Fannin County School System
Personnel Handbook
2019-2020

Revised July 11, 2019
A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

July 2019

Welcome to the Fannin County School System and to the 2019-2020 school year! This handbook contains general guidelines for the day-to-day operations of our school district. All personnel should review this information, as it has been revised for the current school year.

You are a part of a professional family that is dedicated to helping students succeed. Your job serves an essential function for our school community, and our collective work helps students master the curriculum, achieve goals, and move forward in life. As a public school system, we depend on the support of all stakeholders – parents, community, government, businesses, and higher education – to meet the needs of all of our students.

Please keep these guidelines available for future reference, and feel free to seek clarification from your administrative team at any time. By all of us working together to make our school district run smoothly, higher student achievement will occur.

If I may be of service to you in any way, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Michael Gwatney, Ed.D.
Superintendent

It is the policy of Fannin County School System to not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, creed or disability in admission to its programs, services, and activities in access to them, in treatment of individuals or in any aspect of their operations to also include but not be limited to additions, modifications, or alterations to the physical plan of any school facility.
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Mr. Lewis DeWeese, Chair
Mr. Chad Galloway, Vice-Chair
Mr. Bobby Bearden
Mr. Terry Bramlett
Mr. Mike Cole
# DISTRICT LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES

**Superintendent**  
*Dr. Michael Gwatney*

**Assistant Superintendent**  
*Personnel & Administration*  
*Mrs. Robert Enley*
- Director of personnel/human resources
- Professional standards/ethics coordinator
- TKES/LIKES coordinator/employee evaluations
- Workers compensation coordinator
- GSBA Local Board Training coordinator
- Disciplinary tribunal/hearing officer
- STEM coordinator
- Media spokesperson
- School improvement committee

**Assistant Superintendent**  
*Facilities & Operations*  
*Mrs. Darren Darner*
- District emergency planning coordinator
- School resource officer (SRO) coordinator
- Workplace safety coordinator
- Project planning and negotiations
- Bids and contracts facilitator
- Maintenance coordinator/supervisor
- Facilities and construction coordinator
- Fannin Development Authority Board representative
- SPLOST planning coordinator
- District calendar committee coordinator
- School improvement committee

**Director of Finance**  
*Mrs. Susan Wynn*
- Chief financial officer/administrator
- Annual budget and mileage preparation
- Grants, bids, and contracts management
- Coordination of all financial audits
- Workers compensation injuries
- Maintenance of all public records
- SPLOST management
- Coordinator of school activity accounts
- School improvement committee

**Director of Instructional Technology**  
*Mrs. Heather Finley*
- Technology and information administrator
- Technology-related professional learning
- Technology-related grants/E-Rate management
- PTE/CPT/student information coordinator
- Media services coordinator
- Electronic information coordinator/Security officer
- Network/Internet/social media compliance
- District social media coordinator
- Mass notification coordinator
- Teacher mentoring/Title-IIA/FQ coordinator
- Title V-B coordinator
- School improvement committee

**Director of School Nutrition**  
*Mrs. Candice Sizemore*
- Nutrition program administrator
- Public relations/events coordinator
- Teacher of the Year coordinator
- Workplace safety committee
- Board minutes coordinator
- REACH coordinator
- Wellness committee coordinator
- Calendar committee
- School improvement committee

**Director of Transportation**  
*Mrs. Denver Foster*
- Transportation program administrator
- Bus route coordinator
- Fleet maintenance management
- Transportation shop foreman
- Workplace safety committee
- Calendar committee
- Driver standards and compliance
- School improvement committee

**Director of Instructional Services & Policy**  
*Mrs. Sarah Welch*
- Grades PK-12 curriculum coordinator
- Gifted program coordinator
- Learning materials/textbook adoption
- Professional learning coordinator
- New teacher mentoring facilitator
- Coordinator of LiGA/other instructional grants
- Spelling Bee coordinator
- 20-Day coordinator
- School counselor coordinator
- Travel approval
- Board policy and administrative regulations
- School improvement committee

**Director of Student Services**  
*Mrs. Shannon Miller*
- Special education administrator
- Section 504 coordinator
- Title VI-B IDEA coordinator
- Pre-K coordinator
- MISS coordinator
- PBS coordinator
- Homebound coordinator
- DFCS liaison
- School improvement committee

**Director of Achievement**  
*Mrs. Sarah Riddle*
- Accreditation – SACS/GAC – coordinator
- Federal programs coordinator: Title I & IV
- Assessment coordinator
- District achievement data analyst
- School leadership development coordinator
- Chamber of Commerce representative
- Academic coach coordinator
- Parent liaison coordinator
- School improvement committee chair

**Deputy Superintendent**  
*Charter Governance & Leadership Support*  
*Mrs. Betty Hyde (45%)*
- Charter and School Governance Team administrator
- Post-secondary/higher education liaison
- Professional certification coordinator
- Attendance Support Team coordinator
- Title IX coordinator
- Family Connections representative
- Fannin Regional Hospital Board representative
- School nurse program coordinator
- School improvement committee
STRATEGIC PHILOSOPHY

VISION

The Fannin County School System holds a vision of excellence for all students with successful student progression at each level and a 100% graduation rate.

MISSION

Developing Young Futures . . .
Learning for Tomorrow,
Today

BELIEFS

The system has established belief statements as part of the vision and mission. The belief statements of the system form the foundational values needed to fulfill its vision and mission. They are:

Belief Statements

1. All students can learn and deserve equal access to a quality education.
2. Higher expectations result in higher achievement.
3. High school graduation is an essential key to lifelong success.
4. Parent and community involvement increase student achievement.
5. Education is a shared responsibility and should take place at home, in school, and in the community.
6. A safe and secure environment is essential for teaching and learning.
7. All schools are accountable for improving student achievement.
8. A quality education requires quality staff, programs, facilities, equipment, and technology.
9. Student needs and supports should drive decision making and school system policies.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. Attaining high level of student achievement
2. Developing organizational effectiveness
3. Ensuring stakeholder support and satisfaction
SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

The Fannin County School System is committed to continuous improvement at both the school and district levels. Our commitment is demonstrated through our annual accreditation from the Georgia Accrediting Agency (GAC) and our AdvancEd Accreditation through SACS/CASI. All schools and the district complete a thorough review of data each spring, including community and stakeholder meetings, to determine areas of strength and areas for improvement. The results from our comprehensive needs assessment (CNA) are used to create actionable goals that will lead to improvement. School and district improvement teams meet regularly to review goals and progress toward meeting those goals. School and district budgets are prioritized and aligned to the goals within the school and/or district improvement plans. All employees are an integral part of the continuous improvement process.

KEY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The Fannin County School System recognizes the importance of meeting employee needs and utilizing employee abilities. For the effective operation of the Fannin County School System, it is necessary that sound personnel policies and procedures are known and understood by all employees. These policies ensure consistency and fairness for all employees.

Policies and procedures are subject to change. These changes are made known to employees through memos, administrative bulletins, meetings, and e-Policy on the system’s website. Policies and procedures summarized in this handbook are meant to provide employees with only a general overview of expectations related to personnel and are not intended to be part of any contract or to be a legally binding agreement.

ASBESTOS STATEMENT

The Fannin County School System has fully complied with Federal Regulation HOCFR763 – Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA). All school buildings have been inspected for asbestos by an EPA certified inspector. A Management Plan for each school is on file in the Principal’s office. The Management Plan is available to the general public during regular business hours. Copies may be obtained for a fee of $.25 per page.

ASSESSMENT

Fannin County school system employees annually acknowledge their receipt of the Georgia Code of Conduct for Educators embedded within the FCSS Personnel Handbook. The Code of Conduct specifically addresses professional conduct and expectations related to assessment and assessment security in Standard 10.

Fannin County Schools implement all testing programs required by the State of Georgia using the protocols and guidelines found in the Georgia Department of Education Student Assessment Handbook. Prior to any testing event, the appropriate personnel receive training and direction. The assessment director works collaboratively with school level testing coordinators to ensure that all proctors are fully trained and prepared for testing events.

- The District Testing Coordinator meets with each School Level Testing Coordinator to review security, scheduling, and training materials for all state mandated tests before the test administration window.
• School Level testing Coordinators meet with their school staff that administer state mandated tests and train them on test security and administration prior to each administration window.
• At the conclusion of a testing event, the Principal's Certification of Adherence to Prescribed Test administration procedures is sent to the district office. The “Examiner’s Certification of Adherence to Prescribed Test Administration Procedures” form is completed by each test examiner and housed on-site at each school.
• The Superintendent signs the Superintendent Certification in January and July of each year.
• Any action that compromises test security or integrity of the assessment is reviewed at the district office and is then referred to the appropriate contacts within the Georgia Department of Education, Assessment Division, and the Georgia Professional Standards Commission as appropriate.

**AUTOMATED CALLS**

All school employees should keep personal contact information updated with office personnel so that the automated calling system can contact you. The automated calling system will be used in the event of a school cancellation or if other important information needs to be passed along.

**BENEFITS**

Employee benefits make up a large part of the total compensation package and are designed to meet the most important needs of Fannin County School System employees. Currently the Fannin County School System pays the Single Bronze (no tobacco) HRA portion of health insurance and the Dental Select single portion of the dental insurance. Many additional choices for other services are offered through the Flexible Benefits plan.

**Insurance**

Insurance benefits become effective on the first day of the month following the completion of work for one full calendar month and a proper payroll deduction.

**State Health Benefit Program (Employer/Employee Contributions)**

Employees have the opportunity to subscribe to group health insurance. Individual or family coverage may be selected from a variety of health plans provided by the State of Georgia. Specific rules apply to making changes to any of these plans, so please consult your plan guide to more fully understand your options and timelines.

**State Personnel Administration (SPA)- GABREEZE**

Fannin County School System employees have a choice of participating in plans that use before-tax and after-tax dollars to pay for benefits. Optional benefits that are included are:

1. Employee Life Insurance (pre-tax)
2. Spouse and/or Child Life Insurance (after-tax)
3. Accidental Death & Dismemberment (pre-tax)
4. Short-term Disability (after-tax)
5. Long-term Disability (pre-tax)
6. Dental Insurance (pre-tax)
7. Legal Insurance (after-tax)
8. Health Care Spending Account (pre-tax)
9. Child Care, Dependent Care Spending Account (pre-tax)
10. Long-term Care (after-tax)
11. Vision Care (pre-tax)
12. Specified Illness (after-tax)

Employees are given the opportunity to begin or discontinue participation in any of these optional benefits during Open Enrollment of each year or upon the occurrence of a qualifying
event. Specific rules apply to making changes to any of these plans, so please consult your plan
guide to more fully understand your options and timelines.

Social Security
The Fannin County School System participates in the Social Security System. Social
Security contributions are deducted each month to provide future benefits for all
employees.

Medicare Participation (Employer/Employee Contributions)
All employees hired after April 1, 1986 are required to pay Medicare contributions.
Medicare provides the medical benefits within the Social Security Administration.

**BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETINGS**

The Fannin County Board of Education meets on the second Thursday of each month at
6:00 p.m. at the central office. All board meetings are open to the public, and all
personnel are encouraged to attend.

**BOARD POLICIES**

A link to all board policies for the Fannin County School System may be found on the
system website (www.fannin.k12.ga.us), or you may go to the following link:
https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/index.aspx?s=4066#. Board policies should be
consulted whenever questions arise on policies and procedures. All personnel are
expected to know and abide by all Board policies and procedures. For answers to
questions related to Board policies, employees should contact their building
administrator.

**CELLULAR TELEPHONES - FACULTY AND STAFF**

To help reduce distractions and disruptions to the learning environment, all FCSS
personnel should adhere to the following guidelines regarding cellular telephones:

1. Faculty or staff members who choose to carry a cellular telephone while on duty
   at school should be sure that it is set on either silent or vibration notification
   only.
2. Except for an emergency or other urgent situation, FCSS faculty and staff
   members should not make or receive calls while supervising students, providing
   instruction, or carrying out their assigned duties.
3. Employees should refrain from use of ALL personal social media during school
   hours.

Please be sure to notify your principal or immediate supervisor of any extenuating
circumstances that may require your use of a cellular telephone that is outside of these
parameters.
CERTIFICATION

Professional employees of the Fannin County School System must hold proper in-field certification from the Georgia Professional Standards Commission and must meet all state and federal requirements. It is the responsibility of the individual to keep his or her certification current. Any questions concerning certification status should be directed to the Deputy Superintendent at 706-632-3771.

CERTIFICATE RENEWALS FOR CERTIFIED EMPLOYEES

Beginning with the 2018-19 school year, all certified personnel will be evaluated on the SLDS Platform. Certificate renewals will be based on successfully completing Professional Goals that will be a part of your TKES/LKES Plans.

Effective January 1, 2018

505-6-.01 THE CODE OF ETHICS FOR EDUCATORS

(1) Introduction. The Code of Ethics for Educators defines the professional behavior of educators in Georgia and serves as a guide to ethical conduct. The Georgia Professional Standards Commission has adopted standards that represent the conduct generally accepted by the education profession. The code defines unethical conduct justifying disciplinary sanction and provides guidance for protecting the health, safety and general welfare of students and educators, and assuring the citizens of Georgia a degree of accountability within the education profession.

(2) Definitions

(a) “Breach of contract” occurs when an educator fails to honor a signed contract for employment with a school/school system by resigning in a manner that does not meet the guidelines established by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission.

(b) “Certificate” refers to any teaching, service, or leadership certificate, license, or permit issued by authority of the Professional Standards Commission.

(c) “Child endangerment” occurs when an educator disregards a substantial and/or unjustifiable risk of bodily harm to the student.

(d) “Educator” is a teacher, school or school system administrator, or other education personnel who holds a certificate issued by the Professional Standards Commission and persons who have applied for but have not yet received a certificate. For the purposes of the Code of Ethics for Educators, “educator” also refers to paraprofessionals, aides, and substitute teachers.

(e) “Student” is any individual enrolled in the state’s public or private schools from preschool through grade 12 or any individual under the age of 18. For the purposes of the Code of Ethics for Educators, the enrollment period for a graduating student ends on August 31 of the year of graduation.

(f) “Complaint” is any written and signed statement from a local board, the state board, or one or more individual residents of this state filed with the Professional Standards Commission alleging that an educator has breached one or more of the standards in the Code of Ethics for Educators. A
“complaint” will be deemed a request to investigate.

(g) “Revocation” is the invalidation of any certificate held by the educator.

(h) “Denial” is the refusal to grant initial certification to an applicant for a certificate.

(i) “Suspension” is the temporary invalidation of any certificate for a period of time specified by the Professional Standards Commission.

(j) “Reprimand” admonishes the certificate holder for his or her conduct. The reprimand cautions that further unethical conduct will lead to a more severe action.

(k) “Warning” warns the certificate holder that his or her conduct is unethical. The warning cautions that further unethical conduct will lead to a more severe action.

(l) “Monitoring” is the quarterly appraisal of the educator’s conduct by the Professional Standards Commission through contact with the educator and his or her employer. As a condition of monitoring, an educator may be required to submit a criminal background check (GCIC). The Commission specifies the length of the monitoring period.

(m) “No Probable Cause” is a determination by the Professional Standards Commission that, after a preliminary investigation, either no further action need be taken or no cause exists to recommend disciplinary action.

3) Standards

(a) Standard 1: Legal Compliance - An educator shall abide by federal, state, and local laws and statutes. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to the commission or conviction of a felony or of any crime involving moral turpitude; of any other criminal offense involving the manufacture, distribution, trafficking, sale, or possession of a controlled substance or marijuana as provided for in Chapter 13 of Title 16; or of any other sexual offense as provided for in Code Section 16-6-1 through 16-6-17, 16-6-20, 16-6-22.2, or 16-12-100; or any other laws applicable to the profession. As used herein, conviction includes a finding or verdict of guilty, or a plea of nolo contendere, regardless of whether an appeal of the conviction has been sought; a situation where first offender treatment without adjudication of guilt pursuant to the charge was granted; and a situation where an adjudication of guilt or sentence was otherwise withheld or not entered on the charge or the charge was otherwise disposed of in a similar manner in any jurisdiction.

(b) Standard 2: Conduct with Students - An educator shall always maintain a professional relationship with all students, both in and outside the classroom. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. committing any act of child abuse, including physical and verbal abuse;

2. committing any act of cruelty to children or any act of child endangerment;

3. committing any sexual act with a student or soliciting such from a student;

4. engaging in or permitting harassment of or misconduct toward a student that would violate a state or federal law;

5. soliciting, encouraging, or consummating an inappropriate written, verbal, electronic, or physical relationship with a student;

6. furnishing tobacco, alcohol, or illegal/ unauthorized drugs to any student; or
7. failing to prevent the use of alcohol or illegal or unauthorized drugs by students under the educator’s supervision (including but not limited to at the educator’s residence or any other private setting).

(c) Standard 3: Alcohol or Drugs - An educator shall refrain from the use of alcohol or illegal or unauthorized drugs during the course of professional practice. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. being on school or Local Unit of Administration (LUA)/school district premises or at a school or a LUA/school district-related activity while under the influence of, possessing, using, or consuming illegal or unauthorized drugs; and

2. being on school or LUA/school district premises or at a school-related activity involving students while under the influence of, possessing, or consuming alcohol. A school-related activity includes, but is not limited to, any activity sponsored by the school or school system (booster clubs, parent-teacher organizations, or any activity designed to enhance the school curriculum i.e. Foreign Language trips, etc).

(d) Standard 4: Honesty - An educator shall exemplify honesty and integrity in the course of professional practice. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to, falsifying, misrepresenting, or omitting:

1. professional qualifications, criminal history, college or staff development credit and/or degrees, academic award, and employment history;

2. information submitted to federal, state, local school districts and other governmental agencies;

3. information regarding the evaluation of students and/or personnel;

4. reasons for absences or leaves;

5. information submitted in the course of an official inquiry/investigation; and

6. information submitted in the course of professional practice.

(e) Standard 5: Public Funds and Property - An educator entrusted with public funds and property shall honor that trust with a high level of honesty, accuracy, and responsibility. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. misusing public or school-related funds;

2. failing to account for funds collected from students or parents;

3. submitting fraudulent requests or documentation for reimbursement of expenses or for pay (including fraudulent or purchased degrees, documents, or coursework);

4. co-mingling public or school-related funds with personal funds or checking accounts; and

5. using school or school district property without the approval of the local board of education/governing board or authorized designee.

(f) Standard 6: Remunerative Conduct - An educator shall maintain integrity with students, colleagues, parents, patrons, or businesses when accepting gifts, gratuities, favors, and additional compensation. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. soliciting students or parents of students, or school or LUA/school district personnel, to purchase
equipment, supplies, or services from the educator or to participate in activities that financially benefit the educator unless approved by the local board of education/governing board or authorized designee;

2. accepting gifts from vendors or potential vendors for personal use or gain where there may be the appearance of a conflict of interest;

3. tutoring students assigned to the educator for remuneration unless approved by the local board of education/governing board or authorized designee; and

4. coaching, instructing, promoting athletic camps, summer leagues, etc. that involves students in an educator’s school system and from whom the educator receives remuneration unless approved by the local board of education/governing board or authorized designee. These types of activities must be in compliance with all rules and regulations of the Georgia High School Association.

(g) Standard 7: Confidential Information - An educator shall comply with state and federal laws and state school board policies relating to the confidentiality of student and personnel records, standardized test material and other information. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. sharing of confidential information concerning student academic and disciplinary records, health and medical information, family status and/or income, and assessment/testing results unless disclosure is required or permitted by law;

2. sharing of confidential information restricted by state or federal law;

3. violation of confidentiality agreements related to standardized testing including copying or teaching identified test items, publishing or distributing test items or answers, discussing test items, violating local school system or state directions for the use of tests or test items, etc.; and

4. violation of other confidentiality agreements required by state or local policy.

(h) Standard 8: Required Reports - An educator shall file reports of a breach of one or more of the standards in the Code of Ethics for Educators, child abuse (O.C.G.A. §19-7-5), or any other required report. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. failure to report all requested information on documents required by the Commission when applying for or renewing any certificate with the Commission;

2. failure to make a required report of a violation of one or more standards of the Code of Ethics for educators of which they have personal knowledge as soon as possible but no later than ninety (90) days from the date the educator became aware of an alleged breach unless the law or local procedures require reporting sooner; and

3. failure to make a required report of any violation of state or federal law soon as possible but no later than ninety (90) days from the date the educator became aware of an alleged breach unless the law or local procedures require reporting sooner. These reports include but are not limited to: murder, voluntary manslaughter, aggravated assault, aggravated battery, kidnapping, any sexual offense, any sexual exploitation of a minor, any offense involving a controlled substance and any abuse of a child if an educator has reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused.

(i) Standard 9: Professional Conduct - An educator shall demonstrate conduct that follows generally recognized professional standards and preserves the dignity and integrity of the education profession. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to a resignation that would equate to a breach of contract; any conduct that impairs and/or diminishes the certificate holder’s ability to function professionally in his or her employment position; or behavior or conduct that is detrimental to the health, welfare, discipline, or morals of students.
(j) Standard 10: **Testing** - An educator shall administer state-mandated assessments fairly and ethically. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. committing any act that breaches Test Security; and
2. compromising the integrity of the assessment.

(4) Reporting

(a) Educators are required to report a breach of one or more of the Standards in the Code of Ethics for Educators as soon as possible but no later than ninety (90) days from the date the educator became aware of an alleged breach unless the law or local procedures require reporting sooner. Educators should be aware of legal requirements and local policies and procedures for reporting unethical conduct. Complaints filed with the Georgia Professional Standards Commission must be in writing and must be signed by the complainant (parent, educator, or other LUA/school district employee, etc.).

(b) The Commission notifies local and state officials of all disciplinary actions. In addition, suspensions and revocations are reported to national officials, including the NASDTEC Clearinghouse.

(5) Disciplinary Action

(a) The Georgia Professional Standards Commission is authorized to suspend, revoke, or deny certificates, to issue a reprimand or warning, or to monitor the educator’s conduct and performance after an investigation is held and notice and opportunity for a hearing are provided to the certificate holder. Any of the following grounds shall be considered cause for disciplinary action against the holder of a certificate:

1. unethical conduct as outlined in The Code of Ethics for Educators, Standards 1-11 -10 (GaPSC Rule 505-6-.01);
2. disciplinary action against a certificate in another state on grounds consistent with those specified in the Code of Ethics for Educators, Standards 1-11 -10 (GaPSC Rule 505-6-.01);
3. order from a court of competent jurisdiction or a request from the Department of Human Resources that the certificate should be suspended or the application for certification should be denied for non-payment of child support (O.C.G.A. §19-6-28.1 and §19-11-9.3);
4. notification from the Georgia Higher Education Assistance Corporation that the educator is in default and not in satisfactory repayment status on a student loan guaranteed by the Georgia Higher Education Assistance Corporation (O.C.G.A. §20-3-295);
5. suspension or revocation of any professional license or certificate
6. violation of any other laws and rules applicable to the profession (O.C.G.A. §16-13-111); and
7. any other good and sufficient cause that renders an educator unfit for employment as an educator.

(b) An individual whose certificate has been revoked, denied, or suspended may not serve as a volunteer or be employed as an educator, paraprofessional, aide, substitute teacher or, in any other position during the period of his or her revocation, suspension or denial for a violation of The Code of Ethics. The superintendent and the educator designated by the superintendent/Local Board of Education shall be responsible for assuring that an individual whose certificate has been revoked, denied, or suspended is not employed or serving in any capacity in their district. Both the
superintendent and the superintendent’s designee must hold GaPSC certification. Should the superintendent’s certificate be revoked, suspended, or denied, the Board of Education shall be responsible for assuring that the superintendent whose certificate has been revoked, suspended, or denied is not employed or serving in any capacity in their district.

Authority O.C.G.A. § 20-2-200; 20-2-981 through 20-2-984.5

**COMPENSATION**

In order to attract the most qualified certified personnel, the Fannin County School District maintains competitive salaries based on the state salary schedule supplemented by a 6% local supplement. State salary schedule pay and the local supplement are both subject to the availability of funds as noted in certified employees’ contracts.

**Payday/Direct Deposit**

Employees are paid monthly with earning statements issued on the last workday of the month. Employees may choose to have their pay directly deposited in their bank, or they may receive their check at their school each payday. Direct deposit forms are available from the payroll department at the central office. Once an employee applies to receive direct deposit, it may take one or two months before the first direct deposit is accomplished. Employees may sign up for direct deposit upon hiring, during Open Enrollment, or upon the occurrence of a qualifying event. Payday is usually the last working day of each month (except for November and December.) Pay dates are always subject to change.

**Certificated Employees**

Certificated employees are issued employment contracts. These contracts are contingent upon the employee securing and maintaining a valid certificate issued by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission. It is the employee’s responsibility to complete the required professional learning necessary to renew his or her Georgia certificate every five years. For information on adding fields to or upgrading a certificate, employees should go to [www.gapsc.com](http://www.gapsc.com) and click on the certification link. Employees should also establish their MyPSC account and may email requests for guidance from PSC certification experts regarding upgrades or adding fields. Certificated employees will be paid on the state salary schedule according to the certificate level that they have been issued by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission and the work experience that has been verified.

**Hourly Employees**

Non-salaried employees are paid according to the pay schedule for their particular job. Credit for prior experience (up to ten years) is only given if the employee’s past experience is the same type of work that he or she has been hired to do for the school system.
Extra Pay for Noncertified Employees
Extra pay may be paid to hourly employees for any time worked over an employee’s regular hours. Employees only receive overtime pay (time and a half) for any hours worked that exceed 40 hours in a one week period. No extra pay or overtime will be paid unless there is prior approval from the hourly employee’s immediate supervisor. Time sheets must be submitted to the principal or immediate supervisor for approval. The principal or immediate supervisor will submit the original copy of time sheets to the Finance Department according to the payroll cut off date schedule for overtime to be paid in a timely manner.

Extra Pay for Certificated Employees
Employees who provide hospital/homebound or tutoring services to students should submit their time sheets to their principal for approval. The principal will submit the original copy of these time sheets to the Finance Department according to the payroll cut off date schedule for overtime to be paid in a timely manner.

Garnishments
Employees are subject to garnishment according to state and federal laws that regulate garnishments.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURES
Any employee who has a complaint should refer to the Complaints and Grievances Board Policy (GAE) for the proper procedure to follow to lodge the complaint. This policy may be found at the following link:

COMPUTER/INTERNET POLICY STATEMENT
All staff members using school system computer resources and the Internet shall comply with the Fannin County Board of Education’s Acceptable Use of Computer/Internet Resources policy, the administrative procedures provided by the Technology Department regarding such use. Staff members are cautioned that no personal business should be conducted on school system equipment as anything on such equipment is subject to Open Records requests.

CONFIDENTIALITY
Any protected employee- and student-related information is confidential, and all employees are expected to honor that confidentiality. Any personnel in violation of the confidentiality standards may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and possibly including termination. Additionally, violations of confidentiality may result in a referral to the Ethics Division of the Georgia Professional Standards Commission, if appropriate.
CONFLICTS OF INTEREST AND OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

Employees should be aware of situations and activities that may be construed as a conflict of interest.

Fannin County School System employees are reminded that their job assignments within the school system are their first obligation, and, if outside employment is affecting their performance, the employee may have to choose between the employment opportunities. Principals at the individual schools or department supervisors have direct responsibility for evaluating the effects of outside employment on personnel assigned to their school or department.

In general, outside employment is allowed as long as it does not create a conflict of interest or otherwise interfere with an employee’s duties.

**TUTORING:** A teacher may serve as a tutor when it is deemed beneficial to the student. However, teachers may not give private instruction for a fee to students presently enrolled in their classes. These students should receive help from the teacher after school hours if necessary without a fee. Tutoring for a fee should occur away from the school building. Principals should be made aware in advance if any teachers in their building are tutoring for a fee, and if the building is being used, prior approval for use of the building should be cleared with the Central Office.

**DUAL PAY:** Fannin County School System employees are prohibited from receiving dual pay for services rendered during their regular work hours. The employee may forfeit either the regular pay or the pay from the other agency, organization, or individual. Employees may receive payments for services rendered while on a non-paid leave of absence or on a personal day or for services performed other than during the regular working day.

**OTHER WORK:** No employee is permitted to complete work outside of the scope of their assigned duties during work hours. This includes the use of any district-owned equipment to complete outside work for personal gain.

**CONTRACTS FOR CERTIFIED PERSONNEL**

Certified employees may be given a letter of intent early in the second semester of each school year. This is used for planning purposes for the upcoming school year. Contracts for all certified employees, except for the Superintendent, are issued for no more than one school year.

Any employee who is fulfilling a full year contract for the current year must be notified by May 15 of that school year if a contract for the ensuing year will not be offered. An employee who holds a contract for less than one full year will not necessarily be offered a full contract for the ensuing year.
COPYRIGHT POLICY STATEMENT

All staff members shall comply with the Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S. Code). Staff members who fail to follow the Copyright Law shall be held personally liable for copyright infringement. The Fannin County Board of Education will not be responsible for any violations of the Copyright Law by staff and hereby notifies all employees that a willful infringement of the law may result in disciplinary action.

DRESS CODE

Faculty and Staff should dress appropriately and professionally at all times, keeping in mind that they are role models for the students they teach.

Faculty and Staff should comply with the following clothing standards:

a. Hem length for any garment should be no more than 3 inches above the kneecap
b. No low-cut tops or blouses
c. No clothing with advertisements for drugs, alcohol, or tobacco
d. No clothing with insulting or insinuating messages
e. No tight spandex-type clothing, cropped tops, tank tops or sheer lace
f. No tights/leggings unless top garment is approaching knee length
g. No beachwear type foot wear
h. No shorts or sweatpants*

Specific dress code violations will be addressed privately and professionally on an individual basis by the administration of the school. Any aspects of appearance that cause a disruption to the learning environment will be addressed on an individual basis. *Exceptions may be made for field days, field trips, and special events. Another exception is for physical education teachers.

DRUG FREE WORKPLACE

The following board policy should be adhered to at all times:

The Board of Education declares that the manufacture, distribution, sale or possession of controlled substances, marijuana and other dangerous drugs in an unlawful manner or being at work under the influence of alcohol, controlled substances, marijuana or other dangerous drugs is a serious threat to the public health, safety and welfare. With this in mind, the Board declares that its work force must be absolutely free of any person who would knowingly manufacture, distribute, sell or possess a controlled substance, marijuana or a dangerous drug in an unlawful manner. This prohibition specifically includes, but is not limited to, the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance or alcohol in the employee's workplace. This prohibition also includes, but is not limited to, an employee being under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances while on duty.

Any employee who is convicted for the first time, under the laws of this state, the United States, or any other state, of any criminal offense involving the manufacture, distribution, sale or possession of a controlled substance, marijuana or a dangerous drug shall be subject to disciplinary action. At a minimum, such an employee shall be suspended for a period of not less than two months and shall be required to complete, at his or her own expense, a drug abuse treatment and education program licensed under Chapter 5 of Title
26 of the Official Code of Georgia and approved by the board. At a maximum, such an employee may be terminated from his employment with the school system. Any employee who is convicted for a second or subsequent time under the laws of this state, the United States, or any other state, of any criminal offense involving the manufacture, distribution, sale or possession of a controlled substance, marijuana or a dangerous drug shall be terminated from his or her employment and shall be ineligible for employment for a period of five years from the most recent date of conviction.

If, prior to an arrest for an offense involving a controlled substance, marijuana or a dangerous drug, an employee notifies the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee that the employee illegally uses a controlled substance, marijuana or a dangerous drug and is receiving or agrees to receive treatment under a drug abuse treatment and education program licensed under Chapter 5 of Title 26 of the Official Code of Georgia and approved by the Board, the employee shall be entitled to maintain his or her employment for up to one year as long as the employee follows the treatment plan. During this period, the employee shall not be separated from employment solely on the basis of the employee's drug dependence, but the employee's work activities may be restructured if practicable to protect persons or property. No statement made by an employee to the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee in order to comply with this code section shall be admissible in any civil, administrative or criminal proceeding as evidence against the public employee. The rights granted by this policy shall be available to an employee only once during a five year period and are intended to be and shall be interpreted as being the same as those minimum rights granted pursuant to the Georgia Drug-Free Work Force Act and any subsequent amendments thereof.

As a condition of employment, each employee must abide by the terms of this policy and must notify the Board within five days after any arrest on any drug-related criminal charge and further notify the Board within five days of any conviction of a drug-related offense.

A copy of this policy shall be disseminated to all employees either directly or through employee handbooks.

The Board of Education shall not consider for employment any applicant who has been convicted for the first time of any drug offense as described above for a three month period from the date of conviction nor shall the Board of Education consider any applicant for employment who has been convicted for the second time of any drug offense as described above for a five year period from the most recent date of conviction.

For purposes of this policy, "conviction" refers to any final conviction in a court of competent jurisdiction, specifically including acceptance of a plea of guilty, nolo contendere, or any plea entered under the First Offenders Act of Georgia or any comparable state or federal legislation.

No certified employee or employee with a contract for a definite term shall be subject to suspension or termination pursuant to this policy except in compliance with the provisions of the Fair Dismissal Act of Georgia, Official Code of Georgia Annotated §§ 20-2-940 through 947. This policy is not intended and shall not be interpreted as prohibiting the school system from taking appropriate disciplinary action against any employee where there exists evidence that an employee uses, distributes or sells illegal drugs even though the employee has not been convicted of any criminal offense or where there exists evidence that an employee is under the influence of alcohol while on
duty, except that the school system may not use the statement of any employee to the Superintendent requesting treatment as described in this policy.

The school district shall provide such staff development as required by state or federal law to inform employees of the dangers of drug abuse, the availability of employee assistance and drug counseling and treatment and the terms of this policy.

**DRUG SCREENING OF BUS DRIVERS**

The Board of Education is dedicated to providing safe and efficient transportation for students transported on school buses. The Board recognizes that safe student transportation depends on unimpaired judgment, physical dexterity, reflex action, and unimpaired senses of sight and hearing, of employees in safety-sensitive functions. The goal of this Board is to provide our employees and students with an environment that promotes health and safety.

Operating a school bus or other commercial vehicle requires a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) and is considered a safety-sensitive function. Individuals who are employed by the Board of Education to operate safety-sensitive vehicles include, but are not limited to: mechanics, school bus drivers, substitute school bus drivers, maintenance workers, coaches, teachers, and administrators.

In order to meet this goal, we hereby endorse the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration's anti-alcohol and controlled substances policies and regulations. This Board will not tolerate unauthorized use, abuse, possession or sale of alcohol or controlled substances by its employees.

Individuals who have positive controlled substance test results shall be terminated, as shall individuals whose test results reveal blood alcohol concentrations 0.04 and above and individuals who refuse to submit to a required alcohol or controlled substance test. Individuals whose tests results reveal blood alcohol concentrations of at least 0.02, but less than 0.04, and individuals who engage in other conduct prohibited by the regulations may, at the Board of Education's discretion, be terminated.

Drivers must inform their immediate supervisor of any therapeutic drug use, whether by prescription or "over the counter", and must provide a statement from their prescribing physician that the substance does not adversely affect the driver's ability to operate the bus.

**EMAIL**

The Fannin County School System provides Internet access and an e-mail account to employees for professional purposes. E-mail is used by school employees at all levels, and it has become an integral part of the overall communication within our school system. Employees should check their school e-mail account each day. Per school system policy, permission from an administrator must be obtained before sending any message to an entire group or school staff, such as “EFES Teachers.”

The school Internet and your school system e-mail account should NEVER be used for
personal gain or personal business activities. All computer network traffic, including employee e-mail and Internet usage, is monitored by the FCSS Technology Department.

Please help keep our school system’s network and communication system operating in a professional manner. Chain e-mails should be discarded as soon as you receive them, and other inappropriate messages should also be deleted.

**EMERGENCY CLOSING OF SCHOOLS**

In the event that schools must close early during the school day or be cancelled due to inclement weather or other emergency situation, employees will receive an automated phone call from central office personnel. In addition, cancellations are posted on the system website, on the system weather line (706-946-FCSS), on local radio stations, and on area television stations. Days are scheduled in the annual school calendar as holidays/emergency make-up days in order to complete the school year in a timely manner. Employees who make plans for these holidays that cannot be rescheduled, **will have their pay docked** if these holidays must be used to make-up missed days.

Employees will be instructed in the procedure for documenting make-up time in the event that this is the option chosen to complete missed work hours. No time should be made up until the employee’s immediate supervisor gives permission for such activity to take place. Employees may not use time they are getting paid for as make up time. For example, if an employee is receiving a stipend for extended or additional work hours that time may not count as make up time.

**EMPLOYEE BACKGROUND CHECKS**

All Fannin County School System personnel must be fingerprinted and successfully complete a criminal background check. This criminal background check is updated every five years for all employees.

**EMPLOYEE IDENTIFICATION BADGES**

At the beginning of their employment with our school system, new employees will be issued an ID key badge. There is no charge for this. Employees may also receive a replacement badge at no charge if they have a legal name change, job title change, or if the badge breaks.

An employee may request an additional ID key badge for $5.00. A $5.00 charge may also apply if the badge is lost, breaks due to carelessness, or if the employee wants one with a different photograph.

Personnel should turn their ID key badge in to their principal when discontinuing employment with the school system.

**This ID key badge serves as a key to exterior doors at their respective campus. If a key card is lost or misplaced, notify your supervisor immediately.**
EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENTS

Fannin County School System personnel are employed by the Fannin County Board of Education upon the recommendation of the Superintendent. Employees are assigned to the school/work location by the Superintendent.

All employees must have earned either a high school diploma or GED at a minimum and must be at least 21 years of age. Teachers, principals, and other certified personnel are eligible for sustained employment provided they meet the educational and professional standards set by the State of Georgia and the Fannin County Board of Education. Other employees are eligible for sustained employment upon evidence of completion of required training and ability to do the work for which they are applying, satisfactory recommendations, and an acceptable criminal background check.

All employees must complete I-9 forms as required under federal law and must provide proof of eligibility for employment.

EVALUATION OF PERSONNEL

All FCSS personnel are evaluated annually by their administrator/supervisor. All certified employees will be evaluated on the state mandated SLDS Platform/TKES/LKES. Classified employees will be evaluated using district developed instruments. All evaluations will be completed no later than May 1. Certified employees will have an orientation on the SLDS Platform at the beginning of the school year.

FACILITIES USE REQUEST

School facilities may be used on occasion by outside groups. The principal of each school must be contacted for use of the facility. He or she may approve a one time use. Requesting to use school facilities for multiple occasions over an extended period of time must be approved by each school’s School Governance Team.

FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE

The Fannin County School System follows federal guidelines in offering Family Medical Leave to all of its employees. Details of the Family Medical Leave Board Policy (GBRIG) may be found at the following link:

FIELD TRIP REQUESTS

All field trips must be related to the Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE) being taught in that grade level, and they should be aimed at helping to reach school improvement goals. Field trip request forms must be completed and submitted to the school principal for approval by the School Governance Team. Any educational field trip that is a long distance trip, an extended day trip, or an overnight trip must be approved by the School Governance Team.

FUNDRAISERS

All fundraisers must be submitted to the School Governance Team for approval. The principal will let employees know the cut off date for submitting requests each month.

HARASSMENT

It is the policy of this school district to prohibit any act of harassment of students or employees by other students or employees based upon race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, or disability at all times and during all occasions while at school, in the workplace, or at any school event or activity. Any such act by a student or employee shall result in prompt and appropriate discipline, including the possible termination of employment or suspension or expulsion of the student.

Sexual harassment may include conduct or speech which entails unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, taunts, threats, comments of a vulgar or demeaning nature, demands or physical contact which creates a hostile environment for a student or employee. There may be other speech or conduct which employees or students experience as inappropriate or illegal harassment which should also be reported; harassment can take many forms, and it is not possible to itemize every aspect of the harassment forbidden by this policy.

Any student, employee, applicant for employment, parent or other individual who believes he or she has been subjected to harassment or discrimination by other students or employees of the school district as prohibited by this policy should promptly report the same to the principal of their school or to the appropriate coordinator designated in policy GAAA/JAA, who will implement the Board's discriminatory complaints procedures as specified in that policy. Students may also report harassment or discrimination to their school counselor or any administrator. Students and employees will not be subjected to retaliation for reporting such harassment or discrimination. If at any point in the investigation of reported sexual harassment of a student, the coordinator or designee determines that the reported harassment should more properly be termed abuse, the reported incident or situation shall be referred pursuant to the established protocol for child abuse investigation.
It is the duty of all employees to promptly report harassment forbidden by this policy. All supervisors will instruct their subordinates as to the content of this policy and, through appropriate staff development, enlighten employees as to the varied forms or expressions of prohibited harassment. The principals of all schools shall ensure that students and parents are informed through student handbooks and verbally that such harassment is strictly forbidden, how it is to be reported, and the consequences for violating this policy.

**HOLIDAYS FOR TWELVE MONTH EMPLOYEES**

The following dates are those days that are designated as paid holidays for the period from July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Holiday</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 2</td>
<td>Labor Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 27-29</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 23-25</td>
<td>Christmas Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 31-January 1</td>
<td>New Year’s Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 20</td>
<td>Martin Luther King Day</td>
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<td>April 10</td>
<td>Good Friday</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 13-14</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 25</td>
<td>Memorial Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 3</td>
<td>Independence Day</td>
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**IDENTIFICATION/SECURITY BADGES/VISITORS ON CAMPUS**

All personnel in any school building are required to wear badges issued to them. These badges should be worn above the waist. Lost or damaged badges will be replaced for a $5.00 replacement fee. Every employee has an obligation to question anyone in the building who does not have a security badge and to request that they report to the office to obtain a visitor’s pass. Violators should be reported to the administration immediately.

**LEAVE AND ABSENCE POLICY**

This policy shall apply to all employees of the Fannin County Board of Education.

**ACCRUAL OF SICK LEAVE AND ABSENCE FOR MEDICAL AND RELATED REASONS**

In accordance with Georgia law, employees will be entitled to annual sick leave with pay to be accrued at the rate of one and one quarter days for each completed contract month. All unused sick leave shall be accumulated from one fiscal year to the next up to a maximum of 120 days. If an employee needs to utilize unearned sick leave, advance leave may be granted. The advance leave shall not exceed the number of days the employee would accumulate through the end of the fiscal year. If an employee fails for any reason to complete a fiscal year, sick leave used but not yet earned will be deducted from the employee's final check.

The leave provided for under this policy is available only for personal illness, injury or exposure to contagious diseases, or for absences necessitated by illness in the employee's immediate family.
For any absence in which sick leave is used, the Superintendent shall have the right to require a physician's certificate stating that the employee is ill and is unable to perform his or her duties. In the event that sick leave is used to care for a member of the immediate family, the Superintendent shall have the right to require a physician's certificate stating that the employee is needed to care for the sick family member.

For the purpose of absences for medical and related reasons, members of the immediate family are defined as spouse, children, father, mother, father-in-law, mother-in-law, grandchildren, grandparents, or other relatives living in the household.

Personal and Professional Leave

Employees may take personal and professional leave if prior approval of the absence has been given by the employee's immediate supervisor and if the presence of the employee requesting absence is not essential for effective school operation. Professional leave may be requested when a teacher is to be away from his/her assigned school for the purpose of supervising students. A leave form must be filed and approved by the principal and Superintendent two (2) weeks prior to leave unless it is determined that such leave should be granted due to an emergency or extenuating circumstances. **Personal leave will not be granted during pre-planning, post-planning, in-service days, early release days, emergency make-up days, or on the day before or day after holidays.** In addition, personal leave will not be granted during the first week of the student school year or during the last week of the student school year, or when state-mandated assessments are scheduled at the school, unless the Superintendent or designated central office administrator, at his or her discretion, determines that such leave should be granted due to an emergency or extenuating circumstances beyond the employee's control.

**EMPLOYMENT INCENTIVES**

In addition to the three (3) days of personal leave outlined above:

1. Employees who have been with Fannin County School District for less than ten years may designate one (1) day of sick leave to be taken as one additional day of personal leave. Only three (3) days of personal leave may be taken on consecutive work days by any employee with less than ten years of service.

2. Employees who have completed at least ten, but less than twenty, years of service with the Fannin County School District may designate up to two (2) days of sick leave to be taken as two (2) additional days of personal leave. Up to four (4) days of personal leave days may be taken on consecutive work days.

3. Employees who have completed at least twenty, but less than thirty, years of service with the Fannin County School District may designate up to two (2) days of sick leave to be taken as two (2) additional days of personal leave. Up to five (5) days of personal leave may be taken on consecutive work days.

4. Employees who have completed at least thirty years of service with the Fannin County School District may designate up to three (3) days of sick leave to be taken as three (3) additional days of personal leave. Up to six (6) days of personal leave may be taken on consecutive work days.

Employees are not required to disclose the purpose of personal leave.

**OBSERVANCE OF RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS**

Employees may use personal leave for the observance of recognized religious holidays. If an employee desires to take leave for the observance of recognized religious holidays in excess of the days allowed for personal leave, the employee may take unpaid leave for such purposes provided that such leave is not excessive and does not interfere with fulfilling the obligations of his or her job.
JURY AND WITNESS LEAVE

Each person employed by the Fannin County School System shall be allowed leave with pay for the purposes of serving as a juror in any court or when subpoenaed to testify in a case arising out of the individual's duties as a school system employee. Except as otherwise specified below, jury and/or witness leave shall not be deducted from an individual's accumulated personal, professional or sick leave. No employee utilizing jury and witness leave shall be required to pay the cost of employing a substitute to serve during his or her absence for such leave. Employees who serve on juries or who are subpoenaed for reasons arising out of their employment with the school system may retain their jury/witness pay.

MILITARY LEAVE

All employees of the Fannin County Board of Education are entitled to paid leave not to exceed eighteen days in any federal fiscal year for the purpose of complying with ordered military leave duty with the armed forces of the United States or State of Georgia, including duty as a volunteer member of the militia or reserve component of the United States or State of Georgia. Employees also are entitled to leave not exceeding thirty days in any one federal fiscal year if ordered to duty as a result of the declaration of any emergency by the governor or the appropriate officials of the United States armed forces. Employees who have military commitments shall inform the Superintendent or designee annually and shall cooperate to the extent possible in scheduling such leave so as to minimize the disruption in those employee's duties and the mission of the Board of Education. Immediate family of members of the military may use personal leave, with approval of their immediate supervisor, to accommodate duty requirements of the family member.

BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

In the event of a death in the immediate family of an employee, three days bereavement leave will be granted. Any additional leave will be charged against the employee's sick leave. For the purposes of bereavement leave, members of the immediate family are defined as spouse, children, father, mother, brothers and sisters, father-in-law, mother-in-law, or other relatives living in the household.

CONSTRUCTION WITH THE FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

To the extent that any provision in this policy conflicts with or is superseded by the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), the regulations promulgated thereunder, or other federal law, the provision of the FMLA, its regulations or other law, as the case may be, control.

TO ENCOURAGE EXEMPLARY ATTENDANCE OF ALL EMPLOYEES, THE FANNIN COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION WILL:

Upon retirement from the Fannin County School System, employees may choose to be paid for all days of unused accumulated sick leave (accumulated in the Fannin County School System) at the rate of one-half the amount paid to substitutes or apply sick leave toward retirement.

SUPPORT PERSONNEL VACATION

All personnel on a twelve month work schedule shall have two weeks vacation during the calendar year as approved by the immediate supervisor.
MAINTENANCE REQUESTS

Requests for maintenance require the approval of a building administrator and must be submitted to the Facilities Director to be scheduled and completed. Minor maintenance problems should be handled at the school level.

MANDATORY REPORTING

School system employees are required to report any suspected child abuse, drug use, or alcohol use involving students to a building administrator. It is neither the employee’s role nor responsibility to investigate. All employees will complete mandatory reporting training at the beginning of each school year.

NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

It is the policy of Fannin County School System to not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, creed or disability in admission to its programs, services, and activities in access to them, in treatment of individuals or in any aspect of their operations to also include but not be limited to additions, modifications, or alterations to the physical plan of any school facility.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parents should be encouraged to participate in their child’s education as much as possible. Making parents feel welcome at school will benefit our students as well as our teachers. Supportive parents make a world of difference in providing our students with additional help at home and are much more willing to back up the teacher who they feel has been open and inviting to them. Teachers are expected to be at school for our three parent/teacher conference days. If a teacher must be out on one of those days, he or she needs to make parents aware of this and offer to reschedule a conference at another time. Teachers should always be willing to meet with parents. Teachers are also encouraged to keep parents informed through phone calls, letters, newsletters, etc. Each Title I school also shares its Parent and Family Engagement Policy with parents early in the school year. Parents are also encouraged to volunteer at each of our schools.
PARENT’S RIGHT TO KNOW STATEMENT

In compliance with the requirements of the Every Students Succeeds Act, the Fannin County School System provides information about the professional qualifications of a student’s teacher(s) and/or paraprofessional(s). The following information may be requested by parents/guardians:

Whether the student’s teacher:

- Has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subjects in which the teacher provides instruction;
- Is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived; and
- Is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher

- Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualification

PERSONNEL RECORDS

It is the responsibility of employees to inform Human Resources when there are changes in the home address, telephone number, and/or the occurrence of a qualifying event. Information contained in an employee’s personnel file is not made available to others except as may be required by law (Open Records Act), requested by the employee, or to those school officials with a need to know in an official capacity.

An employee may review his or her personnel file by requesting an appointment with the Human Resources Department.

PERSONNEL TIME SCHEDULE

Most full time employees of the Fannin County Board of Education work a minimum of 40 hours per week. The principal/supervisor sets a schedule for the time of arrival and departure for all employees assigned to their school or department.

In order for an organization to achieve its desired goals, good attendance and punctuality are necessary. Therefore, regular and prompt attendance is expected and required of all employees. If it is necessary to be absent or late to work, employees are responsible for contacting their supervisor as soon as possible. Teachers and/or paraprofessionals are responsible for making their own arrangements for a substitute if they are supposed to have one.
PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS

All Fannin County School System bus drivers must pass an annual physical evaluation in order to maintain his or her bus driving job. These physicals are to be completed by a physician designated by the school system.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

Teachers and paraprofessionals are strongly encouraged to become members of a professional organization, with special attention being given to joining an organization that provides professional liability insurance. The three organizations that have the largest memberships in Fannin County are the Georgia Association of Educators (GAE), the Professional Association of Georgia Educators (PAGE), and Educator’s First.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

To provide teachers with an opportunity to continue learning and growing as educators, the Fannin County School System offers on-going professional learning for all employees. Professional learning activities that are offered are tied to each school’s or the district’s improvement plans. For more detailed information, employees should refer to the Professional Learning information page located on the system website at the following link:

http://www.fannincounty.schoolinsites.com/?DivisionID=23725&DepartmentID=28612

PURCHASING

No purchases may be made obligating either school or district funds without following the appropriate purchasing procedures. Please refer to the Fannin County School Activity Account Handbook and check with your individual school bookkeeper for purchasing procedures. Purchases made without following these guidelines may become the responsibility of the purchaser. Mismanagement of school system funds may result in disciplinary action including possible termination and the filing of a report with the Georgia Professional Standards Commission for a violation of the Georgia Educators Code of Ethics.

RELEASING STUDENTS

Students are always released through the school office except for release from an off-campus activity. No employee may allow a student to leave school without checking out through the office.
REPORTING OF ACTS OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

House Bill 1321 passed by the Georgia Legislature amended O.C.G.A. 20-2-751.7 to require that local school systems implement a state mandated process for students to follow in reporting instances of alleged inappropriate behavior by a teacher, administrator, or other school employee toward a student. Sexual misconduct includes behavior by an educator that is directed at a student and intended to sexually arouse or titillate the educator or the child. The following procedure is required should any student or employee need to report an act of sexual misconduct:

Reporting of Acts of Sexual Misconduct
Any student (or parent or friend of a student) who has been the victim of an act of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct by a teacher, administrator or other school system employee is urged to make an oral report of the act to any teacher, counselor or administrator at his/her school.

Any teacher, counselor or administrator receiving a report of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct of a student by a teacher, administrator or other employee shall make an oral report of the incident immediately by telephone or otherwise to the school principal or principal’s designee, and shall submit a written report of the incident to the school principal or principal’s designee within 24 hours. If the principal is the person accused of the sexual abuse or sexual misconduct, the oral and written reports should be made to the superintendent or the superintendent’s designee.

Any school principal or principal’s designee receiving a report of sexual abuse as defined in O.C.G.A. 19-7-5 shall make an oral report immediately, but in no case later than 24 hours from the time there is reasonable cause to believe a child has been abused. The report should be made by telephone and followed by a written report in writing, if requested, to a child welfare agency providing protective services, as designated by the Department of Human Resources, or, in the absence of such agency, to an appropriate police authority or district attorney.

RESIGNATIONS
Contracted employees are expected to honor their employment contract. Therefore, except in emergency situations, employment contracts may not be terminated without the recommendation of the Superintendent and the approval of the Board. Resignations of employees should be tendered as soon as reasonably possible to allow the school system to plan for upcoming school years and to attract the most highly qualified candidates.

RETIREMENT PLANS
Teacher Retirement System (TRS)
Teachers, administrators, supervisors, clerical employees, and paraprofessionals are eligible members of TRS. Benefits become available at 30 years of service, regardless of age, at 25 years of service with early retirement penalties, or at age 60, after 10 years of service. Employee members contribute 6.0% of their salary to TRS, while the school
system contributes 21.14% for each employee. Disability retirement is available for members who qualify according to TRS guidelines.

Public School Employees’ Retirement System of Georgia (PSERS)
Bus drivers, food service employees, maintenance, and custodial personnel are eligible for membership in Public School Employees’ Retirement System of Georgia. Retirement benefits are available for members who are 65 years of age with at least 10 years of creditable service or at 60 years of age with 10 years of creditable service with early retirement penalties. New members contribute $10.00 per month for nine months, and the state makes the employer’s contribution. Previously employed members pay $4.00 per month for nine months. Disability retirement is available for members who qualify according to PSERS guidelines.

VALIC for PSERS Members
The Fannin County School System participates in VALIC in order to provide additional retirement benefits for employees who are not eligible for membership in TRS. The school system contributes 3% of their salary to a VALIC account for all PSERS members. In addition, the system will also match half of what employees who are members of PSERS contribute themselves for a maximum additional system contribution of 3% more on a monthly basis.

SAFETY PLAN

Each school in the Fannin County School System has a school safety/emergency plan. Each employee should receive pertinent information about and/or a copy of the plan from the school/location to which he or she is assigned.

SMOKING AND TOBACCO PRODUCTS

Smoking and use of other tobacco products shall be prohibited on any school campus, in any school building used for the instruction of students, or in any school owned vehicle including any school bus or county vehicle. Vaping is also prohibited.

School district employees who violate this policy may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, including reprimand, suspension with or without pay, or termination. Students who violate this policy may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with Board policy and the student/parent handbook.

STAFF MEETINGS

Regular staff meetings are a necessary part of the school operation. Each school shall have a schedule for staff meetings on a regular basis. Special staff meetings for professional development, accreditation, and/or workshops, as deemed necessary, should be called by the principal. All staff members, including less than full-time employees, are required, as part of their teaching/employment responsibilities, to attend such meetings as designated by the principal.
STUDENT ABSENCES

State board policy requires that each school system keep accurate records of student attendance. Students who have excessive absences should be referred to the school attendance support worker.

SUICIDE PREVENTION TRAINING

The Fannin County School System has developed a Suicide Prevention Protocol that designated staff have been trained on. In addition, all other certificated employees will complete a mandatory training on suicide prevention on an annual basis.

TRANSFERS-CERTIFIED & CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL

All transfer requests must be in writing and be signed by the employee’s immediate supervisor. Employees requesting a transfer may be interviewed for the position by the supervisor/principal of the receiving department or school. If the transfer is not granted, then the employee will remain at the current location or as otherwise directed by the superintendent. Being employed by the FCSS does not entitle anyone to transfer to another position.

TRAVEL APPROVAL

Approval for travel should be approved PRIOR to the event by the principal and the travel coordinator. All travel must be reimbursed to the employee during the same fiscal year that the travel occurred. All travel reimbursements must be turned in within a 45 day window from the date of the event in order to be processed in a timely manner. It is the responsibility of any employees who travel in June to make sure that their travel reimbursement request is turned in to the central office in a timely manner. From an auditing perspective at both the school and district levels, travel reimbursements may not cross fiscal years so any June travel turned in after June 30 cannot be paid and will be considered a donation from the employee. Employees should refer to the Fannin County Travel Regulations which can be found on the system website for travel guidelines at the following link:

http://www.fannin.k12.ga.us/?DivisionID=23725&DepartmentID=28616
WORKERS’ COMPENSATION INSURANCE

Workers’ compensation is a benefits program created by state law that provides medical, rehabilitation, income, death, and other benefits to employees and dependents due to injury, illness, and death resulting from a compensable work-related claim covered by the law.

To be eligible for workers’ compensation benefits, employees must be injured while performing assigned job duties during work hours. Injuries that occur during an employee’s normal commute to and from work are not covered.

Any accident that occurs should IMMEDIATELY be reported to the employee’s supervisor. The required paperwork should be completed and forwarded to the appropriate department for processing. On the job accidents should be described as accurately and as in depth as possible. If there is a witness to the accident, their name should be included in the report. Prompt notification will enable your employer to process your claim in a timely manner. Additionally, all employee accidents must be called in to the central office immediately by a designated school administrator. Employees who have a workers’ compensation claim will be required to meet with the superintendent or his/her designee to review the circumstances that led up to the event.

Employees who are injured on the job and need to seek medical assistance are required to go to a physician on the approved list. The “Panel of Physicians” is posted in each school or department. If an employee chooses to use a doctor who is not on the approved list or fails to make a required report, he or she may be responsible for any bills and risk losing any benefits that may have resulted from a workers’ compensation claim. As with any insurance, the premiums that districts pay for workers’ compensation insurance increase as accidents increase and decrease as accidents decrease. Employees should exercise safety at all times.

Workers’ Safety Rules:
All employees are required to implement safety practices while on the job. Safety practices include, but are not limited to:

1. Use of safety straps while working on overhead and off-ground surfaces
2. Use of ladders while working overhead
3. Use of proper footwear in kitchens and work areas
4. Use of safety signs on floor surfaces where areas are being worked
5. Report any condition that may cause an injury immediately to a supervisor
# Fannin County School System 2019-2020 School Calendar

## July 2019

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- **Aug. 1-6 - Preplanning**
- **Aug. 7 - First Day for Students**

## August 2019

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- **Sept. 2 - Holiday - Emergency Make Up Day**
- **Sept. 4 - 20 Days**

## September 2019

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- **Oct. 1 - 60 Days**
- **Nov. 25-29 - Thanksgiving Break - Emergency Make Up Days**

## October 2019

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- **Nov. 1 - 60 Days**
- **Dec. 6 - 80 Days**

## November 2019

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- **Dec. 23-31 - Christmas Break - Emergency Make Up Days**

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- **Jan. 1 - 3 New Year’s Break - Emergency Make Up Days**
- **Jan. 6 & 7 Professional Learning Days - Emergency Make Up Days**
- **Jan. 8 - Students Return from Break**
- **Jan. 20 - Holiday - Emergency Make Up Days**

## January 2020

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- **Jan 22 - 100 Days**
- **Feb. 17 - Holiday - Emergency Make Up Day**
- **Feb. 20 - 120 Days**
- **March 13 - Early Release - Parent Teacher Conference**
- **March 19 - 140 Days**

## February 2020

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- **April 1 - Kindergarten Registration - BRES, EFES, & WFES**
- **April 10 - 17 - Spring Break - Emergency Make Up Days**
- **April 24 - 160 Days**

## April 2020

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- **May 22 - 180 Days - Last Day of School - Graduation**
- **May 25 - Memorial Day - Holiday**
- **May 26 - 28 - Post Planning**

## May 2020

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- **June 2020**
- **July 2020**
- **August 2020**
- **September 2020**
- **October 2020**
- **November 2020**
- **December 2020**

## Notes

**Testing Dates**
- Semi/Final Exams: MS/FH Dec. 19-20 & May 21-22

**Milestones test windows**
- Winter 2019 EOC (FCHS only)
- December 2 to December 13, 2019
- Spring 2020 EOC (HS courses)

April 27 to May 15, 2020
- Spring 2020 EOG (3rd-8th grades)
- April 22 to May 15, 2020

**Days for Spring Break and Holidays can be used to make up days missed due to inclement weather or other reasons**
# Fannin County School System

All administrative personnel can be reached by email using their first initial last name @fannin.k12.ga.us
(example: dmesser@fannin.k12.ga.us)

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<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Fax</th>
<th>Principal</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blue Ridge Elementary</td>
<td>706-632-5772</td>
<td>632-6069</td>
<td>Dr. April Hodges, Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>224 East Highland Street</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Gini Bell, Asst. Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Ridge, GA 30513</td>
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<tr>
<td>East Fannin Elementary</td>
<td>706-374-6418</td>
<td>374-2470</td>
<td>Matt Price, Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Elementary Circle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Andrea Crump, Asst. Principal</td>
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<td>Morganton, GA 30560</td>
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<tr>
<td>West Fannin Elementary</td>
<td>706-492-3644</td>
<td>492-4523</td>
<td>Lucas Roof, Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5060 Blue Ridge Drive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Alison Danner, Asst. Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Ridge, GA 30513</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fannin Middle School</td>
<td>706-632-6100</td>
<td>632-0461</td>
<td>Keith Nuckolls, Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4560 Old Highway 76</td>
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<td>Martha F. Williams, Asst. Principal</td>
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<td>Mark Young, Asst. Principal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fannin High School</td>
<td>706-632-2081</td>
<td>632-6908</td>
<td>Erik Cioffi, Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>360 Rebel Circle</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Theresa Dillard, Asst. Principal</td>
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<td>Blue Ridge, GA 30513</td>
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<td>Dr. Scott Ramsey, Asst. Principal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fannin Co. Athletic Depart.</td>
<td>706-632-3111</td>
<td>632-3121</td>
<td>David Henson, Athletic Director</td>
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<tr>
<td>360 Rebel Circle</td>
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<td>706-632-2013</td>
<td>632-6552</td>
<td>Patricia DuBois, FC CTAE Director</td>
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<tr>
<td>FC Agriculture &amp; Environmental</td>
<td>706-946-2055</td>
<td>946-2056</td>
<td>Rhonda Mathews</td>
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<tr>
<td>Science Facility</td>
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<td>Fannin Co. Sch. System Cannery</td>
<td>706-632-0208</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rhonda Mathews</td>
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<tr>
<td>811 Summit Street</td>
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<tr>
<td>FCSS Technology Center</td>
<td>706-258-2791</td>
<td>258-3748</td>
<td>Heather Finley, Director</td>
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<td>FCSS Nutrition Department</td>
<td>706-258-2619</td>
<td>258-2784</td>
<td>Candy Sisson, Director</td>
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<td>Bus Garage</td>
<td>706-632-7802</td>
<td>632-0068</td>
<td>Denver Foster, Transportation Director</td>
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<td>Maintenance Shop</td>
<td>706-946-2010</td>
<td>632-9772</td>
<td>Darren Danner, Asst. Superintendent, Maintenance and Facility Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2088 East First Street</td>
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<tr>
<td>Board of Education</td>
<td>706-632-3771</td>
<td>632-7583</td>
<td>Dr. Michael Gwatney, Superintendent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2290 East First Street</td>
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