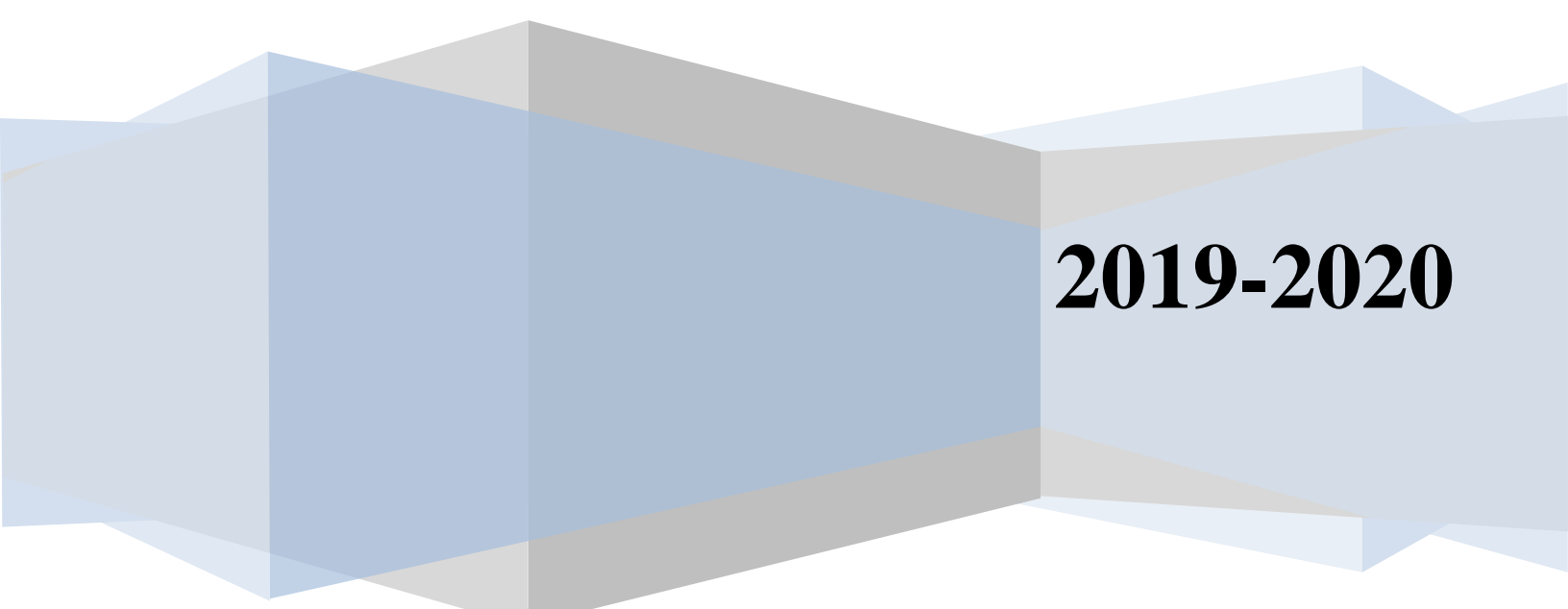


Tift County Charter System Employee Handbook



2019-2020

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ADMINISTRATION
207 North Ridge Avenue
(229) 387-2400

Adam Hathaway..... Superintendent
Kevin J. DobardAssistant Superintendent
Mickey Weldon.....Chief Academic Officer
Robby Dasher.....Chief Operations Officer
Klinton Guess.....Chief Financial Officer
Joanna Hand.....PreK Director/K-5 Curriculum Director
Dr. Shereca Harvey.....6-8 Curriculum Director
Dr. LaShonda Flanders9-12 Curriculum Director/System Testing Coordinator
Dr. Michael Slaven Federal Programs Director
Michael Norman Student Services Director
Vanessa HayesChief Nutrition Officer
Cherie Wright Payroll Manager
Renee Guess Comptroller
James Walker Maintenance Director
David Williams Transportation Director
Jonathan JudyChief Technology and Innovation Officer
Dana SpurlinChief Information Officer
Dr. Tonja TiftAlternative School Director
TBD CTAE Director
Brandon Johnson.....System Security Officer

SPECIAL EDUCATION OFFICES (PRE-K CENTER)
506 West 12th Street
(229) 387-2460

Lee Watson.....Special Education Director
Kimberly Bruce.....Assistant Special Education Director
Debra Woods..... School Psychologist
Melanie Hall..... School Psychologist
Vanda Freeman.....School Psychologist
Danielle Burgos.....School Psychologist

MISSION OF THE TIFT COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

The mission of the Tift County Board of Education is to educate, prepare and inspire students to reach their fullest potential.

The Tift County Charter System is governed by a seven-member board, elected by the residents of Tift County. The Board holds its regular, monthly meeting at 6 p.m., on the second Tuesday of each month.



CERTIFICATION

For a teaching contract to be valid, a teacher must meet the proper professional qualifications of the Tift County Charter System. It is the responsibility of all teachers to be certain they possess a valid certificate. Staff members with questions related to certification should contact Mr. Dobard in the personnel office, or the school principal. It may also be necessary for teachers to deal directly with the Professional Standards Commission in Atlanta, Georgia.

The teacher is responsible for submitting an application for a new certificate when he/she is eligible for a higher level certificate and/or for adding a new field. The application packet must be completed and sent to the Professional Standards Commission with an official copy of the transcript. The Office of Human Resources can assist the teacher with this. For more information on certification, log onto www.gapsc.com.

GACE Assessment

All teachers, with the exception of those holding "life" certificates, are required to make acceptable scores on the GACE Assessment in their teaching area as part of the certification process. Any presently employed teacher who holds a certificate that requires the appropriate subject area test to be successfully completed in order to renew their teaching certificate for the following school year must provide proof of a passing score by the May Board of Education meeting. If written proof is not submitted, the teacher may not be recommended to the Board for employment.

The principal may use discretion in holding a position open for any person in this category.

TITLE I

In Title I school programs, all teachers hired after the first day of school (effective 2002), who teach core academic subjects must meet professional qualifications requirements. To be a certified teacher, the individual must:

- Be certified by the State, including alternative routes to certification.
- Hold at least a bachelor's degree.
- Pass a rigorous State test on subject knowledge that the teacher teaches and on teaching skills.

PARAPROFESSIONALS

Paraprofessionals in all school programs who are hired after January 8, 2002 must have:

- Completed at least 60 semester hours of study at an institution of higher education or
- Obtained an associate's degree (or higher) or
- Met a rigorous standard of quality as demonstrated through a formal state approved assessment the knowledge of and the ability to assist in instruction.

HANDLING OF SCHOOL FINANCES

All monies collected must be receipted daily through the principal's office.

INSURANCE

The system attempts to provide several types of group insurance plans which may benefit employees. Information about group plans will be made available to employees during the school year.

All professional and eligible classified employees and their families are covered through the State Health Benefit Insurance Plan with premiums being paid through payroll deduction.

CAFETERIA PLAN

All employees of the Tift County Board of Education are eligible to enroll in a Section 125 Plan (Cafeteria Plan). Enrolling in the Section 125 Plan enables employees to pay qualifying insurance premiums with pre-tax dollars which results in more take-home pay. (Non reimbursable medical payments and dependent child care also qualify.) New employees may enroll during the first ten days of employment. Other employees may revise the plan during open enrollment only.

LONG DISTANCE CALLS

No personal long distance calls should be made from school telephones.

MAINTENANCE REQUESTS

Requests for maintenance are submitted by staff on-line and require approval by the principal or supervisor. Emergency maintenance requests should be reported by telephone to the central office by the school principal or his/her designee.

PAYROLL INFORMATION

It is the employee's responsibility to provide necessary payroll information to the central office. Upon beginning employment, the employee should complete W-4 and G-4 forms. These forms are furnished in the packet of forms to be completed during the first week of employment. Additional forms for making changes in payroll may be obtained from the payroll office. Payroll checks are issued on the last working day of each month. Changes in payroll status or deductions should be requested in writing by the 20th of each month.

SICK AND VACATION LEAVE

Link to: [GARH](#)

PURCHASING

All supplies and equipment charged to the Tift County Board of Education must be ordered on a system purchase order. Purchase orders should be prepared by the principal's designee and submitted to the principal for approval. A purchase order must be approved by the principal and the appropriate central office administrators before being submitted to the vendor.

When the order is received, the invoice should be checked against the purchase order and the merchandise; the invoice should then be signed, dated, and returned to the central office. Payment will not be made until this is done. Purchases of all supplies and equipment to be paid from the present year budget should be made prior to March 31. All purchases charged to federal programs should be handled through the office of the respective project coordinator.

RESIGNATION

A staff member who no longer desires employment should submit a letter of resignation or a request to be released from the current contract to the principal or supervisor. If the timing of the resignation is not appropriate, the Board or superintendent may not accept the resignation.

SCHOOL PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

School equipment or property may be sold after permission is granted by the superintendent and the item has been given surplus status. Questions regarding the loaning of school property of any type should be referred to the principal. In order to keep school insurance coverage complete, new materials or equipment should be promptly added to the school inventory. This information should be furnished to the school secretary.

SPECIAL EDUCATION REFERRALS

Students for whom teachers feel special testing and special services may be needed should be referred to the school response to intervention team. Teachers should become familiar with response to intervention procedures at their school.

Persons needing additional information related to special education should contact the special education director or assistant special education director at the Special Education Office located in the Pre- K Center.

COPYRIGHT POLICY STATEMENT

All staff members shall comply with the Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S. Code) as outlined in the Tift County Board of Education's Media Programs: Instructional Materials and Equipment - Challenged Materials policy. Staff members who fail to follow the Copyright Law shall be held personally liable for copyright infringement. The Tift County Board of Education will not be responsible for any violations of the Copyright Law by its staff and hereby notifies all employees that a willful infringement of the law may result in disciplinary action.

COMPUTER/INTERNET POLICY STATEMENT

All staff members using or connecting to the school system's computers, networks, servers, clouds, internet access, email accounts, cellular telephones or other similar technology (hereafter collectively referred to as "technological resources") are required to read and comply with the school system's Administrative Regulation titled *Internet Acceptable Use* Descriptor code IFBG-R, all other Board policies, administrative regulations and procedures, all employee handbooks, and all Federal and State laws that govern the use of such technological resources. In order for a staff member to gain access to or use the school system's technological resources the staff member must sign a Staff Computer/Internet Access Agreement, available through the school system's Compliance Director Program; however, regardless of whether a staff member signs such agreement he or she must at all times abide by the aforementioned regulations, policies, procedures, handbooks and laws when using or connecting to the school system's technological resources. Staff members are advised that they should not have any expectation of privacy in their use of or connection to the school system's technological resources and privacy in their use of or connection to such resources is not guaranteed.

In addition, all staff members allowing students to use the school system's computers, network or Internet access under their supervision are responsible for ensuring such use is in compliance with School Board policy [IFBG-E](#), regulation [IFBG-R](#), FERPA, (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act), CIPA, (Children's Internet Protection Act) and any other applicable Federal and State laws that govern such use.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

The system seeks to provide and keep employees aware of professional learning opportunities. The curriculum department coordinates professional learning programs and will assist staff members interested in professional learning opportunities. Check with the school site-based professional learning coordinator for additional information.

STUDENT ABSENCES

Link to: [JBD](#)

TRAVEL APPROVAL

Approval from the principal or immediate supervisor must be obtained BEFORE an employee travels during school time on professional leave if he/she expects reimbursement for travel. This request must be made seven (7) days in advance. Once approved by the principal and/or the superintendent, or the appropriate program manager, reimbursement for travel outside the school system must be obtained on FORM TC 901, Employee Leave Request. Any claims for reimbursement without prior approval from the principal or program manager will be at school and/or employee expense.

TRAVEL REGULATIONS AND REIMBURSEMENT

Reimbursement for official travel will be made in compliance with the Georgia Accounting Handbook for Local School Systems. An individual will be reimbursed for necessary expenses incurred while traveling on approved school system business. It is expected that conservation and good judgment will be used in the choice of lodging and eating places.

In the back of the handbook is a checklist of travel regulations. The employee should also understand how to complete the travel expense statement which must be submitted for approval prior to receiving reimbursement.

When traveling: the beginning and ending odometer readings must be recorded for reimbursement for use of a personal car. Receipts must be attached to the expense statement for all hotel bills and conference registration fees. The expense statement should be submitted to the central office by the 5th working day of the month following the month during which the travel was completed.

An Employee Leave Request (TC 901) must be approved prior to a trip for which the employee desires reimbursement. The approved form must be attached to the expense statement, as well as the appropriate receipts and an agenda for the event attended if applicable. ***All travel expenses must be turned in monthly.***

USE OF FACILITIES BY OUTSIDE GROUPS

Link to: [KG](#)

WORKERS' COMPENSATION INSURANCE

The Board provides Workers' Compensation Insurance for all school employees. An employee must immediately report to the principal or supervisor any accident which he/she has while working or any injury which occurred while on duty. The principal/supervisor or their designee will complete the First Report of Injury Form.

The central office will provide information related to Workers' Compensation Insurance for any employee requesting information. Claims against Workers' Compensation Insurance should be filed within 24 hours after the injury with the central office.

ADDITIONAL BOARD POLICIES RELATING TO PERSONNEL

[EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYMENT - GAAA](#)

[EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES - JAA](#)

[PERSONNEL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES - GAD](#)

[STAFF COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES – GAE \(2\)](#)

[SEXUAL HARASSMENT – GAEB](#)

[PERSONNEL SMOKING- GAN](#)

[PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL NON-SCHOOL EMPLOYMENT-GBRG](#)

[PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL EMERGENCY AND LEGAL LEAVE – GBRIA-R](#)

[FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE- GBRIG](#)

TEACHER DRESS CODE

Teachers are professionals and should dress in a way that promotes the profession. Articles of clothing prohibited for student wear are also not appropriate for staff members. ***Jeans are not allowed during regular work days for staff members unless exceptions are approved by the principal. Flip Flops are prohibited, based on information from our Workers Compensation carrier and it strongly recommends no stiletto heels. Employees should wear footwear appropriate for position (For further details consult with your immediate supervisor).*** While job descriptions vary, all personnel will be expected to dress in a manner that reflects his/her job description. The building level administrator has the authority to make exceptions on “special days.”

Staff members are required to be properly groomed to reflect a professional demeanor.

Displaying a rival team’s colors or paraphernalia (especially on game day) is not permitted.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES FUNDS MANAGEMENT Link to: [DK-R](#)

ADDITIONAL POLICIES REGARDING STUDENTS:

[CHILD ABUSE REPORTS- JGI](#)

[STUDENT TOBACCO USE- JCDA](#)

[STUDENT ALCOHOL/DRUG USE- JCDAC](#)

[STUDENT CORPORAL PUNISHMENT- JDA](#)

[ADMINISTRATION OF PRESCRIBED MEDICATIONS- JGCD](#)

LINK TO STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT:

[STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT](#)

The safety and security of Tift County students is of the utmost importance.

Effective January 1, 2018:

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

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

(2) Definitions

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(3) Standards

(a) **Standard 1: Legal Compliance** - An educator shall abide by federal, state, and local laws and statutes. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to the Commission or conviction of a felony or of any crime involving moral turpitude; of any other criminal offense involving the manufacture, distribution, trafficking, sale, or possession of a controlled substance or marijuana as provided for in Chapter 13 of Title 16; or of any other sexual offense as provided for in Code

Section 16-6-1 through 16-6-17, 16-6-20, 16-6-22.2, or 16-12-100; or any other laws applicable to the profession. As used herein, conviction includes a finding or verdict of guilty, or a plea of *nolo contendere*, regardless of whether an appeal of the conviction has been sought; a situation where first offender treatment without adjudication of guilt pursuant to the charge was granted; and a situation where an adjudication of guilt or sentence was otherwise withheld or not entered on the charge or the charge was otherwise disposed of in a similar manner in any jurisdiction.

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

1. committing any act of child abuse, including physical and verbal abuse;
2. committing any act of cruelty to children or any act of child endangerment;
3. committing any sexual act with a student or soliciting such from a student;
4. engaging in or permitting harassment of or misconduct toward a student that would violate a state or federal law;
5. soliciting, encouraging, or consummating an inappropriate written, verbal, electronic, or physical relationship with a student;
6. furnishing tobacco, alcohol, or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any student; or
7. failing to prevent the use of alcohol or illegal or unauthorized drugs by students 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 or Local Unit of Administration (LUA)/school district premises or at a school or a LUA/school district-related activity while under the influence of, possessing, using, or consuming illegal or unauthorized drugs; and
2. being on school or LUA/school district premises or at a school-related activity involving students while under the influence of, possessing, or consuming alcohol. A school-related activity includes, but is not limited to, any activity sponsored by the school or school system (booster clubs, parent-teacher organizations, or any activity designed to enhance the school curriculum i.e. Foreign Language trips, etc).

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

1. professional qualifications, criminal history, college or staff development credit and/or degrees, academic award, and employment history;
2. information submitted to federal, state, local school districts and other governmental agencies;
3. information regarding the evaluation of students and/or personnel;
4. reasons for absences or leaves;
5. information submitted in the course of an official inquiry/investigation; and
6. information submitted in the course of professional practice.

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

1. misusing public or school-related funds;
2. failing to account for funds collected from students or parents;
3. submitting fraudulent requests or documentation for reimbursement of expenses or for pay (including fraudulent or purchased degrees, documents, or coursework);
4. co-mingling public or school-related funds with personal funds or checking accounts; and
5. using school or school district property without the approval of the local board of education/governing board or authorized designee.

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

1. soliciting students or parents of students, or school and/or LUA/school district personnel, to purchase equipment, supplies, or services from the educator or to participate in activities that financially benefit the educator unless approved by the local board of education/governing board or authorized designee;
2. accepting gifts from vendors or potential vendors for personal use or gain where there may be the appearance of a conflict of interest;

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

substance and any abuse of a child if an educator has reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused.

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

(j) **Standard 10: Testing** - An educator shall administer state-mandated assessments fairly and ethically. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to: 505-6-.01 Page 5

1. committing any act that breaches Test Security; and

2. compromising the integrity of the assessment.

(4) Reporting

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

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

(5) Disciplinary Action

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

1. unethical conduct as outlined in The Code of Ethics for Educators, Standards 1-10 (GaPSC Rule 505-6-.01);

2. disciplinary action against a certificate in another state on grounds consistent with those specified in the Code of Ethics for Educators, Standards 1-10 (GaPSC Rule 505-6-.01);

3. order from a court of competent jurisdiction or a request from the Department of Human Resources that the certificate should be suspended or the application for certification should be denied for non-payment of child support (O.C.G.A. §19-6-28.1 and §19-11-9.3);
4. notification from the Georgia Higher Education Assistance Corporation that the educator is in default and not in satisfactory repayment status on a student loan guaranteed by the Georgia Higher Education Assistance Corporation (O.C.G.A. §20-3-295);
5. suspension or revocation of any professional license or certificate;
6. violation of any other laws and rules applicable to the profession; and
7. any other good and sufficient cause that renders an educator unfit for employment as an educator.

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

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

Student Reporting of Acts of Sexual Abuse or Sexual Misconduct

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

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

(c) Any school principal or principal's designee receiving a report of sexual abuse as defined in O.C.G.A. 19-7-5 shall make an oral report immediately, but in no case later than 24 hours from

the time there is reasonable cause to believe a child has been abused. The report should be made by telephone and followed by a written report in writing, if requested, to a child welfare agency providing protective services, as designated by the Department of Human Resources, or, in the absence of such agency, to an appropriate police authority or district attorney.

Reports of acts of sexual misconduct against a student by a teacher, administrator, or other employee not covered by O.C.G.A. 19-7-5 or 20-2-1 184 shall be investigated immediately by school or system personnel. If the investigation of the allegation of sexual misconduct indicates a reasonable cause to believe that the report of sexual misconduct is valid, the school principal or principal's designee shall make an immediate written report to the superintendent and the Professional Standards Commission Ethics Division.

"Sexual abuse" means a person's employing, using, persuading, inducing, enticing, or coercing any minor who is not that person's spouse to engage in any sexual act as defined in O.C.G.A. 19-7-5.

"Sexual misconduct" includes behavior by an educator that is directed at a student and intended to sexually arouse or titillate the educator or the child. Educator sexual misconduct by an educator may include, but is not limited to, the following behavior:

1. Made sexual comments, jokes, or gestures.
2. Showed or displayed sexual pictures, photographs, illustrations, or messages.
3. Wrote sexual messages/graffiti on notes or the internet.
4. Spread sexual rumors (i.e. said a student was gay or a lesbian).
5. Spied on students as they dressed, showered or used the restroom at school.
6. Flashed or "mooned" students.
7. Touched, excessively hugged, or grabbed students in a sexual way.
8. Forced a student to kiss him/her or do something else of a sexual nature.
9. Talked or asked about a student's developing body, sexuality, dating habits, etc.
10. Talked repeatedly about sexual activities or sexual fantasies.
11. Made fun of student's body parts.
12. Called students sexual names.

Social Media Guidelines

When used herein, the term "educator" shall mean all certified and classified agents and employees of the Tift County Charter System.

When using any form of social media or electronic communication, all educators are held to the standards outlined in the Code of Ethics for Educators and to FERPA (the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act) which provides that students' educational records and information are deemed private and confidential. All educators must comply with Board policy, state and federal law, the Code of Ethics for Educators and FERPA when communicating electronically or through social media.

Social Media Usage Professional

Each educator who posts or causes to be posted any message through the Tift County Charter System computer system, or on the School System website, Facebook pages, sports team pages, photo sharing sites, or other school related sites must insure their message is appropriate and in compliance with Board policy, state and federal law, the Code of Ethics for Educators and FERPA. If an educator is given a message to post or authors a post he or she must read and re-read the post to ensure it is appropriate and compliant. Staff members may wish to consult with their supervisor before posting any questionable material.

Educators shall not text, email, transmit or share electronically a student's educational records or any information obtained from such records that is protected by FERPA and School Board policy including but not limited to a student's work, grades, disciplinary information, attendance records, schedule or any other information that is not directory information. A student or his or her parents/guardian can opt out of sharing directory information such as the student's name, address, telephone number, photographs, honors, awards, date of birth, grade level etc. Educators shall not disclose any directory information without ensuring the student or parents or guardians have not opted out of sharing directory information. Before posting, texting, emailing or otherwise communicating any student's information electronically, educators must be thoroughly familiar and compliant with the Code of Ethics for Educators, FERPA, the Code of Student Conduct and the Board's policies and procedures regarding student privacy.

If an educator posts a message in error or determines the content of any post or message is inappropriate or non-compliant, he or she must immediately correct or retract the post or message and notify his or her supervisor and the Chief Information Officer at Central Office.

Social Media Usage Personal

The Code of Ethics for Educators applies to educators twenty four hours a day, seven days a week, and three hundred and sixty five days per year. All educators shall read, understand and follow the Code of Ethics. The Code of Ethics applies to any and all electronic communications regardless of whether the communication is made through a privately owned computer or through the school computer system.

Even when off duty, educators must comply with Board policy, state and federal law, the Code of Ethics for Educators and FERPA when communicating through social media or through other electronic means. Educators must be mindful that they represent the Tift County Charter System at all times and that the content of their electronic messages and posts on social media can go viral and be readily spread across the world in minutes. Staff members must also be mindful that once an electronic message or social media post is sent, it cannot be retrieved and the recipient has the power to disseminate it to anyone. Standard 9 of the Code of Ethics titled "Professional

Conduct” applies to all social media posts and electronic communications made by educators and provides:

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.

Educators must adhere to Standard 9 anytime they communicate through social media or other electronic means. Educators shall not be “Friends” with students on Facebook and other social media sites. Please note that students are considered students under the Code of Ethics until September 1 following their high school graduation and include students from any school.

Electronic Communication with Students

E-mail, texting, tweeting and other forms of electronic communication have become very standard. Educators must be mindful that FERPA and the Code of Ethics for Educators including Standard 2 “Conduct with Students” applies anytime they communicate electronically with a student. Educators shall not communicate with students electronically without the consent of the student’s parent or guardian. Educators shall not communicate with students electronically unless the message is copied to the receiving student’s parent or guardian. If the educator is unable to copy the student’s parent or guardian he or she may communicate with the student electronically if the message is copied to the educator’s supervisor.

Mandated Reporters

All educators are Mandated Reporters as defined by Georgia law. All standards and expectations of this designation apply to online activity as well. If an educator witnesses any form of child abuse through the use of social media or electronic means he or she must immediately report such abuse pursuant to state law and Board protocols.

Civility Guidelines

It is the goal of the Tift County School Board and the Tift County Charter System that staff, principals, teachers, students, parents, and guardians treat one another with mutual respect and courtesy. The Tift County Charter System is committed to maintaining an orderly educational environment free from disruptions. We do not intend for these guidelines to deprive any person of his or her right of freedom of expression. Rather, we seek to maintain, to the extent possible and reasonable, a safe, harassment-free workplace for our students and staff. In the interest of presenting teachers and other employees as positive role models, Tift County Charter System encourages positive communication and discourages offensive,

disruptive, volatile, hostile, or aggressive communications or actions. Principals, staff and teachers, may in their discretion take the following steps:

1. Disruptive individuals may be directed to leave the school or district facility. The disruptive individual(s) may be directed to leave by the principal or his/her designee.
2. If any member of the public uses loud and/or offensive language, swearing, cursing, or displays a temper, he or she may be calmly asked by the teacher or employee to refrain from such behavior and if the behavior continues the teacher/employee may terminate the phone conversation, meeting, or conference. The principal or designee may direct the individual to leave the facility if the incident happened on campus.
3. If an individual refuses to leave the school or district facility, the superintendent, principal, or designee may notify law enforcement.
4. Threatening to do bodily or physical harm to a teacher, school administrator, school employee or student may constitute a criminal violation.
5. If any district employee receives an email, text, or voice mail which is abusive, offensive, threatening, or obscene, the employee is not obligated to respond to the email, text, or telephone call. Such incidents may be reported to the employee's immediate supervisor.

TRAVEL REGULATIONS CHECKLIST

Please use this checklist when completing travel vouchers.

Be sure to include the date of departure and arrival time for each listing. On out of-town trips, meal reimbursement is dependent on this information.

Receipts must be attached for ALL hotel bills, conference registration fees, and transportation by scheduled common carriers (plane, train, or bus).

Beginning and ending odometer readings must be listed for reimbursement for use of personal car at the current state rate. Local transportation costs will not be allowed between the

individual's home and school headquarters. Meals and lodging costs must be entered separately in the indicated spaces even though they may be included on the same hotel bill receipt. Reimbursement may be made for reasonable lodging expenses plus sales tax. Reimbursement for actual cost of meals is limited to a total of \$28.00 per day in Georgia. Individual meals are limited to \$6.00 for breakfast, \$7.00 for lunch, and \$15.00 for dinner. Reimbursement for breakfast is allowable only if you leave for trip from home or official headquarters before 6:30 a.m. Reimbursement for a noon meal will be allowed when you are away overnight or you leave before 6:30 a.m. and return after 7:30 p.m. and claim both breakfast and dinner; and/or if the noon meal is an integral part of a scheduled meeting or a part of registration fee. Reimbursement for dinner is allowable only if you arrive at your home or official headquarters after 7:30 p.m.

High cost counties within Georgia are: Chatham, Cobb, DeKalb, Fulton, Glynn, and Richmond. The per diem amount for these counties: \$7.00 for breakfast, \$9.00 for lunch, and \$20.00 for dinner.

Upon arrival at a hotel/motel facility, furnish the facility operator with the Tax Exemption Form to be exempt from paying local hotel/motel excise tax. This excise tax cannot be reimbursed by the Tift County Board of Education. (A copy of this tax exempt form is located on the system website under Human Resources/Employee Forms) The state sales tax is not exempt.

No reimbursement will be allowed for gratuities, entertainment, personal expense, or any portion of conference fees covering social activities.

Properly completed employee expense statements should be received in the central office no later than five (5) working days after the end of the month in which the travel occurred.

ABSOLUTELY NO PAYMENT CAN BE MADE FOR TRAVEL EXPENSE STATEMENTS RECEIVED AFTER THE END OF THE CURRENT FISCAL YEAR.

GEORGIA HOTEL AND MOTEL OPERATORS:

On April 2, 1987, Act No. 621 amending section 48-13-51 of the Georgia Code became effective. This Act provides that Georgia state or local government officials or employees traveling on official business should not be charged county or municipal excise tax on lodging. Sales tax is not exempted under the current sales tax law, since the payment of hotel or motel bills by an employee is not considered to be payment made directly by a state agency from appropriated funds. Upon verification of the identity of the state official or employee identified below, Georgia hotel and motel operators are authorized to exempt the individual from any applicable county or municipal lodging excise tax. Sales tax, however, should continue to be charged.