasons, private and confidential information is not to be discussed with any person other than District personnel with a work-related need to know. Unauthorized discussion, disclosure, and/or dissemination of confidential information could result in disciplinary action up to and including a recommendation for termination of employment.

Internal mail system

The District's internal mail system may be used only for the distribution of materials for conducting District business. Therefore, materials sent through the internal mail system are considered to be District property.

Electronic communications

Electronic messaging systems are important tools which enhance communication and increase productivity when properly used. The District has established this policy with regard to the acceptable use of District-provided electronic messaging systems including, but not limited to, email and instant messaging. This policy applies to any and all electronic messages composed, sent, or received by any employee or by any person using District-provided electronic messaging resources. The District will not restrict the speech of an employee on matters of public concern on the basis of a disagreement with the opinions the employee is expressing as long as the speech does not violate District policy or applicable law or regulations.

1. The District provides electronic messaging resources to assist in conducting District business, and it is the District's intention that these resources constitute a non-public, limited forum. District office personnel and school-level administrators are authorized to send the same message to multiple addresses throughout the District by way of distribution lists or by other means in order to conduct District business with staff members. However, unless an exception is granted in writing by the principal, other school-level employees are authorized to use such methods only for communicating with staff members at the same location with copies sent, as appropriate, to the District-level staff member(s) with a need to be informed about the content of the message. Communication about professional matters by such school-level employees should be by use of a ListServ or through an electronic forum – a system which will be implemented by the District. If a staff member at a school would like to send the same message to multiple addresses throughout the District by way of distribution lists or other means, he/she should submit his/her request to his/her principal, along with a description of the type(s) of messages that will be sent and the groups of employees to whom the messages will be sent. The principal, after consulting with the Chief Accountability Officer about the intent of this policy, will grant or deny permission for such use. However, few requests are to be granted since the use of the ListServes and the electronic forum will reduce high traffic uses that would take away bandwidth resources from activities necessary to District operations. The decision of the district office administrator shall be final, and the decision may not be the subject of a grievance. The District hosts ListServes for use within its intranet system. Such ListServes may only be established by a ListServ manager in the District's Technology Department if recommended by a principal or an appropriate District-level department head. If disputes arise concerning a particular ListServ or its messages, the Chief Accountability Officer shall resolve the matter. His/her decision shall be final, and his/her decision may not be the subject of a grievance. The District provides an electronic forum that enables employees to share information on matters of professional importance. Policies and conditions of use of the forum are made available to employees. Employees posting their views on the forum may do so only with the understanding that their views do not necessarily represent the views of the District and that they are solely responsible for the views they post, which must conform to District policy. Use of the forum is limited to District employees and members of the Horry County Board of Education. The forum may not be used to make personal

attacks on anyone. The Superintendent or his/her designee reserves the right to remove a topic/thread from the forum if it violates District policy or applicable law or regulations. The decision to remove a topic shall be final, and the decision may not be the subject of a grievance.

2. The District prohibits discrimination based on race, sex, color, religion, religious or political beliefs, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, immigrant status, English-speaking status, marital status, or any other characteristic protected by applicable federal or S.C. law.
3. Use of electronic messaging resources to discriminate based on any or all of the aforementioned characteristics is prohibited.
4. The electronic messaging system is District property. Therefore, all messages composed and/or sent using District-provided electronic messaging resources must comply with District policies.
5. The District will deny access to electronic messaging resources, including, but not limited to, the ability to download, forward, print, or retrieve any message stored in the system, regardless of sender or recipient when an employee's employment with the District is terminated or during the period of time that an employee is either suspended from employment or placed on administrative leave.
6. An employee assigned an email address is to use that email address while conducting District business via email. Employees are to safeguard their passwords by not sharing their passwords with anyone and by not hiding or posting their passwords in a place accessible to anyone. However, when absolutely necessary during their absence, employees may give proxy access to an appropriate, responsible District employee.
7. Accessing external email systems from District-provided equipment is prohibited except for compelling reasons and unless authorized for a limited time by the Technology Department. This includes, but is not limited to, Yahoo! Mail, Mail, MSN Hotmail, AOL, Earthlink, and other email services offered by Internet service providers.
8. Employees are prohibited from automatically forwarding electronic messages sent through District-provided systems to external messaging systems.
9. The District has the right to monitor electronic communications to enforce its rule that messages will not be illegal, libelous, profane, obscene, vulgar, harassing, insulting, disruptive, pornographic, defamatory, racially offensive, abusive, sexually oriented, present a danger to the health and safety of others, etc. Therefore, the District reserves the right to intercept, monitor, review and/or disclose any and all messages composed, sent or received. The interception, monitoring and reviewing of messages may be performed with the assistance of content filtering software or by designated District employees and/or designated external entities. Employees designated to review messages may include, but

are not limited to, an employee's supervisor or manager and/or others deemed by the District to need access.

10. The District reserves the right to alter, modify, re-route, or block the delivery of messages as appropriate. This includes but is not limited to:
 - a. Rejecting, quarantining or removing the attachments and/or malicious code from messages that may pose a threat to District resources;
 - b. Discarding attachments, such as music, considered to be of little business value and of significant resource cost;
 - c. Rejecting or quarantining messages with content suspected of violating District policy or law;
 - d. Rejecting or quarantining messages containing offensive language;
 - e. Re-routing messages with content suspected of violating District policy or law to designated company employees for manual review;
 - f. Rejecting or quarantining messages determined to be unsolicited email (spam);
 - g. Appending legal disclaimers to messages.
11. Employees are not permitted to use email and the internet in a way or at a time that results in the neglect of assigned duties.
12. District-provided electronic messaging resources may not be used for the promotion of any particular political candidate(s), political party, or partisan political endeavor of any kind. Also, the resources may not be used for the purpose of religious proselytizing or for the promotion of any particular religious faith(s) or religious practice(s). The restrictions are not meant to constrain users from expressing professional educational viewpoints that might have related political and religious underpinnings and overtones.
13. The District may permit the use of instant messaging programs on a case-by-case basis. The policies in this document apply equally to instant messages as well as email. Employees authorized to use instant messaging programs will be advised specifically on which instant message programs are permissible and which ones are not. Employees authorized to use instant messaging programs will be assigned a unique instant messaging identifier, also known as a buddy name, handle, or nickname.
14. The unique email addresses and/or instant messaging identifiers assigned to an employee are the property of the District. Employees may use these identifiers only while employed by the District. The right to use these identifiers terminates upon separation from the District.
15. The District uses sophisticated anti-virus software. Employees are prohibited from disabling anti-virus software running on District-provided computer equipment.

16. Any employee who discovers a violation of these policies must immediately notify the Executive Director of Technology. Suspected illegal activities will be reported to law enforcement authorities.
17. The District employs certain practices and procedures in order to maintain the functionality and efficiency of electronic messaging resources, to achieve District objectives, and/or to meet various regulations. These practices and procedures are subject to change by the District as appropriate or required under the circumstances.
18. The District may serialize, archive, and retain copies of all internal and external email messages for a period consistent with its records retention schedule.
19. While electronic messaging resources allow employees to conduct District business efficiently, use of email and instant messaging systems comes with some inherent risks. All employees should be aware of these risks and take precautions to mitigate them.
 - a. Messages sent electronically can be intercepted inside or outside the District and as such caution and judgment should be used when disclosing proprietary or confidential information through email or instant messages.
 - b. In some cases, electronic messages may not be unconditionally and unequivocally deleted. The remote possibility of discovery always exists. Use caution and judgment in determining whether a message should be delivered electronically instead of in person.
 - c. Electronic messages may be subject to disclosure to the public under the S.C. Freedom of Information Act and legally discoverable and permissible as evidence in a court of law.
 - d. Electronic messages are frequently inadequate in conveying mood and context. Carefully consider how the recipient might interpret a message before composing or sending it.
 - e. Even though the District uses anti-virus software, some virus-infected messages can enter the District's messaging systems. Viruses, "worms," and other malicious code can spread quickly if appropriate precautions are not taken:
 - (1) Be suspicious of messages sent by people not known by you;
 - (2) Do not open attachments unless they were anticipated by you;
 - (3) Disable features in electronic messaging programs that automatically preview messages before opening them.
 - f. Do not forward a chain message, a pyramid message, a spoofed-identity message, or spam mail. Simply delete them.
 - g. The District considers unsolicited email or spam a nuisance and potential security threat. Use caution if you remove yourself from future delivery of a message that you determine is spam. "Remove Me" links often are used by unscrupulous mass junk emailers as a means to verify that you exist. Attempting to remove yourself may increase the amount of spam you receive.

- h. Internet message boards are a fertile source from which mass junk emailers harvest email addresses and email domains. Avoid using District-provided email addresses when posting to external message boards.

20. An employee in violation of this policy is subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices

While driving a vehicle in the course of employment with the District, personnel are not to use cell phones, and/or other electronic devices under any circumstances where such use might create or appear to create a hazard to themselves, other persons, personal property, and/or real property. Such devices are to be used only when safety is not compromised and in accordance with federal and state laws and regulations. Devices with camera and/or video capability are never to be used in any area associated in any way whatsoever with the District, its programs, or activities in which an individual has a reasonable expectation for privacy including, but not limited to, restrooms, locker rooms, and showers.

Employees are not to interfere with the instructional program, a school activity, or a work-related meeting; and employees are not to inappropriately message or record through the use of a cell phone, a device with camera and/or video capability, a paging device, or any other electronic device.

Personally owned devices are to be turned off during the foregoing programs and activities (except athletic competitions). Principals and District-level department heads may make such exceptions to this requirement as are necessary for the efficient administration of the schools and the health and safety of students and staff members. Violations will result in disciplinary action such as, but not limited to, revocation of the right to use such devices at work.

Computer Crime Act

Section 16-16-20 of the Code of Laws of S.C. states that:

1. It is unlawful for a person to willfully, knowingly, maliciously, and without authorization or for an unauthorized purpose to:
 - a. directly or indirectly access or cause to be accessed a computer, computer system, or computer network for the purpose of:
 - i. devising or executing a scheme or artifice to defraud;
 - ii. obtaining money, property, or service, by means of false or fraudulent pretenses, representations, promises; or
 - iii. committing any other crime.
 - b. alter, damage, destroy, or modify a computer, computer system, computer network, computer software, computer program, or data contained in that computer,

computer system, computer program, or computer network or introduce a computer contaminant into that computer, computer system, computer program, or computer network. (7/2/2002)

State Ethics Law

Employees are under the jurisdiction of the S.C. Ethics Act, as amended, and are subject to the rules of conduct of the statute. Such rules include the following:

A public employee:

1. May not use his/her position or office for personal financial gain (§ 8-13-700);
2. Must report the receipt of anything of value worth \$25 or more under certain circumstances (§ 8-13-710);
3. May not receive compensation to influence action (§ 8-13-705);
4. May not receive additional money as payment for advice or assistance given in the course of their employment (§ 8-13-720);
5. May not receive anything of value for speaking before a public or private group if the employee is acting in an official capacity (§ 8-13-715);
6. May not use government personnel, equipment, materials, or office buildings in an election campaign (§ 8-13-765);
7. May not use or disclose confidential information gained in the course of employment (§ 8-13-725);
8. May not serve as a member or employee of a governmental regulatory commission that regulates any business with which the employee is associated (§ 8-13-730);
9. May not represent another person before a governmental entity (§ 8-13-740);
10. May not have an economic interest in a contract if the employee is authorized to perform an official function relating to the contract (§ 8-13-775);
11. May not use or disclose confidential information in any way that would affect his/her economic interest (§ 8-13-725);
12. May not cause the employment, appointment, promotion, transfer, or advancement of a family member to a position which the employee supervises or manages (§ 8-13-750);
13. May not participate in an action relating to the discipline of the employee's family member (§ 8-13-750).

However, public facilities may be utilized for political meetings or campaign-related activities if they are rented or made available on similar terms to all candidates or committees.

In cases where an employee is required to take action or make a decision which affects himself/herself or other individuals, the employee will take such steps as the Ethics Commission will prescribe to remove him/herself from the potential conflict of interest (§ 8-13-700).

The Superintendent must file an annual statement of economic interest with the State Ethics Commission (S.C. Code § 8-13-1110).

Nepotism

The District will not offer a recommendation for the appointment or transfer of any person to a position that would require the person to supervise and/or evaluate a family member or be supervised and/or evaluated by a family member.

Those individuals serving in such positions as of April 22, 1996, may retain their positions provided the Superintendent concludes that the continued assignments are in the best interest of the District. The Superintendent may reassign any persons affected by this policy if he/she considers such reassignment to be in the best interest of the District.

The District will not make a recommendation for the appointment of a family member of the Superintendent for a position in the District office, for a position as a principal or assistant principal, or for any other position which is directly supervised and/or directly evaluated by the Superintendent.

The S.C. Code § 59-25-10 provides that no board member's immediate family member (parents, children, brothers, or sisters only) may be employed without the written consent of the board of trustees.

Reporting child abuse or neglect

The schools of this district will cooperate vigorously to expose the problems of child abuse and neglect. Any principal, assistant principal, school teacher, nurse, school attendance officer, social worker or counselor who has received information in his/her professional capacity which gives him/her reason to believe that the physical or mental health or welfare of a child under the age of 18 has been or may be adversely affected by abuse (including physical or mental injury or sexual abuse) or neglect must report such a situation, as provided in S.C. Code Ann. Section 63-7-310.

As mandated reporters, the principal, assistant principal, teacher, nurse, school attendance officer, social worker or counselor must make the report to the county department of social services or a law enforcement agency in the county where the child resides. Other school employees who have reason to believe that a child under the age of 18 has been subjected to, or who may be subjected to abuse or neglect, should also report or cause a report to be made as stated above.

The state of South Carolina provides both civil and criminal immunity to those reporting suspected child abuse or neglect in good faith. Anyone required to report who knowingly fails to do so may be found guilty of a misdemeanor in a court of law.

Reporting procedures

School personnel who suspect child abuse or neglect should make a report in good faith. It is not the responsibility of school personnel to prove that the child has been abused or neglected, or to make a determination of whether the child is in need of protection. Any involvement of school personnel in investigation or treatment should be in conjunction with the local child protection unit of the department of social services. The department of social services must keep the name of the reporter confidential, except as otherwise required by law.

The teacher or other school employee suspecting the abuse must make an oral report by telephoning, or otherwise, which includes the following information to law enforcement or the department of social services.

- Name, address, and age of student
- Name and address of parent or caretaker
- Nature and extent of injuries or description of neglect
- Any other information that might help to establish the cause of the injuries or condition

The person making the report should notify the principal of the school that he/she made an oral or written report of a case of suspected child abuse or neglect in order to provide for appropriate communication and follow-up by the school administration during any investigation.

School employees who make child abuse or neglect reports must maintain the confidentiality of the information contained in the report. Employees will release this information only to the department of social services or, in the alternative, the county law enforcement agency.

As provided in S.C. Code Ann. Section 63-7-380, a person required to report suspected child abuse or neglect, may take, or cause to be taken, color photographs of the areas of trauma visible on a child who is the subject of the report. In the alternative, the reporter should bring the condition to the attention of the person to whom the report is made.

Copyright law

The 1976 Federal Copyright Law, P.L. 94-553, (effective January 1, 1978) makes it illegal to duplicate or scan copyrighted materials without permission except for certain exempt purposes. Unauthorized reproduction and/or use of copyrighted materials is illegal, unethical, and not permitted by the District. Violations of the copyright law may result in criminal or civil suits and/or suspension and/or dismissal from employment in the District.

To protect staff members and the District against legal redress for alleged violation of the copyright laws, the person making the reproduction is responsible for determining that the

action is within the law. When an individual is not certain, he/she should contact his/her principal or supervisor in order to ascertain whether copying or scanning falls under “permitted use.” If it does not, permission to reproduce materials must be obtained from copyright holders.

District equipment is not to be used to copy or scan copyrighted materials unless the reproduction is legally permissible.

The following information must be prominently displayed on a sign, at least 8 by 10 inches in size, on or near each District copier or facsimile machine with copy capabilities:

NOTICE

The copyright law of the United States governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material under certain conditions. Any person using this equipment to make copies in excess of “fair use” under copyright law is solely responsible for any copyright infringement liability.

Legal Matters

Each employee is responsible for immediately notifying his/her principal or District-level department head of legal matters, which affect or may affect the District. A principal/District-level department head receiving the above information is responsible for communicating the information to the appropriate Chief Officer, who shall forward it to the Superintendent or the Staff Attorney.

Testing Programs

The District endorses the use of standardized tests as one measure of the success and quality of the educational program. In the case of individual students, such tests used in combination with other types of measurement can provide an indication of a student’s achievement. The Office of Assessment coordinates the testing program for students at various grade levels. See the *Parent Student Handbook, 2011-2012* for more information.

Tests and Examinations in Elementary, Middle and High Schools

All teacher-made tests given at any time during the school year should be diagnostic – that is, the test should be given to evaluate what a student has learned so the teacher may plan instruction according to the needs the student exhibits on the tests. Tests should be given when needed throughout the school year. There will be no recording of test grades on report cards and no final examinations as such at elementary and middle school levels; however, final

examinations will be given in middle-school classes for which high-school credit may be granted.

Test Security

All mandatory tests administered to students by or through the District and provided by the District, the S.C. Department of Education ("SCDE"), or any other source, shall be administered in accordance with S.C. law, S.C. regulations, and the policies, guidelines, or requirements of the District or other source. Violation of any law, policy, regulation, guidelines, or requirements will subject the individual to discipline and may lead to criminal proceedings resulting in fines and/or imprisonment, termination of employment with the District, and/or suspension or revocation of an educator's professional certificate.

1. Each school year, the Superintendent shall designate one individual in the District who shall be solely responsible for procuring commercial tests used in testing programs administered by or through the SCDE. The name of the individual so designated shall be provided to the SCDE in writing on an annual basis.
2. Staff members must provide for the security of the materials during testing and the storage of secure tests and test materials, before, during, and after testing. Before and after testing, all materials must be stored at a location or locations in the District under lock and key. Throughout the time that testing materials are under the control of the District, tests must be secured under lock and key when not in use for approved test administration activities.
3. Individuals must adhere to the procedures specified in operating manuals governing the testing programs.
4. Each of the following is considered a breach of professional ethics which may jeopardize the validity of the inferences made on the basis of test date, and as such, is viewed as a security violation which could result in criminal prosecution, disciplinary action by the SCDE which may affect an educator's professional certificate (including suspension or revocation of his/her certificate), and/or disciplinary action by the District, up to and including termination of employment:
 - a. failing to administer tests on the test dates specified by the District and/or the SCDE
 - b. failing to maintain an appropriate testing environment free from undue distractions
 - c. failing to proctor the test to ensure that examinees are engaged in appropriate testing-taking activities
 - d. providing examinees with access to test questions or specific test content prior to testing
 - e. make answers or answer keys available to examinees
 - f. keeping, copying, reproducing, or using in any manner inconsistent with the instructions provided by or through the district and/or the SCDE any test, test question, or specific test content

- g. keeping, copying, reproducing, or using in any manner inconsistent with test security regulations or the instruction provided by or through the District, the SCDE, any other sources, all or any portion of any secure test booklet or examinee responses to any item, items, or any section of a secure test
 - h. coaching examinees, altering examinee responses, or interfering with examinee responses in any way prior to, during, or after testing (this includes hinting to examinees about the correctness or incorrectness of their responses)
 - i. failing to follow security regulations or instructions specified in the test manuals for distribution, storage, or return of secure test materials as directed or failing to account for all secure test materials before, during, or after testing
 - j. failing to follow directions pertaining to the administration of a test as specified in the test manuals for that test. This section includes failure to clear the memory of calculators used on a test as directed in the test manual
 - k. allowing, participating in, assisting in, or encouraging any unauthorized access to test materials prior to, during, or after testing
 - l. disclosing the contents of any portion of secure materials or discussing the content of secure tests with examinees, teachers, or other educators before, during, or after testing
 - m. leaving in view of examinees during test administration any materials that are content or conceptually related to the subject area(s) being assessed
 - n. providing references or tools other than those specifically allowed in test manuals and/or providing reference or tools during test administration at times other than those specifically allowed in test manuals
 - o. not providing appropriately agreed-upon accommodations (to include customized test forms and modifications) as appropriate for students with individualized education programs (“IEPs”) or Section 504 plans (this includes providing more accommodations, e.g., customization and/or modifications, than appropriately agreed upon)
 - p. excluding examinees or exempting from assessment students who should be assessed
 - q. failing to return materials for all examinees
 - r. engaging in inappropriate test preparation practices that invalidate the test scores
 - s. revealing test scores or test performance to anyone not involved in the education of the examinee
 - t. altering test scores in electronic records or files
 - u. participating in, directing, aiding, counseling, assisting in, or encouraging a violation of any of the acts in this section
 - v. failing to report a security breach, including but not limited to, any of the acts prohibited in this section
5. The District and the SCDE have the right and responsibility to observe and to record test administration and scoring activities with or without prior notice. In rare circumstances, the recording may be used by the SCDE to invalidate a student’s score. Since test materials are secure, the SCDE has issued a directive that neither the schools

nor the District may share a recording with anyone other than appropriate staff members of the SCDE. Examinees should be made aware that monitoring and/or recording might occur.

6. Any suspected violation of security must be reported to the District's Office of Accountability Services, who may in turn report the suspected violation to the SCDE and the S.C. Law Enforcement Division which is required by S.C. law to investigate allegations of violations of mandatory test security.

Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying

Pursuant to the S.C. Safe School Climate Act, "harassment, intimidation, or bullying" means a gesture, an electronic communication, or a written, verbal, physical, or sexual act that is reasonably perceived to have the effect of (1) harming a student physically or emotionally or damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of personal harm or property damage or (2) insulting or demeaning a student or group of students causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school. In this context, "school" means in a classroom, on school premises, on a school bus or other school-related vehicle, at an official school bus stop, at a school-sponsored activity or event whether or not it is held on school premises, or at another program or function where the school is responsible for the child. Staff members may not engage in:

- Harassment, intimidation or bullying,
- Reprisal or retaliation against a person who reports an act of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, or
- Reprisal, retaliation, or false accusation against a victim, witness, or one with reliable information about an act of harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

An employee or volunteer who witnesses, or has reliable information that a student has been subject to harassment, intimidation, or bullying shall report the incident to the principal or the designated school contact person of the school that the victim attends or to the Executive Director for Student Affairs. Reports may be anonymous; however, formal disciplinary action must not be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report. The principal or the Executive Director for Student Affairs who receives the report is responsible for seeing that an investigation is promptly conducted and the incident appropriately resolved consistent with any other District policies or regulations that may apply.

Employees and volunteers who commit acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying or who engage in reprisal or retaliation shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including:

- in the case of staff members, dismissal from employment with the District and
- in the case of volunteers, dismissal from the volunteer program and/or denial of consideration for future employment with the District.

Information concerning harassment, intimidation, or bullying will be publicized through the District's Parent-Student Handbook. In addition, principals shall provide for the discussion of the District's harassment, intimidation, or bullying policy with students.

Drug-Free, Alcohol-Free, and Tobacco-Free Schools

Drug-free and Alcohol-free Schools

The District is committed to providing a drug-free and alcohol-free learning environment and workplace. Drug and alcohol use at school or in connection with school-sponsored activities on or off school grounds threatens the health and safety of our students and our employees and adversely affects the educational mission of the schools. The District is taking steps to address the problem of substance use that negatively affects every workplace. The District is concerned with the health and well-being of all employees. Behaviors related to substance use can endanger all employees, not just the substance users.

No employee will unlawfully manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess, be under the influence of, or use any drug or alcohol on or in the workplace, at school or at a school-sponsored activity. Any employee who violates the terms of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

"Workplace" includes any school building; any school premises; any school-owned vehicle, any county-owned vehicle, or any other school-approved vehicle used to transport students to and from school, school activities, or work sites. It also includes off-school property during any school-sponsored or school-approved activity, event, or function such as a field trip or athletic event where students are under the jurisdiction of the District.

"Drug" means any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, benzodiazepine, cocaine, marijuana, methadone, opiate, systemic opiate and narcotic, or any other controlled substance as defined by the policy.

The District holds all employees accountable in terms of substance use but also supports referrals for employees who have substance abuse problems. If an employee has a substance abuse problem and does not come forward and the employee then tests positive for drug or alcohol use, he/she is in violation of the policy, and the District reserves the right to terminate employment for violation of this work rule. Employees whose jobs are subject to special law or regulation may face additional requirements in terms of substance use. Other consequences that apply to all employees who violate this policy are described within this document.

The District recognizes drug dependency as a major health problem. It also recognizes drug abuse as a potential health, safety, and security problem. Employees needing help in dealing with such problems are encouraged to use services provided by the following, as appropriate:

Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse, the Employee Intervention Program (Department of Vocational Rehabilitation), and the State group health insurance plan.

Establishment of Ongoing Drug Awareness Program

The District will maintain an ongoing drug-free awareness program to inform employees about the following:

1. The dangers of drug abuse in the workplace;
2. The District's policy of maintaining a drug-free workplace;
3. Any available drug counseling, rehabilitation, and employee assistance programs; and
4. The penalties that may be imposed upon employees for drug abuse violations occurring in the workplace or off the property of the District while conducting District business.

Tobacco-free schools

The use of tobacco products is prohibited by Horry County Schools on its property and at the events, programs, and activities sponsored by the District, its departments, or its schools. In the event of a violation, appropriate action will be taken.

The use of tobacco products in any District building may result in a civil penalty of up to \$1,000 for each violation. Each day that a violation continues constitutes a separate violation. Those persons who cause a fine to be levied on the District will be required to reimburse the District, and employees may be subject to disciplinary action.

Grievances

The District encourages all employees to discuss their concerns or complaints associated with their employment informally with their supervisors. Often, the cause of a problem or concern is merely a misunderstanding among the individuals involved. Under normal circumstances, an employee should utilize the grievance procedure only after reasonable informal efforts have failed to produce a satisfactory result. If after reasonable and appropriate informal efforts have failed or for good reasons are inappropriate, an employee feels that a "formal" mechanism for raising his/her concern or problem is needed, he/she should follow the procedure below. Employees who utilize the grievance procedures have the right to do so with complete freedom from reprisal.

With respect to formal grievances, the District recognizes the need to provide an orderly means for the efficient and expeditious resolution of disputes concerning the application of any of the provisions of the District's policies, procedures, written agreements and/or unsafe or unhealthy working conditions as they affect the activity of employees. Ideally, employees should secure an equitable solution of grievances at the most immediate administrative level possible.

Definition of a Grievance

A grievance is a claim by an employee of a violation, misinterpretation, or misapplication of a provision of District policies, procedures or written agreement as they directly affect the employment or working conditions of the employee filing the grievance.

Exclusions

The District does not consider actions which are subject to the Teacher Employment and Dismissal Act, S.C. Code § 59-25-410 et seq; § 59-26-40 as revised; employment decisions implemented under the District's reduction-in-force policy; or classified employee terminations to be grievances under this procedure. District policies, procedures, or written agreements are established by the Superintendent pursuant to Board Governance Policies; therefore, a grievance as defined herein cannot be based on a claimed violation of a Board Governance Policy.

Grievance procedure

An employee who wishes to file a grievance must complete the prescribed grievance form (available from the Executive Director of Human Resources) and present it to his/her direct supervisor within 15 days following either the most recent event giving rise to the grievance or the time when the employee reasonably should have gained knowledge of its occurrence.

Additional grievance procedures can be found in the District's Policy Handbook.

Notice of Nondiscrimination

Horry County Schools adheres to a policy of nondiscrimination in employment and educational programs and activities and strives affirmatively to provide equal opportunities for all as required by State and Federal Laws. Any person having inquiries concerning any form of unlawful discrimination or harassment, or the district's compliance with the regulations related to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (sex discrimination), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (discrimination on the basis of disability), the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) of 1967, or Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended (racial or other discrimination), should consult the District's policies or contact the following district representatives:

District Contacts for Discrimination Complaints

Discrimination on the Basis of Sex, Race, Color, Religion, or National Origin	
Employees	Paul Hickman, Principal Specialist 335 Four Mile Road, P. O. Box 260005 Conway, SC 29528-6005 488-6733
Students	James Bradley, Executive Director of Student Affairs 335 Four Mile Road, P. O. Box 260005 Conway, SC 29528-6005 488-6771
Discrimination on the Basis of Disability or Handicapping Condition	
Employees and Students	Judy Plymale, Coordinator of Special Education 335 Four Mile Road, P. O. Box 260005 Conway, SC 29528-6005 488-6854

Title VI, Title IX, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act

The grievance procedures set forth above are to be used to process employee complaints based on alleged violations of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; and Titles I and II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 referred to as "civil rights grievances."

In the event that an employee files a grievance alleging violation of one of the above-referenced laws, the grievance shall be considered to be a grievance for purposes of these procedures.

With respect to alleged violations of Title VI, if the response of the District-level administrator does not resolve the grievance to the satisfaction of the employee, the grievant may appeal in writing to the District's Civil Rights Coordinator. With respect to alleged violations of Section 504 or the Americans with Disabilities Act, if the response of the District-level administrator does not resolve the grievance to the satisfaction of the employee, the grievant may appeal in writing to the District's Coordinator of Special Education. With respect to alleged violations of Title IX, if the response of the District-level administrator does not resolve the grievance to the satisfaction of the employee, the grievant may appeal in writing to the District's Title IX Coordinator.

If the grievant fails to appeal within 15 days of receipt of the written response from the District-level administrator, the right to appeal is waived. If an appeal is made to any of the above-referenced Coordinators, the Coordinator may conduct further investigation, if necessary. The Coordinator shall hold a hearing with the grievant within 15 days of receipt of the grievance, or within 15 days of completing any further investigation, if necessary. The Coordinator shall then render a decision on the matter in writing within 15 days after the hearing is conducted.

If the employee is not satisfied with the response of the Coordinator, the employee may appeal the decision to the Board. This appeal must be made in writing to the Superintendent within 15 days of the Coordinator's response to the grievance. Any such appeal will be handled as set forth above in the Grievance Policies.

Service Animal

Horry County Schools will comply with all state and federal laws, regulations and rules regarding the use of service animals by staff members with disabilities under appropriate circumstances. The policy applies to any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability. Use of service animals by a staff member with a disability is subject to procedures and requirements. Staff members must submit a request for the use of a service animal to the Executive Director

of Human Resources for processing. Additional guidelines, procedures and forms are available in the District's Policy Book.

Sexual Harassment of Employees

Sexual harassment of employees of the District is prohibited. All employees, including supervisory level employees and third parties associated with schools, must avoid any action or conduct which could be viewed as sexual harassment. Teachers and school administrators are expected to use judgment and common sense, which are important elements of a proper response to a particular allegation of sexual harassment or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature.

Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: (1) submission to such conduct is made either expressly or impliedly a condition of employment; (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for any employment decisions affecting the individual; or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with the employee's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Any employee who believes he/she has been subjected to sexual harassment is encouraged to file a complaint in accordance with the District's procedures. All allegations will be investigated promptly and confidentially. Employees who file a complaint of sexual harassment will not be subject to retaliation or reprisal in any form. An employee, including a supervisory level employee or a third party associated with the District, who is found to have engaged in sexual harassment or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature will be subject to appropriate action, up to and including termination of employment in the case of an employee, and all other appropriate steps will be taken to correct or rectify the situation.

The following procedures are intended to:

1. Discourage employees and third parties associated with schools from subjecting employees of the District to sexual harassment;
2. Promote a harassment-free work environment;
3. Effectively and appropriately address all sexual harassment found to have occurred or be occurring;
4. Establish on-going education and awareness of the problem of sexual harassment; and
5. Provide information about how to report allegations of sexual harassment.

Types of behavior which constitute sexual harassment

Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature which:

1. Is made an employment condition, so that submission to such conduct is a term or condition of employment;
2. Has an employment consequence, so that submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for employment decisions affecting an individual employee; or
3. Is an offensive job interference, so that such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an employee's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to: verbal harassment, including epithets, sexually offensive comments or slurs; physical harassment; physical interference with movement or work; or visual harassment, such as sexually offensive cartoons, drawings, or posters. Sexual harassment is prohibited against members of the same sex, as well as against members of the opposite sex.

Behavior prohibited of administrators/supervisors

1. No administrator or supervisor may condition any offer of employment, employee benefit, or continued employment on an employee's acquiescence to any of the sexual behavior defined above.
2. No administrator or supervisor may retaliate against any employee because that employee has opposed a practice prohibited by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the South Carolina Human Affairs Law, or has filed a complaint, testified, assisted, or participated in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing conducted by an authorized agency.
3. No administrator or supervisor shall cause or tolerate the creation of a sexually hostile or offensive work environment by any subordinate employee or third party associated with schools who engages in sexual harassment.
4. No administrator or supervisor shall destroy evidence relevant to an investigation of sexual harassment.

Behavior prohibited of all employees

1. No administrator, supervisor, or any other employee of this District and/or third party associated with schools shall create a sexually hostile or offensive work environment for any employee by engaging in any sexual harassment.
2. No administrator, supervisor, or any other employee of this District and/or third party associated with schools shall assist any individual in doing any act which constitutes sexual harassment against any employee.

Preventive action

Periodically, the District shall ensure that:

1. The District policy on sexual harassment of employees and these procedures are fully referenced in the *Personnel Handbook* and employees are made aware of the website for accessing the *Personnel Handbook*. The policy and procedures shall also be available in Human Resources, from which a copy shall be made available, if requested.
2. All employees are informed about the nature of sexual harassment, the procedures for registering a complaint, and the possible redress which is available.
3. Designated administrators and designated sexual harassment contact persons are informed of the District's sexual harassment procedures and understand how to implement them. For example, they should be made aware of the kinds of acts that constitute sexual harassment, the District's commitment to eliminating and avoiding sexual harassment in the schools, the penalties for engaging in harassment, the procedures for reporting incidents of sexual harassment, and the procedures for conducting a sexual harassment investigation.
4. The District Office makes available information from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the South Carolina Human Affairs Commission about filing claims of sexual harassment with these entities.

Reporting and response procedures

1. Any employee who feels that he or she has been the object of sexual harassment is encouraged to file a complaint with his or her immediate supervisor or principal except for situations covered in item "2" immediately below. Complaint forms which may be used to file a complaint are available in the Office of Policy and Legal Issues.
2. Under no circumstances shall an employee be required to first report allegations of harassment to his or her immediate supervisor if that person is the individual who is accused of the harassment. In such cases, the employee shall file the complaint with the District Title IX Coordinator.
3. Administrators/supervisors shall initiate an investigation of any incident of alleged sexual harassment reported to them or observed by them. The District shall be responsible for ensuring that reasonable efforts are made to prevent public disclosure of the names of all parties involved in the sexual harassment allegation, except to the extent necessary to carry out an investigation and comply with statutory obligations.

4. Administrators/supervisors shall report the general results of any investigation of sexual harassment, including corrective or disciplinary action taken, to the Title IX Coordinator and/or Superintendent. The employee who brought the sexual harassment allegation shall be informed that appropriate actions were taken and shall be advised as to how to report any subsequent problems.
5. If an employee is determined to have sexually harassed another employee, the administrator/supervisor shall take whatever disciplinary action he/she determines is warranted, up to and including a recommendation of termination of employment.
6. Administrators/supervisors shall follow up periodically on any incident of sexual harassment they were involved in investigating to determine whether the employee has been subjected to any further sexual harassment since the corrective action was taken.
7. No administrator/supervisor shall retaliate in any way against an employee who has provided information as a witness to or victim of an incident of sexual harassment.

Additional obligations of employees

1. Employees shall report to their immediate supervisor any conduct on the part of non-employees, such as sales representatives or service vendors, which is believed to constitute sexual harassment.
2. Employees shall cooperate with and maintain the confidentiality of any investigation of alleged acts of sexual harassment conducted by the District or by an appropriate state or federal agency. Failure to do so could result in disciplinary action against the individual who failed to cooperate or who violated the confidentiality of the matter.
3. No employee shall take any action to discourage any other employee from reporting alleged sexual harassment. However, any person who intentionally provides false information in connection with a report or investigation of sexual harassment may be subject to disciplinary action.
4. No employee shall retaliate in any way against another employee who has provided information regarding an incident of sexual harassment.

Racial Harassment

Racial harassment is incompatible with equal opportunity and will not be tolerated in the District. It is the responsibility of employees and students in the District to strive to create an environment free of racial harassment.

Employees and students are encouraged to express their opinions and feelings about any problem or complaint of racial harassment freely, responsibly, and in an orderly way. Any act by a District employee, agent, or a student of reprisal, interference, restraint, penalty, discrimination, coercion, or harassment against any person responsibly complaining of harassment under this policy interferes with free expression and is a violation of this policy.

Racial harassment consists of racially motivated conduct by an employee or student toward any employee or student. Examples of racially motivated conduct include, but are not limited to, (1) discrimination on the basis of race in the terms, conditions, working environment, or privileges of employment; (2) racially motivated conduct directed toward a specific person or persons which involves the threat or use of force; or (3) racially motivated actions undertaken with reckless disregard of the likely effect of inflicting severe mental or emotional distress.

Any employee or student who believes he/she has been subjected to racial harassment is encouraged to file a complaint in accordance with the District's procedures. All allegations will be investigated promptly and confidentially. Employees or students who file a complaint of racial harassment will not be subject to retaliation or reprisal in any form. Any employee who is found to have engaged in racial harassment will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. Any student who is found to have engaged in racial harassment will be subject to the provisions of the student behavior code.

Staff Health

Physical and mental health

If the District has questions or concerns regarding the physical or mental capability of an employee, the District may require an appropriate examination.

Communicable diseases

The District defines a chronic communicable disease as a persistent or recurring infection that may be transmitted to a susceptible person by contact with an infected individual. The National Centers for Disease Control will be the definitive authority on the identification and transmission of chronic communicable diseases.

The District will attempt to protect the health of members of the community by implementing a program of education, prevention, and reporting with respect to chronic communicable diseases in cooperation with State and local public health agencies.

The District will attempt to provide a safe and secure environment for students and employees. Under certain circumstances, the presence of communicable diseases in the school environment may pose a threat to the health and safety of students and employees. In an effort to maintain a balance between the need to educate all eligible students, to protect

student and employee rights, and to control communicable diseases, decisions regarding the employment status of employees with communicable diseases shall be made on a case-by-case basis.

Concerns about communicable diseases should be addressed to the school nurse, who will consult with the Director of Health and Safety Services as needed.

Blood borne pathogens

The District has an exposure-control plan for employees. The plan includes appropriate training for employees as well as universal precautions that employees must follow when dealing with blood and other bodily fluids. A copy of the plan is on file in the District's Department of Health and Safety Services and in the nurse's office of each school.

Communicable diseases – employees

Employees with communicable diseases, including AIDS or HIV infection shall be permitted to work in schools in accordance with these procedures.

Except where otherwise provided by law, employees must inform their principal/department head or the Superintendent when they are suffering from a communicable disease. The Superintendent shall ensure that a committee consisting of the employee's supervisor, the employee's personal physician, appropriate public health professionals, and appropriate school District personnel is formed to monitor and/or evaluate the employee's health status.

In cases involving AIDS or HIV infection, the committee periodically will monitor the health status of the employee. Evaluation of the employee's potential for transmitting the HIV should be made by the health professionals evaluating the employee's status. Information shared during the monitoring process is strictly confidential.

With respect to other reported communicable diseases, the committee shall review each case individually to determine the means of transmittal, how long the employee will be infectious, to what degree the employee's presence poses a risk to other staff and to students, and the probability of transmittal.

Generally, employees with AIDS/HIV infection should be permitted to attend school and school activities without restriction, provided their health status allows. If it is determined, based on sound, medical evidence and in accordance with these procedures that any employee with any communicable disease poses a significant risk to the health and safety of other persons while the employee is in his or her current position, and the risk cannot be eliminated by any reasonable measure, including placement in alternative employment, attendance by the employee may be prohibited or restricted. If the employee's disease constitutes a disability, and the employee is otherwise qualified to perform his or her job, a specific determination will be made as to whether reasonable accommodation can be made. Any prohibition or restriction on attendance will continue, subject to periodic reevaluation, unless and until the risk to others

has been abated. The District reserves the right to require a satisfactory certificate from one or more licensed physicians that the employee's attendance is no longer a risk to others.

Information regarding the medical condition of employees is confidential and should be disseminated strictly on a need-to-know basis. Accordingly, information should be provided only to those who need the information to protect the health and safety of the employee, students and staff and only to the extent necessary to accomplish that end. All personnel informed of the condition of the employee are to be instructed that this information is to be held in the strictest confidence.

To prevent the spread of communicable disease, DHEC or the Centers for Disease Control guidelines for necessary health and safety precautions, including handling of blood and bodily fluids, shall be distributed by the administration from time to time and should be followed by all school employees.

First Aid and Emergency Care

The school nurse or principal's designee(s) will be responsible for providing first aid or emergency care in case of injury to, or sudden illness of, a student or staff member.

Principals or their designees must see that an Emergency Information Card is completed and signed on each student at the time of registration. In extreme emergencies, the principal may make arrangements for the immediate hospitalization of injured or ill students, contacting the parent or guardian in advance if at all possible.

At each school, written procedures for the proper handling of medical emergencies shall be disseminated to staff members. A list of school personnel trained in first aid shall be kept in the main office of each building.

Professional and Support Staff Leaves and Absences

The continuous presence of employees promotes excellence in the instructional program. Therefore, the District expects employees to come to work every scheduled workday. The District recognizes, however, that certain absences are unavoidable. At such times, employees should take leave in accordance with the procedures established by the administration, which shall be consistent with state and federal law. An employee's failure to comply with the leave procedures established by the administration may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Any employee who will be absent from work must notify their supervisor, principal or his/her designee as early as possible so an approved substitute may be secured, if needed. They must also record their absence in ***SmartFind Express***. In addition, employees are required to submit an employee leave request form for approval.

Assignments, Reassignments, and Transfer Requests

In order to ensure the highest quality of instruction, the Superintendent is responsible for the placement of employees within the District. It is the policy of the District to assign, reassign or transfer personnel to positions based on the needs of the instructional program and the District, the qualifications of staff members, and, when possible, the expressed preferences of personnel. The Superintendent may delegate the placement process to other administrators; however, he/she ultimately retains responsibility for staff assignments, reassignments, and transfers since personnel are employed by the District and not by a particular school or department. Placement of personnel at the school level is within the discretion of the principal as long as placement is consistent with job descriptions and the qualifications of personnel, as long as salary status is not changed without authorization from the District, and as long as appropriate District staff member is notified of the changes.

Reassignment

If, in the opinion of the Superintendent, reassignment would be in the best interest of the District, the following procedure will be used.

1. The Superintendent or his/her designee will discuss the need for the reassignment with the employee's current principal (if in a school) or with the District-level department head and with the principal of the school or head of the District-level department to which reassignment is being contemplated.
2. The Superintendent or his/her designee will then discuss with the employee to be reassigned the reasons why the reassignment is being considered. Once the Superintendent determines that the reassignment will go forward, the employee will be notified in writing. Refusal by the employee to comply with the reassignment may be grounds for dismissal.
3. Reassignments are not grievable provided steps 1 and 2 above have been followed.

Transfer requests

Procedures for staff transfers are established by Human Resources. The procedures, which are subject to change at the discretion of Human Resources, are available through the District's "FOR STAFF" webpage and also from Human Resources. Personnel who qualify may request a transfer at designated times. Decisions concerning transfer requests are not grievable.

Personnel Files

The District will maintain a personnel file on each employee that includes all records and documents collected, established, and maintained by Human Resources concerning the

employee. Information included in an employee's personnel file may include, but is not limited to, the following records:

Health and medical records are currently filed separately to protect the privacy of employees.

The District will maintain the confidentiality of personnel files and will provide access to the files only as necessary and appropriate. Each employee has the right to review the contents of his/her personnel file. The employee must contact Human Resources in advance for an appointment to review his/her file. An employee does not have the right, however, to review personal references and recommendations provided to the District on a confidential basis.

Benefits Services and Account Managers

Eligible employees at Horry County Schools are offered an extensive benefit package. This includes retirement, health, dental, vision, life, disability, deferred compensation, flexible spending, and long term care plans. Certain supplemental insurance premiums may also be deducted, after tax, from an employee's pay. Working with the state of South Carolina and independent agencies, Horry County Schools offers these programs to provide comprehensive coverage to help employees meet their personal health and welfare needs. Outlines of available benefit options can be found at

http://www.horrycountyschools.net/departments/human_resources/employees/employee_benefits/.

Salaries

The salary of each professional employee is based on his/her certification (if applicable), experience, and the District salary schedule. The salary of each classified employee is based on his/her education, previous work experience, and the District salary schedule.

Retirement

Employees can retire through the SCRS with full benefits at age 65 or after 28 years of service or with reduced benefits at age 60. An employee with at least 25 years of service may also choose early retirement at age 55. An employee considering early retirement should consult with the Employee Benefits Department or the S.C. Retirement system to understand the implications of early retirement. Effective July 1, 2005, TERI participants that enter TERI and all returning retirees will have a retirement contribution deducted from their pay.

Sick Leave

Full-time employees earn 1.25 days of sick leave per month of employment. Sick leave can accumulate up to a maximum of 150 days, calculated on June 30 of each fiscal year. Sick leave

days may be used only for illness and/or temporary disability such that work is not practical, illness in the immediate family, or death in the immediate family (maximum of ten days per period of bereavement). Up to 2 days (up to 4 days, if accumulated) can be used annually for personal leave.

Sick Leave Bank

In addition to sick leave, Horry County Schools offers eligible employees the opportunity to become a member of the Sick Leave Bank. A member that has a catastrophic or prolonged illness or medical incident so severe that absences exceed 30 days (not including elective surgery and normal pregnancy and delivery) may apply for coverage from the bank. This coverage will only come into effect after all of the employee's leave is exhausted and after review by the SLB Board is deemed to meet the guidelines of the bank. For additional information, please review information at

http://www.horrycountyschools.net/departments/human_resources/employees/employee_benefits/sick_leave_bank/.

FMLA

The District will provide leave to eligible employees consistent with the FMLA. Eligible employees are entitled to up to 12 workweeks of unpaid family and medical leave in any 12 month period. The District will continue to pay the District's share of the employee's health benefits during the leave. In addition, the District will restore the employee to the same or a similar position after the termination of the leave in accordance with District policy.

To better serve employees, Benefit Account Managers have been assigned to assist each location. Current account managers can be found on the District web site on the Benefits page.

All newly hired employees must complete the new hire orientation class.

Important:

New employees must complete insurance paperwork within 31 days of their initial hire date.

Failure to do so will result in an inability to obtain guaranteed coverage. Also, a change in coverage must be made within 31 days of the date of the event enabling a change, such as marriage, birth of a baby, divorce, etc.

Vehicle Liability Policy

The District has a vehicle liability policy which provides excess coverage for employees and volunteers while they are operating a non-District vehicle within the scope of their official duties with the District. The excess coverage is provided with the employee's or volunteer's personal liability coverage being primary. The District's policy would respond to excess liability

only after the employee's or volunteer's coverage is exhausted. Primary coverage is provided for District-owned vehicle and vehicles on a long-term lease to the District. This policy does not provide coverage for job-related injuries to paid employees who are covered under workers' compensation.

Job Retention Services

In cooperation with the S.C. Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, a job retention service has been established to offer District employees and their family professional help with personal problems such as drug addiction, alcoholism, financial problems, marital conflict, and emotional stress. The assistance is provided free of charge.

If an employee or a member of an employee's family desire to use any of the services listed above, he/she should call the S.C. Vocational Rehabilitation, 248-2235. An appointment will be scheduled, usually within 24 hours. All conversations and records will be kept confidential.

Payroll and Work

Direct Deposit

Through direct deposit an employee has his/her paycheck deposited directly into a checking or savings account. This is a free service provided by the District. During the New Hire Orientation class, a new employee completes the required form. Forms for changes are available at:

http://www.horrycountyschools.net/departments/payroll/payroll_documents/

Instead of receiving a paycheck, such employees will have online access to their pay stub, which will itemize withholdings and deductions. Visit the self-service page at the address listed above for more information.

Pay Days

Employees will be paid on or about the 15th and the last working day of each month. Insurance premiums and tax-sheltered annuities will be deducted from each paycheck. Direct deposit vouchers can be accessed online at <http://odi.horrycountyschools.net>. Checks will be mailed one day prior to the scheduled pay date.

Deductions

Deductions may include retirement, social security, Medicare tax, state and federal withholding taxes, levies, garnishments, and voluntary deductions or other money owed to the district.

Retirement

Membership in the S.C. Retirement Systems (“SCRS”) or an optional retirement plan is required for all personnel with the exception of employees who hold a temporary position. Temporary employees may choose to join the SCRS.

Social Security

There will be a deduction for social security on all salaries up to an amount set annually by social security. There is no wage based limit for Medicare tax. Salaries for social security deductions are based on the calendar year rather than the school year.

State and Federal Withholding Taxes

Each staff member must file an “Employee’s Withholding Allowance Certificate” (“W-4”) with the Payroll Office. Employees should review their exemptions and update them as changes occur by submitting a new W-4 form to Payroll. The IRS link for current W-4 forms is <http://www.irs.gov/pub.irs-pd/fw4.pdf>.

Retirement

Membership in the S.C. Retirement Systems (“SCRS”) or an optional retirement plan is required for all personnel with the exception of employees who hold a temporary position. Temporary employees may choose to join the SCRS. There will be a deduction of 6.50% for retirement from all salaries paid to an employee.

Employees can retire through the SCRS with full benefits at age 65 or after 28 years of service or with reduced benefits at age 60. An employee with at least 25 years of service may also choose early retirement at age 55. An employee considering early retirement should consult with the Employee Benefits Department or the S.C. Retirement System to understand the implications of early retirement. Effective July 1, 2005, TERI participants that enter TERI and all returning retirees will have a 6.50% retirement contribution deducted from their pay.

Voluntary Deductions

Except for deductions for absences not covered by paid leave or those required by law, voluntary deductions from salary are subject to District approval and are voluntary on the part of the individual employee. For all voluntary deductions, the employee will complete a form authorizing the deduction.

Voluntary deductions such as the following are available:

- premiums for group insurance programs administered for employees by the District
- income deferred programs
- United Way contributions
- SHS Scholarship
- Uniforms
- other plans approved by the District administration

Teacher Evaluation and Contract Status

Teacher Evaluation Model – State Standards for Professional Teaching

The goal of Horry County Schools is for all teachers to be proficient in the classroom. Therefore, the District uses a comprehensive system for evaluating professional teachers that includes ADEPT Performance Standards. Teacher Performance Standards are designed to promote excellence in teaching by focusing on student achievement results.

The Teacher Evaluation Model is based on effective research and best practices. The model provides greater assurance that our schools are staffed with caring and competent professionals who possess the knowledge and skills necessary to address the needs of all students. The standards and procedures covered in the Teacher Evaluation Model enhance the teaching profession by defining and establishing expectations of what teachers should know and be able to do in order to meet the challenges of the classroom.

Teacher Evaluation Model – Contract Status

The Teacher Evaluation Model provides a framework for teacher preparation. Student teachers must be evaluated and assisted with a locally designed process, which meets South Carolina regulations. Prospective teachers who successfully complete their education program and receive state certification become eligible for employment at the Induction contract level.

The contract level of a teacher must be indicated on the teacher contract each year. Contract levels include: (ADEPT Status)

- **Induction**
- **Annual**
 - (Formal Year 1)
 - (Formal Year 2)
 - (GBE) – have an initial certificate
- **Continuing**
 - (GBE) – have a professional certificate
 - (Formal)
 - (with conditions)

The most typical contract sequence for traditionally prepared teachers is:

- Year 1 Induction Contract
- Year 2 – Annual, and
- Year 3 – Continuing Contract
- Teachers whose contracts are non-renewed are eligible for employment in another school district.

Induction Contract

Induction Contracts are offered to novice teachers for one year. Teachers are provided comprehensive guidance and support through the first year by an assistance team, which includes at a minimum, a mentor teacher and a building level administrator. If a teacher is successful as defined by the district, then the teacher is recommended for an Annual Contract.

If the teacher is unsuccessful as defined by the district, then two options are available. The teacher may not be rehired or the teacher may continue employment on an Annual Contract.

Annual Contract Types

Annual Contract types consist of Annual (Formal Evaluation Year 1), Annual (Formal Evaluation Year 2), Annual (GBE – Goals Based Evaluation). Teachers may remain on an Annual Contract for up to four years. However, after an unsuccessful formal evaluation at the Annual (formal year 2) contract level, state sanctions are imposed. In these instances, teachers may not teach for a minimum of two years and must complete a state-approved remediation plan in order to become eligible to re-enter the profession.

Annual Contract (Formal Evaluation Year 1)

An Annual Contract (Formal Evaluation Year 1) is offered to second-year teachers, who were successful in their first year of teaching (Induction). An Annual contract (Formal Evaluation Year 1) is also offered to out-of-state teachers during their first year of teaching in Horry County Schools. A teacher, who is successful at this level as defined by the District, may move to Continuing Contract status, provided that he/she has met all state requirements for professional certification.

Annual Contract (Formal Evaluation Year2)

An Annual Contract (Formal Evaluation Year 2) is assigned to teachers after an unsuccessful Annual Formal Evaluation Year 1.

Annual Contract (GBE)

An Annual Goals Based Evaluation (GBE) Contract is assigned to individuals (e.g., PACE, CATE, International teachers), following a successful Annual (Formal Evaluation 1 or Annual Formal Evaluation 2) year, who are not yet eligible for a professional teaching certificate.

Continuing Contract

Continuing Contracts are offered to teachers who have earned an evaluation rating of competent and who have met all eligibility requirements for a professional teaching certificate. Continuing contract teachers are evaluated with Goals Based Evaluation (GBE) annually.

Continuing Contract (GBE)

Goals-based evaluations (GBE) at the annual and continuing contract have two distinctions:

Research and Development GBE (R-D GBE) is the ADEPT status of personnel that are engaged in an established professional growth and development plan.

Competency-Building GBE (C-B GBE) is for personnel that have documented areas identified as needing improvement. An individual assistance plan (IAP) is developed to address areas of concern (**C-B GBE**).

Continuing Contract (Formal)

Personnel that are issued a continuing contract may be evaluated due to a change in job, (i.e., classroom teacher to guidance counselor) or who have come to Horry County Schools from another South Carolina district and were previously employed on a continuing contract, or who have been out of teaching for several years and are now returning to teaching.

Continuing Contract with Conditions

If a Continuing Contract teacher is identified as having deficiencies, as defined by the district, he/she may be placed on a Continuing with Conditions contract. When a teacher is placed on a Continuing with Conditions Contract, the teacher must participate in Formal Evaluation (ADEPT). The Formal Evaluation process includes the development of an Individualized Assistance Plan (IAP) that meets South Carolina regulations. All Continuing Contract teachers who are being recommended for Formal Evaluation must be notified in writing on or before April 15, 2012. The written notice must state the basis for the decision to place the teacher on Formal Evaluation.

Certification of Professional Personnel

Applications for S.C. Teaching Credential: It is the personal responsibility of each teacher, or other professional staff member who is required to hold a certificate, to apply for his/her certificate, making sure they supply all information as required by the S.C. Department of Education ("SCDE"). A staff member can expedite the certification process if he/she submits the documents he/she obtains in one complete package.

Renewal of Professional Certificates

The following certificate renewal guidelines apply to any person who holds a South Carolina educator's certificate. An educator's professional certificate is valid for five (5) years and expires on June 30 of the expiration year. In order to be eligible for certificate renewal, the educator must earn a minimum of 120 renewal credits, as described in the renewal credit matrix, during the five-year validity period of the certificate.

Obtaining Renewal Credits

Educators are responsible for ensuring that all renewal options and activities meet the following guidelines.

1. An individual who is employed in a position that requires South Carolina educator certification and is employed in a South Carolina public school district must earn renewal credits through professional development activities that:
 - a. directly relate to the educator's professional growth and development plan;
 - b. support the goals of the employing public school district, and;
 - c. promote student achievement, as required by State Board of Education Regulation 43-205.1, Assisting, Developing, and Evaluating Professional Teacher (ADEPT), and Regulation 43-165.1, Program for Assisting, Developing, and Evaluating Principal Performance (ADEPP).
2. All administrators employed in a South Carolina public school district must earn a minimum of 120 renewal credits, as described in the renewal credit matrix, during the five-year validity period of the certificate. These credits are to include a minimum of twenty (20) renewal credits during each five-year validity period in professional development activities that are designed to enhance their skills in supporting and encouraging teachers as professionals.
3. An educator who is employed at a public educational entity that has been approved as a Renewal Credit Plan agency by the Office of Teacher Certification, Division of Teacher Quality, must earn renewal credits through professional development activities that relate to the educator's current area(s) of certification or a formal program of study in a certification area in which the educator is officially enrolled, or the goals of the educator's employing entity.

4. An educator who is *not* employed in a position that requires South Carolina educator certification, but who wishes to maintain a current certificate, must earn renewal credits through professional development coursework outlined in Option 1 and Option 2 of the Renewal Credit Matrix that directly relates to the educator's current area(s) of certification, or a formal program of study in a certification area in which the educator is officially enrolled.
5. Any educator, included in 1, 3, or 4 listed above, who has not earned a Master's degree must earn sixty renewal credits in graduate-level coursework to renew the current certificate. Educators who hold a Career and Technology Education Work-Based Certification only are not required to fulfill the graduate-level coursework requirement.

Valid Period of Teaching Credential

A teacher who becomes eligible for an initial credential or for advancement to an improved class of credential must make application for the initial credential or the new advanced credential. Forms are available in Human Resources.

If a new teacher becomes eligible for initial certification or a certified teacher becomes eligible for an improved class of credential between November 1 and April 30, the newer credential will be valid from:

1. the date upon which the teacher completed requirements for the initial teaching credential or the higher class credential provided the application is filed in the Office of Licensure/Recertification within 45 calendar days after the date on which the teacher completed requirements, or
2. the date of receipt of the completed application if such date is later than 45 calendar days beyond the date on which the teacher completed existing requirements.

If a new teacher becomes eligible for initial certification or a certified teacher becomes eligible for an improved class of credential between May 1 and November 1, the new credential will be valid from:

1. July 1 of the calendar year in which the teacher completed existing requirements provided the application is filed in the Office of Licensure/Recertification by November 1, or
2. the date of receipt of completed application if such date is later than November 1.

Contracts for Professional Staff

Teachers assigned to regular positions will be given a contract if employment period for fiscal year will be greater than 151 days. This will be for the length of the regular teacher year (190

teaching days plus in-service days) or for a longer period of time provided the term of contract does not violate S.C. statutes. Contracts are considered valid upon approval by the Board.

A staff member hired under contract for a period that is longer than the regular teacher year will be paid pro rata for the additional period according to his/her position on the District's salary schedule.

The Superintendent will give written notice of Board Approved contract renewal to appropriate certificated personnel on or before April 15 of each year. Certificated personnel receiving such notice must give written acceptance to the District on or before April 15. Failure on the part of a certificated staff member to give such notice will constitute rejection of the contract.

Other professional employees hired under a contract are paid according to his/her position on the District's salary schedule.

Teacher Employment under Letter of Agreement

Teachers who are eligible for an induction or an annual contract but who are hired on a date that would cause their period of employment to be less than 152 days during the school year are employed under a letter of agreement. Teachers under a letter of agreement are not guaranteed a contract for the following school year.

Teachers employed under a letter of agreement do not fall under ADEPT. However, districts must ensure that these teachers receive appropriate assistance and supervision throughout the school year.

The employment and dismissal provisions of Article 3, Chapter 19 and Article 5, Chapter 25, of Title 59 of the 1976 Code of Laws do not apply to teachers employed under a letter of agreement.

Evaluation of Classified Staff

Supervisors are expected to evaluate the performance of classified employees at least annually in an effort to improve the quality of work performance. The employee's principal, director, immediate supervisor, or designee has the responsibility for evaluating employees under his/her supervision. Supervisors will complete the evaluations on District-approved forms, and the evaluation report will be discussed with the employee. The employee will receive a signed copy of the evaluation report.

If an employee is assigned a rating of needs improvement on their performance expectations, a performance improvement plan will be developed that includes clear steps and performance targets the employee must achieve in order to continue employment.

Resignation of Staff

Teachers and Certain Administrative Staff

The term “teacher” as used herein shall include all personnel required by the nature of their position to be certificated by the S.C. Board of Education.

When any teacher has entered into any signed contract or written agreement to teach in any public school in S.C., such teacher shall not break or seek to terminate such contract except for good cause, and then only after giving written notice to the Superintendent and receiving written notice from the Superintendent that the resignation has been accepted. The Superintendent has the authority to accept and to approve or reject resignations on behalf of the board after consultation with the employee’s supervisor. The Superintendent shall provide the Board with a list of resignations that he/she has accepted.

Any teacher who fails to comply with the provisions of his/her contract without the written consent of the board shall be deemed guilty of unprofessional conduct. A breach of contract resulting from entering into an employment contract with another school board within S.C. without the consent of the Horry County Board of Education make void any subsequent contract with any other school district in S.C. for the same employment period. Upon the formal complaint of the Horry County Board of Education, substantiated by conclusive evidence, the S.C. Board of Education shall revoke or suspend the teacher’s certificate for a period not to exceed one calendar year. State education agencies in other states with reciprocal certification agreements shall be notified of the revocation of the certificate.

Separation of Professional Personnel

It is the policy of the Board to terminate the employment of staff members only for good cause and by a fair and just process.

Grounds for Dismissal

It is the responsibility of the school administration to operate District schools in a manner that will maintain a broad community confidence in and support of the schools. In the absence of such support, the District cannot maintain a strong, effective educational program. Therefore, it is the policy of the Superintendent to recommend to the Board the removal from employment of any teacher (or administrator) who shall fail, or who may be incompetent, to give instruction (or provide appropriate administration of a school or a program) in accordance with the directions of the Superintendent, or who shall otherwise manifest an evident unfitness for teaching (or administration) as determined by the Superintendent. Evident unfitness for teaching or administration is manifested by conduct including, but not limited to, the following: persistent neglect of duty; willful violation of the policies, rules, regulations, or procedures of

the District; drunkenness, conviction of a violation of the law of S.C. or the United States; gross immorality; dishonesty; and/or the illegal use, sale, or possession of drugs or narcotics. In addition, following the end of the second month from the date of employment, the District may suspend a staff member without pay until evidence of his/her certification has been received by the District. However, if the employee's certificate is not received within 20 working days, the employment relationship may be terminated. Any action taken under this policy will be implemented pursuant to the provisions of the Code of Laws of S.C., 1976, as amended.

Reporting Terminations and Resignations

The Superintendent will report to the S.C. Board of Education and the S.C. Superintendent of Education, the name and certificate number of any certified educator who is dismissed, resigns, or is otherwise separated from employment with the District based on allegations of misconduct including, but not limited to, misconduct involving drugs, sexual misconduct, the commission of a crime, immorality, moral turpitude, or dishonesty, that is reasonably believed by the Superintendent to constitute grounds for revocation or suspension of the certificate issued to the educator by the S.C. Board of Education. This report is required notwithstanding any termination agreement to the contrary that the Board or Superintendent may enter into with the educator. The reasons for the educator's termination of employment with the District shall also be provided along with all evidence in the possession of the district relating to the termination.

Administrative Leave

Definition

Administrative leave is a general term for temporary removal from a job assignment. The district may place an employee on administrative leave when allegations of misconduct have been made against them. The district may remove the employee from the situation while investigating the allegations. When the allegations are inflammatory or become public knowledge, administrative leave can also be beneficial for the employee. An employee on administrative leave may continue to receive pay and benefits during the leave.

The district may also place an employee on administrative leave pending the resolution of a criminal case, even when the case is not directly school related, such as a DWI charge.

Placing an employee on administrative leave for investigative purposes is not a disciplinary action.

Procedures

2. When an administrator becomes aware of allegations of misconduct of an employee under his/her supervision, the administrator will contact either the Executive Director of Human Resources or the Chief Financial and Human Resources Officer to discuss the concerns.
3. Once the concerns are reviewed a decision will be made as to whether the employee will need to be placed on administrative leave.
4. Only the Chief Financial and Human Resources Officer or the Superintendent can place an employee on administrative leave.
5. Employees placed on administrative leave will be notified of their status and conditions of the administrative leave.
6. Once placed on administrative leave the employee will remain accessible during normal work hours.
7. The employee will remain on administrative leave until the investigation has been completed and has been notified of a change in his/her work status.

Time Schedules – Teachers

The daily time schedules for teachers and other school-based staff members shall assure that appropriate personnel are on duty in advance of the time students arrive at school and remain until after the students depart. Teachers and other employees are expected to remain at the school during the entire workday except when they are away from the school on school business or in case of emergencies.

Dress Code

As representatives of the District, we believe first impressions are significant in our relationships with customers. Therefore, good grooming and appropriate dress are important in conveying the importance of our business. All employees are to maintain high standards of personal appearance and hygiene and present a neat, businesslike appearance at all times during working hours.

Unacceptable Attire

Attire considered unacceptable includes:

- Athletic footwear (clean, solid color, walking-type shoes are acceptable; running shoes are not acceptable)
- Shorts of any kind (except for those who work outdoors in hot weather)
- Jeans of any color
- Sweatshirts
- T-shirts
- Wind pants or sweat pants

- Bib overalls
- Leggings
- Immodest clothing (such as spandex, spaghetti straps, midriff tops, excessively short skirts, revealing garments such as low-cut tops, pants worn too low on hips, tops or dresses with thin straps, clothing that reveals underwear, split skirts or dresses with splits more than 2" above the knee)
- Facial piercing such as nose, eyebrow, lip, cheek, or tongue
- Visible tattoos

General Guidelines

- Men in professional positions are strongly encouraged to wear ties during the school year unless their duties make ties a work hazard.
- Principals may occasionally make exceptions to wearing jeans, athletic footwear, sweatshirts, and/or T-shirt for special circumstances such as field trips to Playcard or similar outdoor trips, teacher workdays, and special school events. Staff development days, Fridays and summer work hours are not exceptions and do not constitute a "special occasion". All exceptions must receive prior approval from the principal or district-level supervisor.
- There is a professional and appropriate dress for every position. Everyone is expected to be clean and neatly groomed and dressed. Men's shirts should be tucked in at all times.
- Clothing should be neat and clean. Faded or wrinkled clothing does not reflect a professional, business-like appearance.
- All personnel should wear appropriate undergarments at all times.
- When in doubt about a garment, decide if you would wear it in a business setting. However, if your work for a particular day includes primarily manual labor, dress accordingly.
- To the maximum extent reasonable, physical education teachers may wear athletic clothing only when directly instructing physical education classes.
- School cafeteria employees should dress in uniforms and skid-resistant, closed-toe shoes.
- School nurses will wear white lab coats or vests over their professional clothes.
- Occupational and physical therapists may wear uniforms as appropriate.
- Maintenance and custodial staff guidelines have been determined by their supervisor.