



EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

Thomaston-Upson County Schools
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Thomaston, Georgia 30286
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Revised 01/2015

WELCOME

Thank you for choosing to be a part of Thomaston-Upson County Schools this year. Our Mission is “Excellence in Education...Every Individual, Every Day,” and together we have a unique opportunity to share this Mission for Thomaston-Upson County Schools.

As we strive for success in making a difference in our community, we know that we can achieve our goals by developing and maintaining relationships based on mutual trust, cooperation, respect, dignity and consideration of others.

We wish for all employees a successful, challenging, enjoyable and rewarding experience with Thomaston-Upson County Schools!

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This handbook has been prepared to assist you with understanding the policies, regulations and procedures pertaining to your employment with Thomaston-Upson County Schools. It is prepared for informational purposes only and its contents should in no way be interpreted as a contract between the Thomaston-Upson County Board of Education and any of its employees.

It is the responsibility of each employee to review and follow the policies and regulations of the Board of Education which affect his/her employment. As with any handbook, it is a summary of policies and any questions for clarification or understanding should be directed to your supervisor. The Thomaston-Upson County School Board Policy Manual is available online at the Georgia School Boards Association and may be accessed through the home page of the Thomaston-Upson County Schools at www.upson.k12.ga.us. From the *Our District* tab, select *Board of Education*, then *eBOARD Website*. Personnel policies are Item G under the *Policies* tab.

Board policies are reviewed and changed from time to time as the need arises. The Thomaston-Upson County School District reserves the right to change any of its policies, including those printed in this handbook. New policies become effective on the date determined by the Thomaston-Upson County Board of Education. It is recommended that employees review the policies from time to time to assure compliance. Policies which are printed in this handbook may have been superseded by more recent policies.

Cafeteria Plan/IRS Section 125

Under a special, approved authorization from the IRS, the cafeteria plan for fringe benefits is available to all employees. If selected, the plan provides that deductions for the selected fringe benefits will be made from the monthly-annual salary before federal taxes, state taxes and social security are computed. The result is a significant savings each month which results in more take-home compensation. Each employee must provide written authorization for entry into this program.

Our "Cafeteria" Program gives you a "menu" from which to pick and choose among different optional benefit plans. You will find a variety of limits and coverage within these product lines:

1. Individual and Dependent Dental Insurance
2. Supplemental and Dependent Life Insurance
3. Individual and Dependent Vision Insurance
4. Cancer Supplement
5. Hospital Intensive Care Supplement
6. Disability Income Insurance

Certification

The teaching certificate is a most important document as relates to the employment of a teacher, administrator and/or paraprofessional educator. State and federal law mandates that valid certificates be held for all certified positions.

It is each employee's responsibility to know the status of his/her certification and to keep certification current. Applications for changes in certification are available in the Personnel Office and on the website of the Georgia Professional Standards Commission at www.gapsc.com. All appropriate information must be completed and submitted in a timely fashion. The Thomaston-Upson County Board of Education will not accept responsibility for omissions regarding an individual's certificate, though the Personnel Office will assist in every possible manner.

As a courtesy, the Personnel Office sends renewal information, forms and reminders. Completed packets with requested documentation are returned the Personnel Department for processing.

Certification: Changes

Upgrades to certificates which will result in a salary increase should be requested through the Personnel Department in order to assure that there is not a delay in the salary increase. Employees requesting upgrades through the school district are exempt from the \$20 PSC fee. It is very important that all information be received in Personnel Department promptly for electronic processing through the Georgia Professional Standards Commission. This expedites the process and assures that the school district receives the proper notification when the change in certification is complete.

Certificate: Renewal

All certificated employees of the Thomaston-Upson County School District must maintain valid Georgia certificates as stated in the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (PSC). Visit the GAPSC web site at www.gapsc.com for a complete list of certification rules.

Chain of Command

The school system's chain of command is designed to promote the overall effectiveness of school programs. If there is a question or problem to be resolved, staff at the local school level will follow the chain of command established by the principal. The principal is directly responsible to the Deputy Superintendent and Superintendent.

Clocking In And Out at the School/Work Place

All personnel in the Thomaston-Upson County School district must keep a time in/time out record by either clocking in or signing in as designated by the Principal.

Compensation

Teachers and other certified personnel are paid on the State Salary Schedule. Placement on the salary schedule is determined by current, valid certification, and years of verified prior teaching experience. It is the responsibility of the employee to provide documentation required for placement on the schedule. In addition to the state base salary, the Thomaston-Upson County Board of Education provides an annual local supplement, contingent upon availability of funding. A salary schedule for State certified salaries for the current school year may be obtained from the Georgia Department of Education website, www.gdoe.org.

Certified personnel are paid according to Georgia Department of Education and Georgia Professional Standards Rules. The employee contract is contingent upon the employee securing and continuing to hold a valid teaching certificate issued by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission. A lack/loss of a valid certificate shall result in termination of the employee's contract.

All support personnel are paid from Board-approved salary scales. Pay is based upon the number of days worked per year, and number of hours worked per day. Verified experience and education determine initial placement on the salary scale.

Conduct

Employees should conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times. Unseemly conduct and unbecoming language in the presence of students and fellow workers will not be tolerated.

Certificated Personnel (teachers, administrators, paraprofessionals, etc.):

505-6-.01 THE CODE OF ETHICS FOR EDUCATORS Effective October 15, 2014

(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) "Certificate" refers to any teaching, service, or leadership certificate, license, or permit issued by authority of the Georgia Professional Standards Commission.
- (b) "Child endangerment" occurs when an educator disregards a substantial and/or unjustifiable risk of bodily harm to the student.
- (c) "Educator" is a teacher, school or school system administrator, or other education personnel who hold a certificate issued by the Georgia 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.
- (d) "Student" is any individual enrolled in the state's public or private schools from preschool through grade 12 or any individual between and including the ages of 3 and 17 under the age of 18. For the purposes of the Code of Ethics and Standards of Professional Conduct for Educators, the enrollment period for a graduating student ends on August 31 of the year of graduation.
- (e) "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 Georgia 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.
- (f) "Revocation" is the invalidation of any certificate held by the educator.
- (g) "Denial" is the refusal to grant initial certification to an applicant for a certificate.
- (h) "Suspension" is the temporary invalidation of any certificate for a period of time specified by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission.
- (i) "Reprimand" admonishes the certificate holder for his or her conduct. The reprimand cautions that further unethical conduct will lead to a more severe action.
- (j) "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.
- (k) "Monitoring" is the quarterly appraisal of the educator's conduct by the Georgia 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.
- (l) "No Probable Cause" is a determination by the Georgia 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 who are 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 premises or at a school-related activity while under the influence of, possessing, using, or consuming illegal or unauthorized drugs; and*
 2. *being on school 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 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 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: Abandonment of Contract - An educator shall fulfill all of the terms and obligations detailed in the contract with the local board of education or education agency for the duration of the contract. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. abandoning the contract for professional services without prior release from the contract by the employer, and
2. willfully refusing to perform the services required by a contract.

(i) Standard 9: 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.

(j) Standard 10: Professional Conduct - An educator shall demonstrate conduct that follows generally recognized professional standards and preserves the dignity and integrity of the teaching profession. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to 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.

(k) Standard 11: 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, personnel director, superintendent, 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 (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 (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; 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 superintendent's designee for certification 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.

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

Classified (Support) Personnel STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

Employees who work together on the job should follow established guidelines concerning their conduct and relationships. It is your responsibility as an employee to follow common courtesy when dealing with other workers and supervisors. The Thomaston-Upson County School District shall take a constructive approach to disciplinary matters to insure that all employees are permitted to work in a positive atmosphere.

The Thomaston-Upson County Board of Education reserves the right to search employee personal effects, such as purses, toolboxes, desks, lockers, and closets on the Thomaston-Upson County Board of Education's property.

Violations of standards of conduct and job performance will result in one of the following forms of corrective action:

1. Oral warning
2. Written warning
3. Suspension without pay
4. Discharge and termination from employment

The corrective action shall be based on the seriousness of the infraction, the past record of the employee and the circumstances surrounding the matter.

Although there is no way to list every possible violation of standards of conduct, the following is a partial list of examples of infractions, which shall result in corrective action.

1. Falsifying employment application, time card/sheet, or personnel documents or other Board of Education documents or records.
2. Unauthorized possession of Thomaston-Upson County Board of Education or employee property.
3. Gambling, carrying weapons or explosives, violating criminal laws on Board of education property or violating Board of Education policies or regulations.

4. Fighting, throwing things, horseplay, practical jokes, or other disorderly conduct which may endanger the well-being or safety of any employee or student.
5. Engaging in acts of dishonesty, fraud, theft or sabotage.
6. Improper use of system/school tax exemption ID number.
7. Improper use, unauthorized use or theft of school/system funds.
8. Threatening, intimidating, coercing, using abusive or vulgar blasphemous language, sexual harassment, or interfering with the performance of other employees.
9. Insubordination or refusals to comply with instructions or failure to perform reasonable duties which are assigned by a supervisor.
10. Unauthorized use of Thomaston-Upson County Board of Education material, vehicles, time, equipment, buildings or property.
11. Damaging or destroying Thomaston-Upson County Board of Education property due to careless or willful act.
12. Conduct which the Thomaston-Upson County Board of Education determines to reflect adversely on the school district or employee.

Confidentiality

Much of what personnel may see or hear in schools is confidential by law. Any information concerning student achievement and behavior is confidential. The confidentiality rights of students are protected through state and federal regulations, and employees become liable for protecting students' rights. Confidential information regarding students or staff is not to be discussed in the community. A breach of this confidentiality can result in termination of employment.

Policy: Criminal Background Check

The Board of Education is cognizant of the importance of protecting the employees and students of the school system from employing persons who are known to have dangerous propensities.

All personnel, certificated as well as non-certificated, shall be fingerprinted and have a criminal record check before being employed by the Board of Education.

All certificated personnel shall have a criminal record check made as required above upon any certificate renewal application to the Professional Standards Commission.

All non-certificated personnel shall have subsequent criminal record checks every 5th year of employment.

The Board shall have no liability for defamation, invasion of privacy, or other claim based upon good faith action as provided for by state law. Any disciplinary action taken against an employee as a result of information obtained through a records check shall be governed by the provisions of O.C.G.A. 20-2-940 (Fair Dismissal Act).

Board Policy GAK

Adopted: 08/24/1976

Deferred Compensation Plan

Currently the Thomaston-Upson County Board of Education offers a deferred compensation (before tax savings) plan through approved vendors listed under our official plan document as mandated by Internal Revenue Code. Representatives

for approved vendors meet with employees periodically throughout the year. The third party administrator for TUCS Plan is TSA Consulting Group, Inc. which administers the Plan to assure IRS compliance. Any request for change, withdrawal, hardship, benefits commencement, etc. should be routed to TSA. Further information is available at www.tsacg.com, or at 1-888-796-3786, Option 4.

Direct Deposit

Direct deposit is mandatory for all Thomaston-Upson County Schools employees. The first paycheck after director deposit enrollment is a live check to allow for pre-note processing to confirm account information.

Policy: Dress Code

The Thomaston-Upson County Board of Education believes that teachers and other certificated faculty members who dress in a professional manner command greater respect and are held in higher esteem by parents, students, and members of the general public. Research also maintains that teachers who dress professionally are able to maintain a better learning environment.

With this research in mind, the Board hereby establishes a policy requiring all teachers, school administrators, and other members of the instructional staff, including paraprofessional and office staff, to dress in a professional manner and style consistent with the dress of those professions.

Guidelines

- 1. Dress which is too short, improper fitting, or overly casual is inappropriate for school wear.*
- 2. Shorts (other than city shorts), jeans (other than dress jeans) and sweat suits are not appropriate for daily wear. Coaches' shorts should be appropriate and should be worn only in physical education areas.*
- 3. School administrators may establish days for special dress if appropriate for school related activities.*

*Adopted: 09/09/1996
Last Revised: 01/14/2014*

All employees are expected to maintain an appropriate appearance that is neat, clean, and represents a businesslike approach to our jobs. Bus drivers and bus monitors will follow the dress code provided by the Director of Transportation. Custodians, school food assistants, and maintenance workers shall wear any uniforms provided for employees by the Board of Education.

Policy: Drug-Free Workplace/Staff Rights and Responsibilities

The Thomaston-Upson County Board of Education is concerned with the well being of all employees of the school system. The Board recognizes that a drug-free workplace encourages employee productivity and promotes the accomplishment of the system's missions and goals. In accordance with the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1990, the Board of Education hereby declares that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, sale and possession of controlled substances, other dangerous drugs or alcohol are prohibited in the workplace for all school system employees.

Effective immediately, any location at which Board of Education business is conducted is declared to be a drug-free workplace.

- 1. Any public 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 report such offense within 5 days to the Superintendent or a designee and shall be suspended from public employment for a period of not less than two months. Any such employee shall be required as a condition of completion of suspension to complete a drug*

abuse treatment and education program licensed under Chapter 5 of Title 26 and approved by the Board of Education. Any such person shall be ineligible for any public employment for a period of three months from the date of conviction.

2. *Any public employee who is convicted for a second or subsequent time, under the laws of this state, the United States, or any other state, or any criminal offense involving the manufacture, distribution, sale, or possession of a controlled substance, marijuana, or a dangerous drug shall be terminated from public employment and shall be ineligible for other public employment for a period of five years from the most recent date of conviction.*

The suspension, expulsion, and ineligibility sanctions prescribed in this chapter, O.C.G.A. 45-23-1 et seq., are intended as minimum sanctions and nothing in this chapter shall be construed to prohibit the Board from establishing and implementing additional or more stringent sanctions for criminal offenses and other conduct involving the unlawful manufacture, distribution, sale, or possession of a controlled substance, marijuana, or a dangerous drug.

On or after July 1, 1990, if, prior to an arrest for an offense involving a controlled substance, marijuana, or a dangerous drug, an employee notifies the Board of Education or 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 and approved by the Board of Education, the employee shall be entitled to maintain the employee's 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 a supervisor of the employee or other person 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 Code section shall be available to an employee only once during a five-year period and shall apply to any employee who has refused to be tested or who has tested positive for a controlled substance, marijuana, or a dangerous drug.

An employee who has signed a fourth year contract with the school system, as defined under O.C.G.A. 20-2-940, shall be offered a hearing as provided for under the Fair Dismissal Act 20-2-940 et seq.

The Superintendent of Schools shall develop a drug-free awareness program to inform employees of the following:

- *The dangers of drug abuse or alcohol in the workplace.*
- *State Board of Education policy GAM (Staff Rights and Responsibilities: Drug-Free Workplace) and any accompanying administrative procedures concerning the maintenance of a drug-free workplace.*
- *Any available drug counseling, rehabilitation; and employee assistance programs.*
- *Any penalties to be imposed upon employees for drug abuse violations occurring in the workplace.*

Entities contracting with the Board of Education shall, as a condition of the contract, assure a drug-free workplace as required under the U.S. Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988. For contracts, a drug-free workplace means a geographic location at which individuals are directly engaged in the performance of work pursuant to a contract with the Board of Education.

Board Policy GAM

*Adopted: 9/11/1990
Last Revised: 1/8/2013*

Policy: Drug-Free Workplace (Drivers)

It is the policy of the Thomaston-Upson Board of Education that all employees who, as a condition of employment and job assignment, must have a Commercial Drivers License, hereafter referred to as drivers, shall be tested for misuse of alcohol or use of controlled substances. Such tests shall include pre-employment and/or pre-duty testing, reasonable suspicion testing, random testing, post-accident alcohol and controlled substance testing, and follow-up testing. In addition to tests for alcohol abuse, tests shall be conducted to detect the use of marijuana, cocaine, opiates, phencyclidine (PCP), and amphetamines (including methamphetamine).

All drivers and driver applicants shall be notified that they are so covered, and that tests for alcohol abuse and use of controlled substances will be administered from time to time as provided by this policy. Drivers cannot refuse to submit to such tests while employed by the Board of Education.

No driver shall report for duty or remain on duty while having an alcohol concentration greater than 0.00. Any driver having an alcohol concentration greater than 0.00 must be referred to a qualified substance abuse professional. No driver shall report for duty or remain on duty when using any controlled substance, except when the use is pursuant to the instructions of a physician who has advised the driver in writing that the substance does not adversely affect the driver's ability to perform safety sensitive functions and safely operate a commercial motor vehicle. Drivers shall be required to inform their supervisors of any therapeutic drug use.

Pre-Employment/Pre-Duty Testing

Prior to the first time a driver performs safety-sensitive functions, the driver shall undergo testing for alcohol and controlled substances.

Post-Accident Testing

In the event of an accident involving directly or indirectly a school district bus or other commercial vehicle, the driver(s) of the vehicle shall be tested for alcohol and controlled substance use within two hours after the accident. If it is not possible to administer the test within two hours, the Superintendent shall prepare and maintain on file for inspection a record stating the reasons the test was not promptly administered. Drivers who are subject to post-accident testing shall remain readily available for such testing. Otherwise, the driver is considered to have refused to submit to testing and employment shall be terminated. Nothing in this policy shall be construed to require the delay of necessary medical attention for injured people following an accident, or to prevent a driver from leaving the scene of an accident for a period necessary to obtain assistance in responding to the accident.

Random Testing

Random testing for alcohol abuse and use of controlled substances shall be unannounced and conducted quarterly. They shall be conducted as follows:

- 1. For alcohol abuse, twenty-five percent (25%) of drivers shall be chosen for random testing each calendar year.*
- 2. For use of controlled substances, fifty percent (50%) of drivers shall be chosen for random testing each calendar year.*

The percentage of drivers tested may be adjusted with written approval of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

Selection of drivers to be tested shall be made by a scientifically valid method that ensures that each covered employee has an equal chance of being tested each time selection is made i.e., a random number table of computer-based random number generator that is matched with employees' social security numbers, or other comparable identifying numbers.

Drivers who are notified that they have been selected for random testing shall proceed immediately to the test site. Drivers shall only be tested for alcohol while performing safety sensitive functions, just before performing safety-sensitive functions, or just after the driver has ceased to perform safety-sensitive functions.

Reasonable Suspicion Testing

Reasonable suspicion shall be cause for a driver to be required to undergo testing for alcohol abuse or use of controlled substances. Reasonable suspicion must be based upon specific contemporaneous, articulable observations by a qualified supervisor or school official concerning the appearance, behavior, speech or body odors of a driver, or indications of the chronic and withdrawal effects of controlled substances. Such observations must have been made by a qualified supervisor or school official during, just preceding, or just after the period of the workday that the driver is required to perform safety-sensitive functions. Within 24 hours of the observed behavior, a written record shall be made of the observations leading to a controlled substance reasonable suspicion testing and signed by the supervisor or school official who made the observations.

Persons designated by the Board to be qualified to determine whether reasonable suspicion exists to require a driver to undergo testing must have received at least sixty (60) minutes of training on alcohol misuse and at least an additional sixty (60) minutes of training on controlled substances use. The training must have covered the physical, behavioral, speech, and performance indicators of probable alcohol misuse and use of controlled substances.

Follow-up Testing

In the event it is determined that a driver is in need of assistance in resolving problems associated with alcohol misuse and/or use of controlled substance, the Superintendent shall ensure that the driver is:

- 1. advised of the resources available to the driver in evaluating and resolving problems associated with misuse and/or use of controlled substances;*
- 2. evaluated by a substance abuse professional who shall determine what assistance, if any the driver needs in resolving problems associated with alcohol misuse and controlled substance use;*
- 3. Drivers who are guilty of controlled substance abuse 3. shall be terminated.*

Before a driver returns to duty, the driver shall:

- 1. undergo a return-to-duty alcohol test with a result of an alcohol concentration of 0.00;*
- 2. be evaluated to determine that the driver has properly followed any rehabilitation program that was prescribed.*
- 3. be subjected to unannounced follow-up testing administered by the school district, at least six (6) times during the first twelve (12) months following return to duty.*

Confidential Handling of Driver Test Information

Driver alcohol abuse and controlled substance use testing information is confidential and may be released only to the appropriate substance abuse professional. Any other release of this information is only with the driver's written consent. Non-compliance with this policy or violation of the federal or state regulations may result in severe disciplinary action including suspension or dismissal.

Board Policy GAMA

Date Adopted: 12/5/1994

Last Revised: 1/14/2014

Policy: Equal Opportunity Employment

The Thomaston-Upson Board of Education is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination in relation to race, color, religion, national origin, political affiliation, age handicap, disability, or sex. This policy prevails in all matters concerning employees, (employment, retention, advancement), students, parents, the general citizenry, educational programs and services, and persons with whom the Board does business.

In keeping with the Board's commitment and the requirement of applicable state and federal law, the Board and staff will strive to remove any vestige of discrimination in employment, assignment and promotion of personnel, in educational services and opportunities offered students; in location and use of facilities; in educational materials; and in all business transactions conducted by the Board.

Title IX Compliance

It shall be the policy of the Board of Education that no person (student or employee) shall on the basis of sex be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity or in recruitment for employment and related benefits.

The Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction has been designated as the employee responsible for coordination of efforts to assure compliance with Title IX mandates.

Board Policy GAAA

*Adopted 8/8/2002
Last Revised 11/08/2011*

Evaluations: Certified Personnel

The Superintendent shall ensure that annual teacher evaluations are in accordance with state law and shall at minimum take into consideration the following:

1. The role of the teacher in meeting the school's student achievement goals, including the academic gains of students assigned to the teacher;
2. Observations of the teacher by the principal and assistant principals during the delivery of instruction and at other times as appropriate;
3. Participation in professional development opportunities and the application of concepts learned to classroom and school activities;
4. Communication and interpersonal skills as they relate to interaction with students, parents, other teacher, administrators, and other school personnel;
5. Timelines and attendance for assigned responsibilities;
6. Adherence to school and local school system procedures and rules; and
7. Personal conduct while in performance of school duties.

Evaluations: Support Personnel

All support personnel employed by the school district shall be evaluated annually and periodically by their immediate supervisor. The job performance evaluation allows the supervisor to discuss overall job performance and summarize both formal and informal job performance discussions held throughout the year. It will review strengths and also point out ways to improve job performance. Employees are encouraged to discuss the evaluation with the supervisor. The purpose of the evaluation is to assist in reaching goals and communicating expectations, as well as improvement in job performance.

Insurance

The following insurance programs are available through payroll deduction for permanent, full-time employees: life, health, disability, cancer, dental, and vision.

Full-time employees are eligible for enrollment in the State Health Benefit Plan (SHBP) governed by the Georgia Department of Community Health. The member's share of the premium is payroll deducted each month. The system's cost for each member is paid at the following rates:

Certified: \$945.00 per member, per month

Support: \$596.20 per member, per month

A \$10,000 life insurance is provided to every permanent, full-time employee free of charge, subject to appropriate, continued funding. An additional, optional amount may be purchased according to established guides and rates. This coverage is obtained upon employment and may be modified during the announced open enrollment period.

Leave

Absence Protocol

In the event of absence, employees should follow the absence protocol set by the administrator at his/her work location. Absences must be reported on a daily basis.

Extended Leave Procedures

Employees who are absent from work for ten (10) days or more must complete request for extended leave forms which may include but are not limited to Family Medical Leave forms and Physician Certification forms.

Policy: Federal Family and Medical Leave Act

It is the purpose of this policy to set out in summary form the provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Act ("the Act" or "FMLA") and its implementing regulations. The Thomaston-Upson Board of Education does not intend by this policy to create any additional rights to leave not provided by the Act; provided, however, the Board does wish to extend the rights of the Act to certain employees who have worked at least 12 months for the Board of Education. The Thomaston-Upson Board of Education does intend to elect certain options as the Act authorizes. Any portion of this policy inconsistent or contrary to the Act is unintentional and shall not be given effect. As to the interpretation of this policy, the Board's employees should look to the Act itself and its regulations.

A. ELIGIBLE EMPLOYEES

Employees of the Thomaston-Upson Board of Education who have been employed by the Board for at least 12 months and who have worked at least 1250 hours during the 12 month period immediately preceding the commencement of the leave are eligible to take unpaid leave under the FMLA.

B. DEFINITIONS

"Covered Active Duty" means, for members of the regular Armed Forces, duty during deployment to a foreign country; for members of a Reserves component of the Armed Forces, duty during deployment to a foreign country under a call or order to active duty pursuant to federal law.

"Covered Service Member" (for qualifying exigency leave) means the employee's spouse, child or parent under a federal call or order to covered active duty.

"Covered Service member" (for military caregiver leave) means the employee's spouse, child, parent or next of kin who is (1) a current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy, is otherwise in outpatient status, or is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list, for a serious injury or illness or (2) a veteran who was a member of the Armed Forces at any time during the five years preceding the date on which the veteran undergoes such medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy.

"Instructional employee" means an employee whose principal function is to teach and instruct students in a class, a small group, or an individual setting.

"Next of Kin" of a covered service member means the nearest blood relative other than the covered service member's spouse, parent, son or daughter, in the following order of priority: blood relatives granted legal custody, brothers and sisters, grandparents, aunts and uncles, and first cousins, unless the covered service member has specifically designated in writing another blood relative for purposes of FMLA caregiver leave.

"Outpatient Status," with respect to a covered service member, means the status of a member of the Armed Forces assigned to either a military medical treatment facility as an outpatient; or a unit established for the purpose of providing command and control of members of the Armed Forces receiving medical care as outpatients.

"Parent" means a biological, adoptive, step or foster mother or father or one who acted in place of a parent when the employee was a child. The term "parent" does not include parent "in law."

"Parent of covered service member" means a biological, adoptive, step or foster parent or any other individual who acted in place of a parent of the covered service member. The term does not include parents "in law."

"Serious Health Condition" means an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves inpatient care requiring an overnight stay in a hospital, hospice or residential medical care facility or continuing treatment by a health care provider, all as further defined in the FMLA regulations.

"Serious Injury or Illness" means, an injury or illness incurred by a covered service member in the line of duty on active duty (or that existed before the active duty and was aggravated by line of active duty service) that may render the service member medically unfit to perform the duties of the member's office, grade, rank, or rating. In the case of a veteran, "serious injury or illness" means a qualifying injury or illness, as defined by the Secretary of Labor, incurred during or aggravated by active duty during the five years before the undergoing treatment, recuperation or therapy, and that manifested itself before or after the member became a veteran.

"Son or daughter" means a biological, adopted or foster child, a stepchild, a legal ward, or a child for whom the employee acts as a parent. The son or daughter must be under age 18 or, if the son or daughter is age 18 or older, he/she must be incapable of self-care due to a mental or physical disability at the time FMLA leave is to begin.

"Son or daughter of a covered service member" means a covered service member's biological, adopted, or foster child, stepchild, legal ward, or a child for whom the covered service member acted in the place of a parent, and who is of any age.

"Spouse" means a husband or wife as defined or recognized under Georgia law.

C. AMOUNT AND TYPE OF LEAVE TAKEN

An eligible employee may request leave for one or more of the following reasons:

- 1. Birth of a son or daughter and to care for the newborn child;*
- 2. Adoption or foster placement with the employee of a son or daughter and to care for the newly placed child;*

3. *To care for the employee's spouse, son, daughter or parent, if that person has a serious health condition;*
4. *Serious health condition of the employee that prevents the employee from performing his/her job functions;*
5. *Any qualifying exigency arising from the fact that the employee's family member (the covered service member) is on covered active duty. Qualifying exigencies are defined as short-notice deployment (seven or less calendar days); military events and related activities; child care and school activities; financial and legal arrangements; counseling; rest and recuperation (up to five days per instance); post-deployment activities; additional activities where the employer and employee agree that the leave is an exigency and agree to both timing and duration of the leave; and*
6. *Military caregiver leave to care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness if the employee is the spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin of the service member.*

In the event of the birth, adoption or foster placement of a son or daughter, all leave must be completed within twelve months after the birth, adoption or foster placement.

Except as provided below, an employee may take up to a total of 12 weeks leave during any twelve-month period. A "rolling year" shall be used to determine the twelve-month period during which the leave entitlement may occur. That is, each time an employee takes FMLA leave, the remaining leave entitlement would be any balance of the number of weeks that has not been used during the immediately preceding 12 months. See 29 C.F.R. § 825.200(b)(4).

If both spouses work for the District and both are eligible for FMLA leave, they are authorized to take only a combined total of 12 weeks leave during any one 12 month period to care for a newborn or adopted child, a child placed with the employee for foster care, or a parent with a serious health condition. Both spouses are authorized to take leave for twelve (12) weeks to care for a spouse or child with a serious health condition.

An eligible employee is eligible to take up to 26 weeks of military caregiver leave during a "single 12-month period." The "single 12-month period" begins on the date the employee first takes military caregiver leave and ends 12 months after that date, regardless of the method used to determine the leave entitlement period for other FMLA reasons.

If both spouses work for the District and both are eligible for FMLA leave, they are authorized to take only a combined total of 26 weeks during the "single 12-month period" described above for military caregiver leave or a combination of military caregiver leave and leave taken for other FMLA reasons.

The District will require that any accrued paid leave (sick, personal, vacation, or any other paid leave) be substituted for all or a part of the otherwise unpaid FMLA leave under the terms and conditions of the District's normal leave policies. Because leave pursuant to an employee's disability benefit plan or workers' compensation absence is not unpaid, the provision for substitution of accrued paid leave is not applicable in such cases.

D. INTERMITTENT OR REDUCED LEAVE

An employee may take leave on an intermittent or reduced leave schedule where it is medically necessary due to the serious health condition of a covered family member, the employee, or the serious injury or illness of a covered service member, or when necessary because of a qualifying exigency. The District will require a certification, in the form designated by the District, to document the necessity of such intermittent leave or reduced schedule leave.

E. NOTIFICATION OF LEAVE

If the need for FMLA leave is foreseeable, an employee requesting leave must provide at least 30 days advance notice to the Assistant Superintendent. If such advance notice is not possible, the employee must give notice as soon as practicable, which means as soon as both possible and practical, taking into account all of the facts and circumstances in the individual case. If an employee does not provide at least 30 days notice of foreseeable leave, he or she must explain why such notice was not practicable if so requested by the District. When the need for leave is not foreseeable, an employee must provide notice as soon as practicable, which generally should be according to the District's usual and customary leave requirements. When planning medical treatment, the employee should make a reasonable effort to schedule the treatment, subject to the approval of the health care provider, so that any corresponding leave will not disrupt unduly the operations of the District.

Employees must provide sufficient information for the District to reasonably determine whether the FMLA may apply to the leave request. When an employee seeks leave due to an FMLA-qualifying reason for which the District has previously provided FMLA leave, the employee must specifically reference either the previous qualifying reason for leave or the need for FMLA leave.

F. BENEFITS AND RETURN TO WORK

Employees will be eligible to maintain health care benefits provided by the school district while on FMLA leave. The District will pay the employer's portion, if any, of such benefits. The employee will pay the same portion, if any, of such benefits as the employee paid before beginning the leave.

The District may recover any health care benefit premiums paid on behalf of an employee if the employee does not return to work after the leave period has expired, unless the employee did not return due to a serious health condition of the employee or the employee's spouse, parent or child, or a serious injury or illness of a covered service member or other circumstances beyond the employee's control. The District may require certification from the health care provider that a serious health condition of the employee or family member, or the covered service member's serious injury or illness, prevented the employee from returning to work.

With the exception of paid vacation, personal, sick, or any other paid leave required to be substituted for unpaid leave under Section C above, the employee's absence during leave will not alter benefits which the employee accrued before taking leave. Any accrued benefits will not be lost during the leave.

Upon return from leave, the employee is entitled to be reinstated to a position equivalent to the one the employee held when he/she left on FMLA leave, with equivalent pay, benefits and other terms and conditions of employment. Upon proper notice, however, the District may deny reinstatement under this policy to an employee whose salary is in the highest 10% of the employees employed by the school district if such denial is necessary to prevent substantial and grievous economic injury to the District's operation, as determined by the District.

G. REQUIRED CERTIFICATION AND REPORTING

The District requires that a request for leave due to a serious health condition of an employee or an employee's family member or a serious injury or illness of a covered service member be supported by certification by the appropriate health care provider of the eligible employee or family member on a form to be provided by the District. This certification for a serious health condition must include (1) the name, address, telephone and fax numbers of the healthcare provider and type of practice/specialization; (2) the approximate date on which the serious health condition commenced, and its probable duration; (3) a statement or description of appropriate medical facts regarding the patient's health condition for which FMLA leave is requested; (4) if the purpose of the leave is to care for a family member, a statement that the employee is needed to care for the family member and an estimate of the frequency and duration of the leave required for such care; (5) if the leave is due to the employee's own serious health condition, a statement that the employee is unable to perform his/her essential job functions, the nature of other work restrictions, and the likely duration of such inability; and (6) if intermittent or reduced schedule leave is requested, information sufficient to establish the medical

necessity for the same and an estimate of the dates and duration of treatments and any periods of recovery. The employer may require that the eligible employee obtain subsequent recertification on a reasonable basis as requested by the District in accordance with the FMLA regulations.

The District, at its own expense, may obtain the opinion of a second health care provider of the District's choice, if the District should choose to do so. If a conflict exists between the opinion in the certification and the second opinion, the District may, at its own expense, obtain a third opinion from a health care provider upon which the District and the employee jointly agree. Such a third opinion as to the necessity for the leave is binding on both the District and the employee.

Upon an employee's return to work after leave for the employee's own serious health condition, the District may require the employee to obtain certification from his/her health care provider that the employee is able to resume work.

The District may require that a first request for leave because of a qualifying exigency arising from active duty or a call to active duty be supported by a copy of the covered service member's active duty orders or other documentation issued by the military. A certification form requesting the required information to support a request for exigency leave will be provided by the District upon request.

The District may require an employee on FMLA leave to report periodically to his/her principal or supervisor on the employee's status and intent to return to work.

H. SPECIAL PROVISIONS

When an instructional employee seeks intermittent leave or leave on a reduced schedule in connection with a family or personal serious health condition or to care for a covered service member that would constitute at least 20% of the total number of working days during which the leave would extend, the District may require the employee to elect to take leave in a block (not intermittently) for the entire period or to transfer to an available alternative position within the school system that is equivalent in pay, for which the employee is qualified, and which better accommodates the intermittent situation.

If an instructional employee begins leave more than five weeks before the end of a semester, the District may require the employee to continue taking leave until the end of the semester if

(a) the leave will last at least three weeks; and

(b) the employee would return to work during the three-week period before the end of the term.

If an instructional employee begins leave for a purpose other than the employee's own serious health condition during the five-week period before the end of the semester, the District may require the employee to continue taking leave until the end of the semester if

(a) the leave will last more than two weeks; and

(b) the employee would return to work during the two-week period before the end of the term.

If an instructional employee begins leave for a purpose other than the employee's own serious health condition during the three-week period before the end of a semester, and the leave will last more than five working days, the District may require the employee to continue taking leave until the end of the semester.

Policy: Leaves And Absences

The Thomaston-Upson Board of Education believes that the school system personnel are entitled to an employment benefit which reduces the risk of monetary losses because of certain recognized absences.

Sick Leave

As provided by law, each person employed in the school system in the capacity of teacher, student services support personnel, administrative and supervisory personnel or bus driver (herein referred to as personnel or employee) shall be entitled to sick leave with full pay computed on the basis of one and one-fourth working days for each completed contract month (school month in case non-certificated). Unused sick leave may be accumulated from one school year to the next up to a maximum of forty-five days except that certificated employees with 10 or more years of professional experience may accumulate a maximum of 50 days. Any sick leave accumulated by an employee pursuant to this section shall be credited to such employee and shall be transferred with such employee when changing employment from one local board of education to another local board of education provided said employee's new position is converted under this section. However, only the state funded 45 days may be transferred from one district to another.

This policy will apply to such personnel regardless of the origin of any funds used to pay their salaries.

Sick leave may be used for personal illness, physical disability (including disability related to maternity) or injury. However, if the Board disagrees with any doctor's statement of disability or ability, it may appoint a physician of the same medical specialty as the employee's physician for the purpose of receiving independent medical judgment; absence necessitated by exposure to contagious disease; absence due to illness or death in the employee's immediate family. The term "immediate family" shall be interpreted to mean spouse, father, mother, brother, sister, child, grandparents, parents of spouse, brothers or sisters of spouse, grandparents of spouse, or a relative living in the residence of the employee.

Personal Leave

A maximum of three (3) days of personal leave may be accumulated by each employee per year. These days are to be deducted from earned sick leave days and do not accumulate beyond three days. Any unused personal is converted back into sick leave. A written request for personal leave must be approved by the principal/supervisor and submitted, three school days in advance, to the Superintendent for consideration. Personal leave may not be granted on the day immediately preceding or following school holidays, during pre-planning or post-planning or on a teacher in-service day.

Maternity Leave

Women affected by pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions must be treated the same for all employment related purposes, including receipt of benefits under fringe benefit programs. Any disabilities or pregnancy and childbirth must be treated the same as disabilities caused or contributed to by other medical conditions under any health or disability insurance or sick leave plan.

An employee who is pregnant shall be entitled to a leave of absence to begin at a time to be determined by the employee, the physician, and the local school superintendent. The employee shall notify the superintendent in writing of her desire to take maternity leave and, except in case of emergency, shall give such notice at least 60 calendar days prior to the date on which her leave is to begin. This notice shall include a doctor's statement of anticipated date of physical disability. The employee may continue in active employment as late into her pregnancy as she desires provided she is able to perform properly the required functions of her job. Final determination of ability to perform properly the required job functions shall be made by the local Board of Education.

An employee who has been granted leave for the period of physical disability only shall be entitled to return to active employment upon presentation of a doctor's statement of physical ability to perform the required functions of the job and shall be assigned to a substantially equivalent position to be approved by the superintendent.

An employee who is granted leave for a period longer than the period of physical disability but not to exceed one full school year, shall be entitled to return to active employment upon written request for reassignment and contingent on a vacancy for which the employee is qualified. Such employee shall be given preference equal to any other applicant returning from a period of physical disability for a vacancy for which she is qualified. In any instance, the employee's return to active employment may be delayed until the beginning of a quarter, or semester, in order to maintain continuity of classroom instruction.

Pregnancy must be treated as any other temporary disability for all job-related purposes. If the employee does not have sufficient leave time accrued to qualify for leave under such a policy, the employee may be granted a leave of absence without pay for a reasonable period of time. At the end of that leave, she must be reinstated to the status which she held when the leave began or to a comparable position, without decrease in rate of compensation or loss of promotional opportunities or other right to privilege of employment. Georgia law confers this right of reinstatement upon a teacher following delivery only when the teacher offers to return immediately following termination of disability; if the teacher obtains a leave greater than the period of her disability, she is not guaranteed a job, but only given a preference in filling any vacancies which occur; and if the leave is greater than one year, all these rights are denied altogether by state law.

Military Leave

The term ordered military duty shall mean any military duty performed in the service of the State or of the United States, including, but not limited to, attendance at any service school or schools conducted by the armed forces of the United States by an employee as a voluntary member of any force of the organized militia or any reserve force or reserve component State or Federal authority, without the consent of the employee.

All employees of the Thomaston-Upson Board of Education, other than those employed on a temporary basis, shall be entitled to military leave for ordered military duty. At the end of such ordered military duty, such employees shall have the right to reinstatement to the position, or substantially equivalent position held, at the beginning of such ordered military duty.

An employee shall be paid a salary or other compensation for a period of absence while engaged in the performance of ordered military duty and while going to and returning from such duty, not exceeding a total of eighteen (18) days in one federal fiscal year and not exceeding eighteen (18) days in any one continuous period of such absence.

In the event the governor declares an emergency and orders an employee to State active duty as a member of the National Guard, such employee shall be paid a salary or other compensation while performing such duty for a period not exceeding thirty (30) days in any one federal fiscal year and not exceeding thirty (30) days in any one continuous period of such State active duty service.

The Thomaston-Upson Board of Education encourages those employees affected by this policy to request military supervisors to schedule military leave days when school is not in session.

Bereavement Leave

The number of days allowed for death in the family shall be five (5). Bereavement days are deducted from accumulated sick leave days. Members of the immediate family shall be confined to spouse, father, mother, child, brother, sister, grandparents, parents of spouse, grandparents of spouse, brothers of spouse, sisters of spouse, or other relatives living in the home.

Leave of Absence

An employee may request and/or be placed on a leave of absence beyond accrued leave time. This employee's leave of absence will be without pay and for a reasonable period of time. At the end of this leave, the employee must be reinstated to the status that was held when the leave began or to a comparable position, without decrease in rate of compensation or loss of promotion opportunities or other right or privilege of employment. If the employee's leave exceeds that approved by the Board, the employee will not be guaranteed a job, but only given a preference in filling any vacancies that occur; and if the leave is for greater than a year, all these rights are denied altogether by state law.

Religious Leave

Reasonable accommodations to the religious needs of the employee shall be made where such accommodations can be made without undue hardships on the school system operation.

Employees released for religious holidays will be required to take personal leave or take leave without pay.

Administrative Leave

The superintendent shall have the authority to place an employee on administrative leave with pay.

Court or Legal Leave

Absences due to court ordered subpoena are considered approved professional absences.

Professional In-service Leave

There shall be neither a deduction in salary nor a deduction from accrued leave days for professional in-service leave that is approved by the Superintendent or Local Board of Education. Professional in-service leave may be used for attending professional meetings, visitations to other schools for the purpose of observing teaching practices, approved professional study, meetings, and workshops or when subpoenaed by the Professional Standards Commission or when serving as a member of the Professional Standards Commission.

Teachers seeking National Board Certification (NBPTS) may be allowed two local professional in-service leave days in addition to the days allowed by the state.

Professional in-service leave may also be granted when it is necessary for teachers to leave early for summer school or to return during preplanning days due to the length of summer school. No deduction in pay will be made for these days.

A written request for Professional in-service leave must be approved by the principal/supervisor and submitted, three school days in advance, to the Superintendent for consideration.

Jury Duty

Personnel will be granted leave to serve as a juror without loss of pay or leave days. The employee may retain up to three (3) days of pay for jury duty and still receive their regular salary. Jury duty pay exceeding three days must be submitted to the Board of Education.

Salary Deduction

Full daily salary will be deducted for each daily absence beyond the maximum accumulated sick leave or unauthorized leave.

Substitute Teacher

Substitute teachers shall be employed from a list of substitute teachers approved by the School Superintendent. A substitute teacher must be on the approved list before payment is made. The Board of Education shall establish a salary schedule for substitute teachers.

A Report of Absence form explaining and confirming reasons for leave shall be filed with the principal for each absence. This report shall be filed by the employee immediately upon returning to work after taking sick leave.

The Thomaston-Upson Board of Education shall not be required to transfer funds to another local Board of Education.

Attendance Incentive

The Thomaston-Upson County Board of Education established an Attendance Incentive Grant paid as follows:

\$200.00 – No absences, no tardies, no early dismissals

(Compensatory days are considered as absences. Professional absences do not count)

Board Policy GARH

Adopted: 9/11/2007

Leaving School Campus During Regular Work Hours

In the event an employee needs to leave campus during the regular workday, the employee must request and **receive approval** from the Principal or an Assistant Principal at the school. The employee must sign out and sign in upon return to the school. The Principal is responsible for creating a procedure for such situations.

In the event that an Administrator needs to leave the school campus, the Administrator must notify the Superintendent or her designee at the Central Office.

Policy: Sick Leave Bank

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Sick Leave Bank is to provide member employees with sick leave upon the exhaustion of all accrued sick leave. Members contribute a portion of their accumulated sick leave to the Bank, and may request withdrawal of sick leave from the Bank, in accordance with the guidelines established by this policy as approved by the Thomaston-Upson Board of Education.

II. ESTABLISHMENT/CONTINUITY

In order for the bank to be established and remain operational, it must be approved by the Board of Education and maintain at least 100 participants.

III. BANK ADMINISTRATION

The Sick Leave Bank shall be administered by a committee appointed by the Superintendent or his/her designee; and composed of three certified representatives, three support representatives, and one individual designated as the Superintendent's representative (votes as necessary in the event of a tie vote). Committee members will serve three-year terms. Annually the committee will elect a chairperson, a vice chairperson, and other such officers as they deem necessary. The Superintendent's representative will serve as recording secretary. Meetings will be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rule of Order.

The responsibilities of the committee are:

- A. To enforce all policies and provisions of the bank.*
- B. To recommend any additions, deletions, or modifications to the Bank's policies or provisions to the Board of Education for approval.*
- C. To consider all requests to withdraw days from the bank.*
- D. To monitor the number of days in the Bank, as reported by the Payroll Department.*
- E. To approve additional levies of sick days to replenish the Bank when the balance reaches a level equal to 50% of its membership.*
- F. To authorize notification of additional levies to the membership.*

IV. BANK MEMBERSHIP

The period for joining the sick leave bank will be from September 1 to October 1 of each school year. All employees who accumulate sick leave are eligible to become members of the Sick Leave Bank provided he/she has worked with the system at least one year and has accumulated at least one day

of sick leave at the time of the membership application. Additional days (up to one per year) shall be assessed as needed to maintain the Bank. Donations of sick leave to the Bank are not refundable or transferrable.

Membership is strictly voluntary. A member may resign from the Bank by giving written notification to the Bank Committee during an open enrollment period. The employee, upon resignation from the Bank, shall not be eligible to withdraw any days already contributed, and shall not be eligible to rejoin except upon approval of the Committee. If employment with the school system ceases, the member is placed on inactive membership. Membership status will be reinstated upon re-employment with the system. Employees on approved leave of absences are considered employed for the purposes of the Sick Leave Bank. Retirees are removed from the Bank and are not eligible to rejoin.

V. WITHDRAWALS OF SICK LEAVE

Members of the Sick Leave Bank shall be eligible to apply for withdrawals of Sick Leave from the Bank provided that:

- A. The employee has been a member of the Sick Leave Bank for thirty (30) calendar days and the sick leave days in the request occur after this waiting period.
- B. The member has been absent due to personal injury, surgery or other illness that is catastrophic in nature (i.e., stroke, cancer, organ transplant, heart attack, trauma accident where major bones are broken). Eligibility also applies to absence due to such catastrophic illness or injury of the member's spouse or child. Disability due to normal pregnancy, childbirth or related medical condition is excluded.
- C. The member's accumulated leave has been exhausted and the member has been absent for five (5) continuous working days without pay.
- D. The member is not receiving Workers' Compensation or other remuneration for the absences provided in part or in full by the Thomaston-Upson Board of Education.

VI. REQUESTS FOR WITHDRAWALS

Requests for withdrawals of leave from the Sick Leave Bank shall be in the form of a letter addressed to the Sick Leave Bank Committee which includes:

- a. name and address
- b. last four digits of social security number
- c. number of days requested (must be in ten [10]-day increments)

The letter must be accompanied by a detailed physician's statement verifying the member's illness, injury, surgery or other temporary disability. The physician's statement shall also attest to the member's incapacity to perform the assigned duties. In the case of illness of the member's spouse or child, a detailed physician's statement verifying the patient's illness, injury, surgery or other temporary disability. The physician's statement shall also attest to the necessity of the member's absence from work to care for the patient.

The maximum number of days any member may receive in any twelve-month period is fifty (50).

All leave granted but not used by the member must be returned to the Sick Leave Bank.

Sick leave granted and used by the member does not have to be repaid except as members are uniformly assessed.

If a member is physically or mentally unable to make a request to the Sick Leave Bank, a family member or agent may file the request on the member's behalf.

Decisions on requests made to the Committee may be appealed to the Board of Education within thirty (30) days of the decision. The letter of appeal must be addressed to the Thomaston-Upson Board of Education and delivered to the office of the Superintendent, 205 Civic Center Drive, Thomaston, Georgia.

Any participating employee withdrawing sick leave shall not be required to replace those days except as a regular contributing member to the Sick Leave Bank.

VII. PROCESSING WITHDRAWAL REQUESTS

Upon receipt of an application, the Sick Leave Bank Committee shall meet and render a decision within twenty (20) working days.

Decisions must reflect a majority vote of committee members voting, and a majority must be present to convene the Committee.

The Committee will use the following criteria in administering the Bank and rendering decisions:

- (a) medical evidence of illness, injury, surgery or disability;*
- (b) applicability of request under Bank Policy.*

VIII. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Rules and provisions of the Sick Leave are subject to approval by the Thomaston-Upson Board of Education. The Board reserves the right to discontinue the Bank at any time.

Pursuant to GA Code 20-2-850(c) an employee may donate up to ten sick leave days to his/her spouse if such spouse is also an employee of the local board for purposes of maternity leave, illness, illness of a family member, or death of a family member.

Board Policy GBRIB(1) & GCRGB(1)

*Adopted 8/14/2007
Last Revised 03/15/2012*

Network and Internet Access

Employee Acceptable Use Policy Policy on Network and Internet Access

Internet access is available to all employees of the Thomaston-Upson County School System. The goal in providing this service to employees is to promote educational excellence in the Thomaston-Upson County School System by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication. Network and Internet users are expected to use the network and Internet as educational resources. The following procedures and guidelines have been established to help ensure appropriate use of the Network and Internet within the Thomaston-Upson County School System.

Privileges

The use of the network and Internet is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use may result in cancellation of this privilege. Based upon the acceptable use guidelines outlined in this document, district administrators will deem what is inappropriate use and the decisions of district administrators will be final. Also, at the direction of a district administrator, the system network administrator may close an account at any time as necessary.

Expectations in Use of the Internet

- a. Employees shall not access material that is obscene or is child pornography.*
- b. Employees shall not write or send abusive messages to others or use inappropriate language.*
- c. Student names and/or photographs are not to be published on the Internet without parental permission on the Thomaston-Upson County School System Contract for Internet and Network Use.*
- d. In addition, the following conduct is prohibited: accessing, sending, creating, or posting materials or communications that are – damaging to another person’s reputation, abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening or demeaning to another person’s gender, race, or ethnicity, contrary to the school system’s policy on harassment, harassing, or illegal.*

Any violation of the Acceptable Use Policy may result in loss of access to the network and/or Internet. Additional disciplinary action may be determined in keeping with existing procedures and practices. When and where applicable, law enforcement agencies may be involved.

Expectations for Communicating Electronically

Thomaston-Upson County Schools (TUCS) recognizes that today's students and parents engage in electronic forms of communication for their daily interactions with friends, family, and their larger social networks. TUCS too has turned to e-mail, websites, blogs, text messaging, and use of public social media networks such as Twitter, Facebook, and others to communicate with similar groups. Whereas these forms of communications are dynamic, mobile, and quickly reach their audience through technologies that have become an integral part of our online lives, they may, in some circumstances, not meet the public and professional standards for communicating with students and parents.

TUCS realizes that part of 21st century learning is adapting to the changing methods of communication. The importance of staff, students and parents engaging, collaborating, learning, and sharing in these digital environments is a part of 21st century learning. To this aim, TUCS has developed the Expectations for Communicating Electronically section of the system's Acceptable Use Policy to provide direction for employees when participating in online social media activities. It is important to create an atmosphere of trust and individual accountability; keeping in mind that information produced by TUCS employees is a reflection of the entire district. By accessing, creating or contributing to any blogs, wikis, or other social media for classroom or district use, you agree to abide by these expectations. Please read them carefully before posting or commenting on any blog or creating any classroom blog, wiki and/or podcast.

All employees must adhere to the Georgia Code of Ethics for Educators (<http://www.gapsc.com/Rules/Current/Ethics/505-6-.01.pdf>) as stated in TUCS Board Policy.

The expectations outlined in this document are designed for the purpose of

1. Protecting students, staff, and the District;
2. Raising awareness of acceptable ways to use electronic communication tools when communicating with students and parents; and
3. Raising awareness of the positive and negative outcomes that may result in using these tools with students and parents.

The following is a set of expectations that all members of the TUCS professional community will adhere to when communicating with students and parents electronically.

Does the communication pass the TAP Test? Electronic communication with students and parents should always be **Transparent, Accessible and Professional** as defined below.

1. **The communication is transparent.** – ALL electronic communication between staff, students, and parents should be transparent. As a public school district, we are expected to maintain openness, visibility, and accountability with regard to all communications.
2. **The communication is accessible.** - ALL electronic communication between staff, students and parents are a matter of public record and/or may be accessible by others.
3. **The communication is professional.** – ALL electronic communication from staff to student or parent should be written as a professional representing TUCS. This includes word choices, tone, grammar and subject matter that model the standards and integrity of a TUCS professional. Always choose words that are courteous, conscientious, and generally businesslike in manner.

Acceptable Communications Methods

PowerSchool and Edmodo – Within PowerSchool, staff can communicate information related to grades, attendance, and assignments. With Edmodo and similar learning platforms, staff can provide some of the same types of communication that public social media networks provide while also offering access to curriculum and learning resources beyond the classroom walls. Edmodo allows for effective online learning by supporting online discussions, secure chat rooms, online delivery of assessments, and the sharing of documents, images and other media, all in a secure, password protected environment.

District Email and Phone - Use of District email and phone is always a very appropriate way to communicate directly with students and parents. District email provides the staff member with a record of the communication. For this reason, district-provided email system (your

@upson.k12.ga.us address) and district-provided phone numbers and extensions should be used. Please refer to the Acceptable Use Policy for best practice guidelines in its use.

District and School Websites – Within school websites, individual web pages are available to all teachers. The website also has the ability to post blogs, surveys, calendar items, and news.

Social Media for Instructional Purposes – Any content, pictures, or dialogue staff members publish, whether in Facebook, Twitter, a blog, a discussion thread or other website, should never compromise the professionalism, integrity and ethics in their role as a TUCS professional. A good question that staff members should ask themselves before posting or emailing a message is, “Would I mind if that information appeared on the front page of the local newspaper?” If the answer is “yes,” then do not post it. Social networking sites are very public places.

Less Acceptable Communications Methods

Text Messaging – Text messaging is typically between individuals and highly personal. Because texting is such a quick and convenient way of communication, a simple message may lead to an extended texting conversation that can get “off topic.” Therefore staff members should be aware that text messaging between a staff member and an individual student can easily be misinterpreted by a parent. If a staff member plans to use texting for immediate and urgent contact with students/team members, they must be transparent about such use. He/she must make parents aware at the beginning of the school year or season that he/she may use texting. A variety of instructional tools such as Remind101 are available which take advantage of texting capabilities. Staff should always communicate with parents ahead of time regarding the use of such tools.

Unacceptable Communications Methods

Non-District Email and Instant Messaging TUCS employees should never use personal email accounts or instant messaging to communicate with students about school matters.

Important Reminders: Social Media Sites for Personal Purposes

Staff members presently using social media sites, such as Facebook, to communicate with friends, family and their personal networks should ensure that their privacy settings are set to “Only Friends.” If the “Friends of Friends” or “Networks and Friends” settings are used, staff members open their content to a much larger group of people, including students and parents. Employees should not use their District email address or phone number for communications on social media networks for personal accounts. The wall between the role of a public educator and personal friendships with students should always be visible and strongly communicated. Employees should always ensure that their comments and opinions are identified as their own and not as “official” comments or opinions of the school(s) and/or system.

Responsible Use Guidelines for Thomaston-Upson County Schools’ Community

The mission of Thomaston-Upson County Schools (TUCS) is for every individual to achieve excellence every day. The district provides ongoing student instruction that develops graduated digital citizenship for using technology as a tool to achieve this mission. Information and Communication Technology is an integral part of TUCS’ curriculum across subjects and grades in developmentally appropriate ways.

I understand that using digital devices (whether personal or school owned) and the TUCS network is a privilege, and when I use them according to the guidelines in the Acceptable Use Policy, I will keep that privilege.

All members of Thomaston-Upson County Schools’ community agree to follow the Thomaston-Upson County Schools’ Acceptable Use Policy, district policies, school rules and commit to the following responsible use guidelines.

I will:

- Use digital devices, networks and software in school for educational purposes and activities.
- Keep my personal information and that of others private.

- Show respect for myself and others when using technology including social media.
- Give acknowledgement to others for their ideas and work.
- Report inappropriate use of technology immediately.

Enforcement of Policy

- a. The Thomaston-Upson County School System uses web filtering hardware and software as a technology protection measure to block or filter access to Internet sites that violate the terms of this acceptable use policy.
- b. The technology protection measure that blocks or filters Internet access may be disabled by a school system administrator for bona fide research purposes by an adult.
- c. The school system technology director may also override the technology protection measure that blocks or filters Internet access for a student to access a site with legitimate educational value that is wrongly blocked by the technology protection measure that blocks or filters Internet access.
- d. Thomaston-Upson County School System staff will monitor students' use of the Internet, through either direct supervision, or by monitoring Internet use history, to ensure enforcement of the policy.

Terms and Conditions

All terms and conditions as stated in this document are subject to the policies of the Thomaston-Upson County School System Board of Education. These terms and conditions reflect the entire agreement of the parties and supersede all prior oral or written agreements and understandings of the parties. These terms and conditions shall be governed and interpreted in accordance with the laws of the State of Georgia, United States of America.

Liability

The school system will not be held liable for information maintained on school corporation diskettes, hard drives, or servers, information retrieved through the school corporation computers, networks, or online resources, personal property used to access school corporation computers, networks, or online resources, or unauthorized financial obligations resulting from the use of school corporation resources and accounts to access the Internet.

Internet Acceptable Use Policy, Descriptor Code: IFBG

Approved 08/14/2001

Payday

All employees of the Thomaston-Upson County Board of Education are paid once per month on the last business day of each calendar month. Exceptions may be made for the months of November and December due to holiday schedules.

Personal Information: Name and Address Changes

Employees must complete a *Payroll Data Change* form to report changes in address, phone and name changes. Name changes cannot be made without a copy of the new Social Security card displaying the new name. Changes will not be made through emails or phone calls. The *Payroll Data Change* form is available on the system website and at the Central Office.

Personnel Assignments and Transfer

The basic consideration in the assignment of personnel is the well-being of the students and staff. The appropriateness of the assignment will have a significant impact on the morale of the staff and the effectiveness of the total educational program. Assignments to the school will be made by the Deputy Superintendent and Superintendent, and assignments within the schools will be made by the principal.

Personnel Files

Permanent personnel files are kept in the Personnel Department Office at Thomaston-Upson County Board of Education. It is the responsibility of the employee to provide any requested information including, but not limited to, the following:

- Application
- Reference Forms
- Official College Transcripts (if applicable)
- Experience Verification Forms from other Schools (if applicable)
- Official Copy of Teaching Certificate (if applicable)
- Copy of TCT, Praxis and/or GACE Score Reports (if applicable)
- Employee's Withholding Certificate for Income Tax Deductions (W-4)
- Georgia Withholding Certificate for Income Tax Deductions (G-4)
- Copy of Social Security Card and Drivers License
- Payroll Deduction Forms (Health, Life, Disability, etc.)
- I-9 Form
- Standards of Conduct Form
- Current Criminal Record Background Check
- Fingerprint Record (**Note: Employees hired prior to 1995 will be required to have fingerprinting done at the time of re-certification).

If the need develops for any other information, the employee will be expected to furnish it immediately upon receipt of request, making sure that all forms are properly notarized. It is important that all information requested be filed with Personnel Department by the deadline given.

Personnel Resignation

Employees planning to retire or resign at the end of a school year are encouraged to submit their resignations in writing as soon as feasible in order to facilitate planning for the upcoming year. Teachers failing to execute and return a contract within the allotted ten (10) days, unless an extended by the Superintendent, shall be understood as a refusal of the offer of employment and shall be treated as a resignation by the Board.

Resignations by any school employee should be in writing and shall be accepted by the Superintendent and Deputy Superintendent on behalf of the Board of Education. The Superintendent shall notify the Board of the resignation at the next meeting by including it as a personnel item on the agenda.

Policy: Possession of Weapons by Employees

The Thomaston-Upson Board of Education is committed to maintaining a safe and secure working and learning environment. Unless authorized by the Board of Education or an administrator in accordance with this policy, or specifically authorized by state law, employees shall be prohibited from bringing weapons on any property or in any building owned or leased by the District, at school functions, and on school buses or other transportation furnished by the school district. Employees in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 16-11-130.1, the Board of Education may authorize certain personnel to possess or carry weapons on any property or in any building owned or leased by the district, at a school function, or on a bus or other transportation furnished by the district, subject to the following conditions:

1. Training of approved personnel shall occur prior to their authorization to carry weapons. The training shall be approved in advance by the Superintendent and shall, at a minimum, include training on judgment, pistol shooting, marksmanship, and a review of current laws relating to the use of force for the defense of self or others. The Superintendent may substitute for certain training requirements an individual's prior military or law enforcement service if he or she has previously served as a certified law enforcement officer or has had military service which involved similar weapons training.
2. An approved list of the types and quantity of weapons and ammunition authorized to be possessed or carried shall be prepared and maintained by the Superintendent.
3. Selection of personnel to possess or carry a weapon shall be done strictly on a voluntary basis. The final appointment will be made by the Superintendent consistent with the requirements of this policy. Each employee appointed must be licensed under the laws of the state to carry a firearm and shall be subject to an annual criminal history background check. Approval will not be granted for any employee who has had an employment or other history indicating any type of mental or emotional instability as determined by the Board or Superintendent. The Superintendent shall be able at any time to remove or suspend the authority granted to any employee under this policy; and
4. Weapons possessed or carried by personnel under this paragraph shall be secured as follows: Concealed weapons are permitted if they are carried in a holster and not in a purse, briefcase, bag, or similar other accessory which is not secured on the body. If maintained separate from the body, the weapon shall be maintained in a secured lock safe or similar lock box that cannot be easily accessed by students.

In addition to those employees appointed pursuant to this policy, the Board recognizes that other exceptions exist under O.C.G.A. § 16-11-127.1. All records regarding the appointment of individual employees and the implementation of this program shall be exempt from production under the Open Records Act as specified in Georgia law.

Board Policy GAMB

Adopted 8/12/2014

Policy: Professional Learning Opportunities

The Thomaston-Upson County Board of Education recognizes the benefits to be derived from a quality professional learning program. The Board believes this to be a vital element in the overall school improvement process, resulting in increased student achievement.

It is the policy of the Thomaston-Upson County Board of Education to develop and maintain a system-level Comprehensive School Improvement Plan. This plan shall address comprehensive professional learning as a major component. All professional learning opportunities will be aligned with this plan.

Professional learning programs will be developed according to state criteria, will utilize the standards of the national Staff Development Council, and will address both individual and instructional program needs. Professional learning programs will be evaluated to determine success and effectiveness. Records of personnel participation will be maintained.

As per State Rule 160-3-3-.10, professional learning units (PLUs) shall be earned by an individual only in the following four categories: (1) field of certification (2) school/system/individual improvement plan (3) annual personnel evaluation and (4) state/federal requirements. The approval of the Professional Learning Advisory Committee of the school district or its designee is required for

a system employee to participate in a PLU activity for the purpose of the renewal of a Georgia professional certificate or to meet the requirements for a paraprofessional certification. One professional learning unit of credit is based on ten (10) contact hours of formal instruction or its equivalent and on verification that the intent of the formal instruction has been implemented on the job or by mastery verification.

Board Policy GAD, Adopted 02/11/1992
Last Revised: 11/10/2009

Retirement

Participation in a state retirement program is mandatory for all benefit-eligible employees of the school system. The retirement programs are:

PSERS (PUBLIC SCHOOL EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT SYSTEM)

Bus Drivers, Bus Monitors, Custodians, School Food Nutrition, and Maintenance personnel are automatically enrolled in Public School Employee Retirement System (PSERS). The mandatory employee contribution is deducted monthly, September through May of each school year.

TRS (TEACHER RETIREMENT SYSTEM OF GEORGIA)

Teachers, Administrators, Supervisors, Paraprofessionals, Nurses, and Clerical personnel are members of the Teacher Retirement System (TRS). The current employee contribution rate is 6% of the gross salary, and is deducted monthly. More information regarding personal retirement benefits may be located at www.trsga.com.

Salary Deductions

Automatic Deductions will be made for the following purposes:

1. Teacher Retirement
2. Medicare (and Social Security only for those in FICA covered positions)
3. Federal Income Tax
4. Georgia Income Tax
5. Health Insurance, when authorized
6. Teacher Association Dues, when authorized
7. Days of Leave in Excess of Authorized Leave
8. Tax Shelter Annuity (when authorized)
9. Garnishments, tax levy, child support, etc., when so ordered by the court

All employees are covered by Social Security (FICA) and Medicare Tax. The employee share is payroll deducted, and matching funds are paid by TUCS.

Providing accurate state and federal tax withholding forms, retirement system membership number, and the social security number to the payroll office is a responsibility of the employee.

Policy: Overtime Pay/Classified (Support) Personnel

- A. *Except as otherwise provided in this policy, no classified employee of the Thomaston-Upson County Board of Education shall work in excess of forty hours in any calendar week. This limitation shall apply notwithstanding the fact that the employee may work in one or more positions, may work for one or more supervisors, may work in one or more capacities, or may*

work in one or more departments. All employment of any type or kind whatsoever which in any way involves or is related to the Thomaston-Upson County Board of Education shall be counted toward this forty-hour limitation. Each classified employee is hereby specifically directed by the Thomaston-Upson County Board of Education not to exceed forty hours per week in any calendar week (12:01 a.m. Sunday until Saturday 12:00 p.m.), as hereinabove set forth, except as provided below.

- B. Each classified employee who is assigned a duty-free meal period of thirty minutes or more shall take that duty-free meal period, as assigned, and shall conduct no activities for or on behalf of the Board of Education during that duty-free period of time.
- C. All classified employees shall maintain accurate time records of the times in which they are actually engaged in the employee of the Board by use of such mechanical or electronic time clocks, sign-in and sign-out sheets, or if by no other means, through written, accurate records reflecting the time on duty of the employee, signed by the employee, and delivered to the employee's supervisor or such person or location as the supervisor may direct, at such intervals as the supervisor may direct. In no event shall any employee be authorized to record time that was not actually worked nor shall any employee be authorized to work for any period of time with regard to which the starting time and the ending time is not properly recorded.
- D. If the supervisor of a classified employee determines that there is no other viable alternative, and it is necessary for a classified employee to work in excess of forty hours in any one calendar week, then that supervisor who makes such determination shall certify such determination in writing, in advance, and shall certify the amount of overtime approved for such classified employee, in advance, and shall procure the signature of the affected employee, in advance, as to the amount of overtime authorized so that the employee, before working said overtime, shall know the maximum amount of overtime that has been authorized for that calendar week. In no event shall a classified employee work overtime beyond the period of time certified in advance by the supervisor as being available. No supervisor shall authorize any overtime for any classified employee unless the specific amount to be authorized is first approved by the Director of Budget and Finance.
- E. If an employee must work more than forty hours in a given work week, that employee may be given compensatory time off at the rate of one and one half hours of compensatory time for every hour worked in excess of forty hours. The employee must use that compensatory time within sixty days after that compensatory time is accrued.
- F. To the extent any policy of the Board of Education is in conflict herewith, such policy is repealed, but only to the extent of such conflict, and this policy shall take priority over the same.
- G. Each employee of the Board of Education shall comply with this policy. Any employee that fails to comply with this policy shall be subject to disciplinary proceedings up to and including termination.

Board Policy GCRD

Adopted: 11/11/2003
Last Revised: 10/14/2014

Policy: Sexual Harassment

It is the policy of the Board of Education that its employees shall be able to enjoy a work environment free from all forms of discrimination, including sexual harassment.

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

1. submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly, as a term or condition of an individual's employment;
2. submission to, or rejection of such conduct by an employee is used as a basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or

3. *such conduct has the purpose or deliberate effect of substantially interfering with an employees work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.*

Sexual harassment is an unlawful employment practice under federal law, and it is a form of discrimination that is specifically prohibited by the Board of Education. Any employee who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary actions.

The Board will take appropriate steps to ensure that all employees are aware of this policy.

An employee who feels that he/she has been subjected to any form of sexual harassment may have his/her concerns addressed through the Employee Complaint Procedure.

*Board Policy GAEB, Adopted 1/14/1992
Last Revised: 1/8/2013*

Policy: Solicitations by Staff

It is the policy of the Thomaston-Upson County Board of Education to prohibit solicitation and distribution on the premises of any school within the system by non-employees except as stipulated in policy GAI. Employees may engage in solicitation and distributions only as outlined below.

Employees are permitted to engage in solicitations or distributions of literature for any group or organization, including charitable organizations, only in accordance with the following restrictions.

1. *The sale of merchandise is prohibited on school premises.*
2. *Solicitations and distributions of literature are prohibited during school hours and are permitted on school premises after hours only with prior approval from the administration.*
3. *Distributions of literature are prohibited in work areas at all times.*

Board Policy GAIA

*Adopted: 07/11/1989
Last Revised 06/07/2011*

Policy: Tobacco Use

In accordance with the "Georgia Smoke Free Air Act of 2005", smoking shall be prohibited by employees and visitors at all times in any school building or property owned or leased by the school district, or at any time in any school-owned vehicle, including any school buses, or at any on or off campus school sponsored event. This prohibition includes the use of other tobacco products by employees and visitors at all times when on duty for the school district, including when such employees are directly instructing or supervising students. Direct supervision includes coaching, band directing, acting as a sponsor or advisor of a club or similar school organization and other instructional roles. Employees shall not store or possess tobacco or tobacco-related products on their person or in their belongings in such a manner that such products are visible to students.

School district employees who violate this policy may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, including reprimand, suspension with or without pay or termination.

Board Policy GAN

*Adopted 4/14/1987
Last Revised 01/12/2010*

Workers' Compensation

The Thomaston-Upson County Board of Education has Workers Compensation insurance to cover the cost of work-related injury or illness. Work-related accidents must be reported immediately to your principal or the designated Workers Comp personnel at the school. Employees reporting a work-related injury or illness that requires professional medical care must be seen by one of the medical providers listed on the panel of approved physicians for the Thomaston-Upson County Board of Education. The physician panel is posted at each facility. Employees must report injuries in a timely manner to insure that they will be covered and the injury can be established as work-related. Should an employee choose to receive care from a physician who is not on the approved list, such care would be considered unauthorized and the school system would not be responsible for the cost.