

Newton-Conover City Schools 2019-20 Personnel Handbook



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Newton, North Carolina 28658
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Revised 2019

District Information

NCCS Mission/Vision..... 4
Administration/Organization Directory..... 5

Employment

General Employment Information..... 7
Pre-Employment Background Checks and Drug Tests..... 8
Health Certificate Requirement 8
Definitions of At-Will, Classified Employee and Licensed Employee..... 8
Definition of Instructional and Non-Instructional Personnel..... 9
Definitions of Part-Time Employees and Full Time Employees..... 9
Definition of Standard Work Week..... 10

Employee Expectations, Responsibilities, and Related Policies

Employee Dress Code Policy..... 10
Drug Free Workplace Policy..... 10
Employee Smoking and Use of Tobacco Products on District Property..... 11
Employee Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens..... 12
Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying..... 13
Professional Staff-Student Relations..... 13
Restrictions on Electronic Communications to Students..... 14
Employee Responsibility to Notify the Director of Human Resources of Criminal Charges..... 15
Employee Responsibility Regarding Licensure Renewal..... 15
Employee Responsibility to Report Child Abuse..... 15
Employee Responsibility Regarding Student Records and Confidentiality..... 15
Employee Responsible Use of Technology..... 16
Employee Use of Social Media..... 16
Employees Political Activities..... 17
Employee Conflict of Interest..... 17
Attendance Expectations..... 17

Compensation and Benefits Information

General Salary Information..... 19
Local Salary Supplement Information..... 19
Longevity Pay..... 20
Direct Deposit of Pay..... 20
Mandatory Payroll Deductions..... 20
Voluntary Payroll Deductions..... 20
Workers' Compensation..... 21
State Employee Health Insurance Information..... 25

North Carolina Teachers and State Employee Retirement.....	25
Short-Term Disability Benefits.....	26
Long-Term Disability Benefits.....	26
Death Benefits.....	27
Unemployment Insurance.....	28
Professional Liability Insurance.....	28
Leave Information	
Paid Legal Holidays.....	29
Who Receives Holiday Pay.....	29
State Holidays.....	29
Taking Religious Holidays.....	29
Annual Leave.....	30
Sick Leave.....	33
Extended Sick Leave.....	35
Voluntary Shared Leave.....	36
Personal Leave.....	38
Parent Leave Without Pay and Leave of Absence Request.....	39
District Maternity Leave Protocol.....	41
Family and Medical Leave.....	42
Parental Involvement Leave.....	45
Short Term Military Leave.....	46
Longevity Pay.....	48
Licensure Information	
Accessing the North Carolina Online Licensure System.....	50
Renewal Credit Requirements for Educators.....	50
Directions for Submitting CEUs for Credit.....	51
Instructions for Checking CEUs and License Renewal Status.....	54

Mission

Newton-Conover City Schools is a supportive community that provides students with personalized opportunities for success.

Vision

Inspire. Innovate. Succeed.

Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Plan

It is the policy of the board of education to provide equal opportunity in employment to all qualified applicants and employees without regard to race, color, religion, physical handicap, national origin, sex, age, socioeconomic status, or political affiliation. A conscientious effort will be made by all administrative personnel to prohibit discrimination against any individual in employment practices/procedures including sexual harassment. Positive efforts will be devised and utilized by all administrative personnel to prevent discriminatory practices in the work environment. The board and the superintendent will take appropriate action to ensure that all personnel transactions will be implemented in a fair and impartial manner.

The Minority Recruitment/Affirmative Action Committee meets annually to review the system plan, issues surrounding employment patterns, and the work of the system. If you have questions, concerns, or suggestions, contact the Personnel Office.

Administration and Organization of Newton-Conover City Schools

A six member, elected Board of Education, governs Newton-Conover City Schools. The superintendent, directors, and office support staff supervise the day-to-day operations of our school system. On this page, you will find the title and name of key personnel, administrative assistants, and other support staff. This information has been included to help you in communicating with the right person when you have comments, questions, or suggestions.

Superintendent

Dr. Aron Gabriel-Ext. 220

Director of Finance

Carmen Houston-Ext. 282

Chief Academic Officer

Dr. Heather Mullins-Ext. 221

Assistant Finance Director

Keista Bass-Ext. 283

Executive Director Auxiliary Services

Dr. Sylvia White-Ext. 204

Accounts Payable/Payroll Specialist

Tonya Shumate-Ext. 285

Administrative Assistant to Superintendent's Office/System Data Manager

Dawn West-Ext. 214

Director of Human Resources/Public Information

Dr. John Robinson-Ext. 277

Administrative Assistant to Chief Academic Officer

Tefany Major-Ext. 210

Personnel/Licensure/Benefits Specialist

Joanne Stanley-Ext. 278

Director of Elementary Education/ESL Services/Federal Programs

Tammy Brown-Ext. 201

Director of Maintenance/Safety/Facilities

Robin Rudisill-Ext. 268

Director of Career and Technical Education.Grant Writer

Jessica Shouweiler

Director of Child Nutrition

Tara Kelley-Ext. 269

Director of Student Services

Dr. Rosanna Whisnant-Ext.

Administrative Assistant Director of Child Nutrition

Colleen Smith-Ext. 270

Director of Accountability and Technology

Cindy Geddes-Ext. 208

Child Nutrition Supervisor

Nancy Price-Ext. 271

Instructional Technology Facilitator

Angie Sigmon-Ext. 206

Director of Community Schools

Kirsten Maynard-Ext. 279

Construction Manager

Allen Kirby-Ext. 223

Assistant Director of Technology

Benjamin Gilmore-Ext. 205

Technology Technician

Leng Yang

Technology Technician

Peter Walsh

LAN Engineer

Tim Cochran

Director of Exceptional Children

Dr. Keisha Pritchard-Ext. 215

**Administrative Assistant Director of
Elementary Education/Director of
Accountability-Technology/
Exceptional Children**

Susan Stallings-Ext. 225

Catawba RALC

Karoline Fisher-828-464-0013

**Administrative Assistant Catawba
RALC**

Melia Stover-828-464-0013

Central Office Receptionist

Anita Law-Ext. 200

General Employment Information

All employees are expected to act in a professional manner at all times. Since educators and support staff serve children as our primary focus, our example in conversation, dress, and behavior must be professional. In addition, as we deal with the public, we must recognize that we are all ambassadors for the school system. As such, we should always present our organization in a most positive light.

All staff members have a responsibility to make themselves familiar with, and abide by, the laws of the state as these affect their work, the policies of the board, and the regulations designed to implement them. All staff members are expected to carry out their assigned responsibilities with conscientious concern. The first responsibility of the instructional staff is the education, safety, and emotional well-being of all students.

Also, essential to the success of ongoing school operations and the instructional program are the following specific responsibilities, which shall be required of all personnel:

- Regularity and promptness in attendance at work.
- Support and enforcement of policies of the board and regulations of the school administration in regard to students.
- Diligence in submitting required reports correctly and promptly at the times specified.
- Care and protection of school property.
- Concern and attention toward their own and the board's legal responsibility for the safety and welfare of students, including the need to ensure that students are under supervision at all times.
- Confidentiality of information concerning student performance and behavior. Only the student's parents or guardian and school personnel directly associated with the student has a right to know. Employees must not be involved in conversations or gossip about students.

In their association with students, parents, and the community, all school employees will set examples that are an important part of the educational process. Their manner, courteousness, industry, and attitudes establish models that affect the development of young people and how parents and the community view our schools and profession. Appropriate, professional dress as determined by the building principal or supervisor shall be worn by all employees while on the job. The board expects our staff members to set a positive example as well as provide exemplary instruction.

Pre-Employment Background Checks and Drug Tests

Employment with NCCS is contingent on passing a drug test and criminal background check. North Carolina Pre-Kindergarten, Developmental Day Staff, and Community Schools Staff are required to have a background check and fingerprinting by the North Carolina Division of Child Development and Early Education, which must be renewed every three years.

Also, federal immigration law requires all employers to verify both the identity and employment eligibility of all persons hired to work in the United States. In our efforts to meet these requirements, NCCS collaborates with Homeland Security and the Social Security Administration to aid in verifying employment eligibility of all newly hired employees. In compliance with these requirements, new employees will fill out an I-9 form for which you will need to bring a valid driver's license and your Social Security Card. Should employment not be authorized, you have eight (8) business days to contact the Social Security Office to resolve your employment status.

Health Certificate Requirement

For initial employment, all employees of the school system will have a health examination by a licensed physician within the first week of going through the hiring process. The examination will include a statement certifying that such person has been examined for tuberculosis and that the results of such examination have been furnished to the State Board of Health. The cost of such examination will be borne by the employee.

Definitions of At-Will Employee, Classified Employee and Licensed Employee

At-Will Employee: Employees who are not required to be employed under contracts or who are not offered contracts by local board prerogative are at-will employees. An example of at-will employees include most non-licensed personnel such as custodians, bus drivers, teacher assistants, clerical staff, maintenance supervisors, and transportation coordinators. Administrators not required by statute to be employed under contract are also at-will employees (unless the local board has chosen to offer contracts). At-will employees are employed at the will and pleasure of the school system. They can resign from their position at any time and may be dismissed or demoted for any reason by either your school administrator or the superintendent. Should an at-will employee be dismissed from her or his position, she or he has a right to request in writing a hearing from the Board.

Licensed Employee: You are considered a licensed employee if you are required to hold and maintain a North Carolina teaching, administrator, counselor, or other educational license. Teachers, principals, assistant principals, counselors, media coordinators, directors, superintendent and associate superintendent are considered licensed employees. Licensed employees are also employed on a contract of 1, 2 or 4 years as approved by the Board of Education.

Classified Employee: You are a classified employee if your position does not require a teaching license. Classified employees are considered at-will employees (See Above.)

Definition of Instructional and Non-Instructional Personnel

Instructional Personnel: Instructional Personnel are defined as “all teachers” with the exception of supervisors, non-teaching principals, assistant principals, social workers, counselors, and psychologists. Any of these personnel that teach students any part of the day are considered instructional personnel. Instructional personnel who required substitutes are prohibited from using annual leave on student attendance days except under the provisions governing catastrophic illness (See definition Under Leave Policies) or leave for new parents.

Non-instructional personnel, or those who do not require a substitute as defined above may, with immediate supervisor approval, take annual leave on any day school is in session. As outlined in leave policy later in this manual, teachers who are restricted in their use of annual leave shall accrue personal leave.

Definitions of Part-Time Employees and Full Time Employees

Part Time Employees: A part time employee is an employee who regularly works at least 20 hours per week, but less than the number of hours set as full time for that class of work. Any permanent employee who works at least 30 hours per week must be enrolled in the retirement system and receive employer-paid insurance for themselves.

Full Time Employees: A full time employee is an individual employed whose regular work week if the number of hours established as full time for the class of work assigned, but not less than 30 hours per week. Two or more part-time assignments may be combined within the same LEA, or local educational agency, to satisfy the requirements to be considered a full time employee. An employee working 30 or more hours per week is considered a full-time employee.

Definition of Standard Work Week

If you work more than 30 or more hours during a work week you are considered a full-time employee. The standard work week for:

- Teachers is a minimum of 40 hours per week
- Teacher assistants is 37.5 hours per week, beginning January 2014 all teacher assistants hired will work 32.5 hours per week
- School administrators is a minimum of 40 hours per week
- Central office administrators is a minimum of 40 hours per week
- All support staff is 40 hours per week

Employees that regularly work 20 hours each week are entitled to annual, sick leave, holidays on a pro rata basis. Employees that work fewer than 20 hours during a work week are not eligible for any employment benefits.

Employee Expectations, Responsibilities and Related Policies

Employee Dress Code Policy

Regarding employee attire, clothing should be clean, appropriate, and reflective of community standards. Teachers will gain the respect of students and parents more readily whenever they dress in a professional manner. If you have doubts about the appropriateness of an outfit, it is best not to wear it. The type of activity determines the appropriate attire. Certainly in normal classroom instruction, more formal attire would be appropriate. If you are in doubt as to the appropriateness of certain clothing, talk with your immediate supervisor. Employees should remember that our attire influences our behavior, as well as the public's perception. We expect all employees to use proper judgment with regard to appropriate attire. **For further information regarding expect professional dress expectations, employees are encouraged to see N-CCS Board Policy 7340.**

Teachers are reminded to refer to Title 16 of the North Carolina Administrative Code known as "Code of Professional Practice and Conduct for North Carolina Educators."

Drug Free Workplace Policy

By Board of Education policy, the school system is a drug free workplace. You must not possess, use, sell, or be under the influence of any alcoholic beverage or prohibited substance while you are at work or on duty. Prohibited substances include but are not limited to liquor, beer, wine, wine coolers and other alcoholic and mixed beverages, speed, ice, phenobarbital, LSD, Quaaludes, codeine, heroin, morphine, PCP, steroids, marijuana, cocaine and crack.

Prescription drugs may be used in accordance with your doctor's prescription. **Bus drivers taking medication that may cause drowsiness, slow down reflexes, or that in anyway would impede driving judgment are required to inform their administrator and refrain from driving their assigned bus route until they are no longer using the medication.**

Anyone violating this policy may be asked to participate in an alcohol or drug abuse rehabilitation program. Depending on the seriousness of the violation, you may receive disciplinary action ranging from a written reprimand to dismissal from your job.

You are required to report any conviction of a drug related offense to your administrator within five (5) days.

School bus drivers, activity bus drivers, driver-education teachers, administrators, and transportation employees may be **randomly tested** for drugs and alcohol at any time during the school year. Names for the Random Drug Test are determined by DAMP, Inc. Transportation personnel who use alcohol or drugs on the job will be recommended for dismissal.

Employee Smoking and Use of Tobacco Products on School Property

State law prohibits smoking and the use of tobacco products on any government property, including schools and school grounds.

Employees of Newton-Conover City Schools have a responsibility for maintaining a safe and wholesome learning environment and for safeguarding the health of students, staff, and visitors. The use of tobacco and tobacco products is a major concern because it seriously endangers the physical wellbeing of students and others in the school environment.

Smoking and the use of tobacco products is prohibited on the school district property. This shall include school buildings, buses, and school-owned vehicles, outdoor public meetings, performances, or contests on school campuses.

Employee Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration issued regulations on job exposure to bloodborne pathogens. These are viruses present in human blood and body fluids that can cause disease in humans. The school system has established plans that cover employees who could be "reasonably anticipated" to incur exposure to blood or other potentially infectious body fluids as a result of performing required job duties. Copies of the Exposure Plan are located in the office of each school and are available upon request at the central office.

This plan includes a list of personnel covered by the OSHA standards; the potential hazards of each job description; what measures will be taken to reduce the risk of exposure; and all forms necessary to carry out the plan.

Newton-Conover City Schools is committed to providing a safe and healthy work environment for all employees, not just those covered by the standard. If any employee feels she or he is at risk, but are not among the identified people listed in the plan as at risk of exposure to blood borne pathogens, she or he should complete the form entitled "Employee Exposure Determination Questionnaire" found in the school office and send the completed form to the personnel office.

According to OSHA, 'Good Samaritan' acts, such as assisting a student or co-worker with a nosebleed, would not be considered 'reasonably anticipated occupational exposure.' Since most employees are not 'occupationally exposed' to bloodborne pathogens while performing their jobs, it is important for everyone in the school setting to understand the dangers of infection and safe procedures to minimize risk.

A safe and effective Hepatitis B vaccination is available to 'occupationally exposed' employees at no cost. However, all employees who have a bloodborne pathogen exposure while on the job will be referred to the Occupational Health Center at Catawba Memorial Hospital and not to their personal physician or to another emergency room.

An exposure incident is a specific eye, mouth, or other mucous membrane, non-intact skin, or contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials. The employee or supervisor should call 326-3230 before going in for a follow-up after an incident. The employee should take a completed Exposure Form with them. These forms can be obtained in the school office.

Taking 'universal precautions' will reduce the risk of infection. These precautions require taking routine care in handling blood and body fluids containing blood of all persons regardless of whether those persons is known to be infected with some specific disease-causing agent.

Employees should get in the habit of washing their hands with soap and running water for at least ten seconds at regular times during the school day. All restrooms in buildings in the district are stocked with an antibacterial soap.

When an accident or incident occurs involving bodily fluids, disposable gloves should be worn when cleaning up blood, feces, vomit and urine. This is to be done in addition to, not as a substitute for hand washing. Gloves are the most widely used and basic form of personal protective equipment. Each school will issue gloves to staff members. After use, the employee will contact the school office for new gloves. Gloves should be removed when they become contaminated or damaged, or immediately after finishing the task.

Carefully dispose of trash that contains body wastes and sharp objects. Double bag (sealed plastic bag) any paper towels or any disposable materials containing blood or body fluids before putting in the trash can.

All equipment and environmental working surfaces shall be decontaminated after contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials. A 1:10 solution of sodium hypochlorite or EPA registered germicidal detergent can be used. These supplies are located with the custodians. An emergency 'spill pak' is also available in the principal's office. Employees should contact the custodian to assist in proper cleaning and disposal of waste materials.

Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying

The Newton-Conover City School Board of Education believes that all employees and students should be free of unlawful discrimination, harassment, and bullying as a part of a safe, orderly, caring, and inviting working and learning environment. It is also committed to ensure nondiscrimination in all its educational and employment activities. Newton-Conover Board of Education policy expressly prohibits unlawful discrimination, harassment, or bullying including, but not limited to, race, national origin, sex, pregnancy, religion, age or disability. *(For complete information regarding this policy, see N-CCS Board of Education Policies 1710, 4021, 7230.)*

The Newton-Conover Board of Education also prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any person for reporting on tending to report violations of this policy; supporting someone for reporting or intending to report a violation of this policy, or participating in the investigation of reported violations of this policy.

Professional Staff-Student Relations

All employees are to maintain the highest professional, moral, and ethical standards in their interactions with students. District employees are required to provide an

atmosphere conducive to learning through consistently and fairly applied discipline and established and maintained professional boundaries. Furthermore, employees are expected to motivate each student to perform to his or her capacity while modeling the behavior expected of students in staff-student relationships. Employees are expected to demonstrate good judgment and to avoid the appearance of impropriety in their interactions with students. All employees are prohibited from dating, courting, or entering into a romantic relationship or having sexual contact with any student enrolled in the school system regardless of the student's age. Employees engaging in such inappropriate conduct will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, and may be subject to criminal action as determined by North Carolina law.

Restrictions on Electronic Communications to Students

Employees are prohibited from communicating with current students through non-school controlled social media without parent permission except to the extent that the employee and student have appropriate relationship which originated outside the school setting.

Employees are prohibited from engaging in other forms of one-to-one electronic communications (e.g., voice mail, email, texting, and photo or video transmission) with students without written prior approval of the employee's supervisor and the student's parent. This rule will not apply, in one or more of the following circumstances:

- The communication is for an educational purpose; is conducted through a school-system provided platform which archives that communication; and occurs after the employee has given prior notice to his or her supervisor that such communication will occur.
- The communication serves an educational purpose and is simultaneously copied to the employee's supervisor or designee and upon the request of parent or guardian.
- The communication is necessary in a bona fide emergency, provided the communication is disclosed to the supervisor and parent or guardian as soon as possible.
- The communication derives from a relationship or association outside of the school setting and occurs with the consent of the parent or guardian, and such communication does not otherwise violate board policy.

For more information about restrictions on electronic communications with students, employees should consult N-CCS Board Policies 4040/7310.

Employee Responsibility to Notify the Director of Human Resources of Criminal Charges and Offenses

Employees are to notify the director of personnel/human resources if they are arrested for, charged with, or convicted of a criminal offense (including entering a guilty plea or nolo contendere) other than a minor traffic violation (i.e., speeding, parking, or a lesser violation). Notice must be in writing, must include all pertinent facts, and must be delivered to the director of personnel/human resources no later than the next scheduled business day following the arrest, charge, or conviction, unless the employee is hospitalized or incarcerated, in which case the employee must report the alleged violation within 24 hours after his or her release. Upon judicial action in the matter, the employee must report the disposition and pertinent facts in writing to the director of personnel/human resources no later than the next day following adjudication. (See N-CCS Policy 7300.)

Employee Responsibility Regarding Licensure Renewal

Licensure renewal is the responsibility of the individual employee, not the school system. Any employee who allows a license to expire must have it reinstated prior to the beginning of the next school year. A teacher whose license has expired is subject to dismissal. (For additional information about district licensure policies see N-CCS Board Policies 7130 and 7130-R.)

Employee Responsibility to Report Child Abuse

A school employee who knows or has cause to suspect child abuse, neglect, dependency, or death as a result of maltreatment by a parent, custodian or caretaker of the child; or, that a child has been a victim of human trafficking, involuntary servitude, or sexual servitude by any person is legally required to report the case to the director of social services. The employee is also expected to report the case to the principal of that school. Failure to do report is subject to disciplinary action or civil or criminal action under the law. (For more information see N-CCS Board Policy 4240/7312.)

Employee Responsibility Regarding Student Records and Confidentiality

Employees have an absolute duty to maintain the confidentiality of student records as required by law. Employees who are exposed to confidential information are expected to avoid repeating or discussing that information. All employees with access to student records should be careful in discussing students with anyone who has not been authorized to have such knowledge. Staff should not discuss students in areas where such conversations can't be confidentially maintained.

Confidential information, such as student records or personnel files should not be emailed unless done so in a secure manner. (See N-CCS Board Policy 2125/7315.)

Employee Responsible Use of Technology

The use of school system technological resources, including access to the Internet, is a privilege and not a right. Individual users of school system technological resources are responsible for their behavior and communications when using those resources.

Responsible use of school system technological resources is use that is ethical, respectful, academically honest, and supportive of student learning. Each user has a responsibility to respect others in the school community and on the Internet. Users are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette.

Newton-Conover City Schools Board Policy has established specific rules governing the use of technological resources, and all employees are expected to know and abide by these rules. These rules are listed under N-CCS Board Policies 3225/4312/7320.

Employees are not to use school email to distribute advertisements for private industries, campaign literature, or other non-school related content.

Employee Use of Social Media

The Newton-Conover City Schools Board of Education acknowledges that school district employees may engage in the use of social media during their personal time. School employees who use social media must be mindful that they are responsible for their public conduct even when not acting in their capacities as school system employees.

Employees are to maintain professional relationships with students at all times in accordance with board policy. Employees are expected to use professional judgment when using social media or other electronic communications and to comply with the following:

- All electronic communications must be school-related and in the scope of professional responsibilities.
- Use only school-controlled social media to communicate directly with current students on school-related matters.
- Must avoid communicating with current students through personal social media without parental permission. Also avoid direct communication with students using social media.

- Any use of non-school controlled social media for instructional or other school-related purposes must have prior written approval of principal superintendent or other designee.

Newton-Conover City Schools respects the right of employees to use social media as a medium of self-expression on their personal time. Employees are expected to be role models for students and are responsible for their public conduct.

School employees are prohibited from accessing social networking websites for personal use during instructional time.

In addition, employees using social media for personal purposes should be aware of that the content they post may be viewed by anyone, including students, parents, and community members. They should not post confidential information about students, other district employees or school system business. (For a complete listing of principles guiding employee posting to social media, see N-CCS Board Policy 7335).

Employee Political Activities

Newton-Conover City Schools respects the right of citizenship, involving registering, discussing political issues, voting, campaigning for candidates on issues, running of serving in public office, and participating on a committee or board that seeks to serve the welfare of the community.

Employees are not to engage in political activities during school time; using school money, materials, or resources; or use their position to encourage or coerce students and other employees to support in any way a political party, candidate or issue.

Employee Conflict of Interest

Employees are expected to avoid engaging in any conduct that creates or gives the appearance of creating a conflict of interest with their job responsibilities. They should not engage in or have a financial interest, directly or indirectly, in any activity that conflicts with duties and responsibilities in the school system. (For more information regarding employee conflict of interest, see N-CCS Board Policy 7730.)

Attendance Expectations

All employees are expected to be present during all working hours. Absence without prior approval, chronic absences, habitual tardiness or abuses of designated working

hours are all considered neglect of duty and will result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. (See N-CCS Board Policy 7500.)

The length of the school day for licensed and professional staff is a minimum of seven hours and thirty minutes and will continue until professional responsibilities to the student and school are completed. Administrative meetings, curriculum development, student supervision, assigned duties, parent conferences, group or individual planning, and extracurricular activities may require hours beyond the stated minimum. Work schedules for other employees will be defined by the superintendent or designee, consistent with the Fair Labor Standards Act and the provisions of N-CCS Board Policy 7500.

Compensation and Benefits Information

General Salary Information

Employees are paid according to salary scales adopted by the North Carolina General Assembly and/or the Newton-Conover Board of Education. All individual inquiries regarding pay and salaries should be directed to the Finance Department and Department of Human Resources.

All licensed personnel have the option of being paid in 12 monthly installments from August to July or being paid in 10 monthly installments from August to May.

Teacher Assistants and Child Nutrition Assistants are given the option of being paid in 12 monthly installments from September to August or being paid in 10 monthly installments from September to June.

Payday for all district employees is generally the last working day of the month, unless otherwise specified.

Local Salary Supplement Information

Teachers employed with Newton-Conover City Schools are paid an annual supplement equal to 7% of their current year's salary. Teachers may also qualify for an additional local performance bonus. This amount varies according to the total amount allotted to the district by the Catawba County Commissioners for this bonus.

Full-time permanent classified personnel receive an annual salary supplement equal to 3% of their current year's salary.

Teacher assistant supplements are paid in two installments with the first being in November and the second one occurring in June.

For all other classified supplements, employees receive the first payment in November with the second payment in April.

Individuals who are not employed for the full year will receive a prorated portion of the salary supplement.

Longevity Pay

Employees eligible for longevity pay include all classified and central office administrators who are considered full time or who are employed part-time for 20 hours per week or more, and who have at least ten years of total qualifying state service.

Classified and central office employees receive longevity pay based on the years of state service as follows:

Years of State Service	Longevity Pay Rate
10 but less than 15 years	1.50 Percent
15 but less than 20 years	2.25 Percent
20 but less than 25 years	3.25 Percent
25 or more years	4.50 Percent

Direct Deposit of Pay

Direct deposit is available as an option for all district employees. These deposits can be made to any bank in the state of North Carolina. At the end of the month, employees who choose the direct deposit option can obtain or view a Notice of Direct Deposit through the Timekeeper program. Employees may only direct deposit to one account, and that deposit will occur at midnight on the designated pay date. Employees interested in the direct deposit option must complete a direct deposit form and submit to Payroll.

Mandatory Payroll Deductions

All employees have the following deductions from their monthly salary as required by law:

- Federal Social Security (FICA): This Social Security deduction is automatic for all employees. (Exception would be student employees of school system.)
- Federal Withholding Tax: These deductions are made according to a schedule determined by the US Department of Treasury.
- State Income Tax: This deduction is determined by the state of North Carolina.
- Retirement: Each employee has a deduction of 6 percent deducted for the State Employee Retirement Fund.

Voluntary Payroll Deductions

Employees may elect to have any of the following deducted from their pay:

- State Employee Credit Union Payments: Employees interested in these deductions may contact the State Employee Credit Union at 828-327-4126.

- Tax Sheltered Annuities and Other Deferred Compensation Plans: These plans are available from our Third Party Provider, TSA. Interested employees may contact TSA at 1-888-627-5267 or for more information regarding 203(b) and 457(b) plans go to www.tsacq.com.
- Health Insurance Premiums: Each employee has deductions based on the type of health insurance plan chosen.
- Cafeteria Benefits Plan: Newton-Conover City Schools offers employees a variety of plans such as extended medical, dental, vision, child-care, cancer insurance, heart insurance, life insurance, and disability income plans through First Financial Administrators. The coverage runs from January 1 to December 31 each year. For more information regarding Cafeteria Benefits contact the Human Resources Office.

Workers Compensation

Purpose of Workers' Compensation: The purpose of workers compensation is to ensure that employees who are injured on the job are provided compensation in accordance with the North Carolina Workers' Compensation Act.

Coverage of Workers' Compensation: North Carolina Public School Law, G.S 115C-337 states that provisions of the Workers' Compensation Act is applicable to all school employees and that the State Board of Education shall make arrangements as necessary to carry out those provisions. Liability of the state for compensation is confined to school employees paid by the state from state public funds for injuries or death caused by accident arising out of and in the course of their employment in connection with the state-operated school term.

Responsibility of Employee in a Workers' Compensation Claim: Workers compensation claims must be submitted within 2 years from the date of the injury or knowledge thereof.

Use of Leave During Required Seven Day Waiting Period: No compensation is allowed during the first seven calendar days of disability resulting from injury, except for medical treatment and supplies. The employee may choose one of the following options during the 7-day waiting period:

- Take earned sick leave during the required waiting period, then go on workers' compensation leave, and begin drawing workers' compensation weekly benefits.
- Elect to go on workers' compensation leave with no pay for the required waiting period and then begin drawing workers' compensation weekly benefits.

If the injury results in a disability of more than 21 days, as indicated in G.S. 97-28, the workers' compensation weekly benefit shall be allowed from the date of disability.

Workers' Compensation Benefits: Under G.S. 97-28 the state paid (in full or in part) employees receive $66\frac{2}{3}\%$ of their average annual weekly salary from the state workers' compensation fund and is paid directly to the employee.

In order to provide an income approximately equal to, but not to exceed, the employee's weekly salary, earned sick leave days may be used while an employee is receiving workers' compensation weekly benefits in full or half day increments.

Continuation of Benefits: While on workers' compensation leave, an employee is eligible for continuation of the following benefits:

- Performance increase: Upon reinstatement, an employee salary will be computed based on the last salary and any legislative increase to which the employee is entitled. Any performance increase which would have been given had the employee been at work may be included in the reinstatement salary, or it may be given on any payment date following reinstatement.
- Vacation and Sick Leave: While on workers' compensation leave, the employee will continue to accumulate vacation and sick leave to be credited to his/her account for use upon return. If the employee does not return, vacation leave accumulated up to 240 hours will be paid in a lump sum payment.
- Hospitalization Insurance: While on workers' compensation leave, an employee is in pay status and will continue coverage under the state's health insurance program. Monthly premiums for the employee will be paid from the same source of funds and in the same proration amount from which the regular monthly salary is paid.
- Retirement Service Credit: While on workers' compensation leave, an employee does not receive retirement credit. As a member of the Retirement System, the employee may purchase credits for the period of time on an approved leave of absence. Upon request by the employee, the Retirement System will provide a statement of the cost and a date by which purchase must be made. If purchase is not made by that date, the cost will have to be recomputed.

Return to Work: When the treating physician has released an employee, who has been injured on the job and placed on workers' compensation leave, to return to work, there are possible return to work situations:

- **FULL RETURN TO DUTY:** When an employee has reached maximum medical improvement, and has been released to full duty return to work by the treating physician, the agency shall return the employee to suitable employment as defined by the Workers' Compensation Act.
- **TRANSITIONAL RETURN:** When an employee has not reached maximum medical improvement and is ready to return to limited work duty with the approval of the treating physician; but retains some disability which prevents successful performance in their original position, the employer will provide transitional employment with the employee's work restrictions. This work reassignment shall be a temporary assignment and shall not exceed 9 months; unless otherwise directed by the treating physician.
- **RETURN TO WORK WITH PERMANENT RESTRICTIONS:** When an employee has reached maximum medical improvement and has been released to return to work by the treating physician; but, has received a disability which prohibits employment in his/her previous position, the employer shall place the employee in suitable employment that is within the employee's work restrictions. This work placement may be a permanent assignment, a part-time assignment, or a temporary assignment.

Separation Due to Unavailability: An employee may be separated on the basis of "unavailability" when the employee remains unavailable for work after all applicable leave credits have been exhausted and LEA management does not grant leave without pay, or does not extend a leave without pay period, for reasons deemed sufficient by the LEA. Such reasons include, but are not limited to, lack of suitable temporary assistance, criticality of position, budget constraints, etc. Separation Due to Unavailability is not a disciplinary dismissal and will not sever any benefits the injured employee is receiving under the Workers' Compensation Act. Separation Due to Unavailability may be grieved or appealed by the employee. Separation Due to Unavailability shall be applied in accordance to law and any applicable board policy.

Unavailability may be due to:

- The employee's inability to return to all of his/her position's essential duties or work schedule due to a medical condition or the vagueness of a medical prognosis;
- And, the employee and the LEA cannot reach agreement on a return to work arrangement that meets both the operating needs of the LEA and the employee's medical/health needs;

- Or, unavailability may also be due to 1) the employee's inability to return to all of the positions essential duties and work schedule due to other extenuating circumstances, and 2) the employee and LEA cannot reach agreement on a return to work arrangement that meets both the needs of the LEA and the employee's situation.

REFUSAL OF SUITABLE EMPLOYMENT: The Workers' Compensation Act prevents employers from firing or demoting employees in retaliation for pursuing remedies under the act. When an employee, receiving compensation benefits, has reached maximum medical improvement, is released to return to work by the treating physician, and refuses to suitable employment offered by the employer and approved by the treating physician, the employer has the right to implement dismissal procedures in accordance with the Workers' Compensation Act.

FAILURE TO COOPERATE: When it has been determined that the employee has not fully cooperated with the intent and spirit of the Workers' Compensation Act, management may terminate the employee. Workers' compensation benefits may be continued or discontinued in accordance with provisions of the Workers' Compensation Act.

Workers' Compensation Local Procedures

If an employee is accidentally injured or contracts an occupational disease while on the job or while carrying out assigned duties, the principal or immediate supervisor must be contacted immediately for approval, investigation, and the completion of the required accident form. The principal, or designee should contact the Human Resources Benefits Specialist, who will then provide additional instructions. The accident or injury report should be promptly forwarded to Human Resources along with a copy of Form 18.

Because Workers' Compensation does not pay for the first seven days, employees who may need to be absent from work may choose to take appropriate sick leave, or annual leave if approved by Human Resources. If no leave is available, the individual may take leave without pay.

Employees must contact the Human Resources Office regarding limitations on choosing a treating physician.

IMPORTANT: Any employees not following these procedures and who seek medical treatment other than as directed by Human Resources will be responsible for any

medical bills incurred. If after the initial visit to Hart Industrial Clinic, the district provider, and employee wishes to see another physician, the employee must contact Human Resources for clearance.

State Employee Health Insurance Information

All permanent full-time employees are eligible for medical insurance through the comprehensive insurance plans offered by the state of North Carolina. The school system covers the cost of the individual premium, but the employee is responsible for any additional coverage such as family member coverage.

Upon retirement, employees may continue their health insurance plans if they receive a monthly retirement check from the state of North Carolina. At that time, the retiree must pay for any additional family members they wish to cover.

To avoid a waiting period, employees should enroll for health insurance when first eligible.

Employees can log in to eBenefitsNow at <https://www.ebenefitsnow.com/go/BCBSNC> and makes changes to their health insurance at any time. All changes subject to approval.

Cancellation of Health Insurance Upon Separation from Newton-Conover City Schools
As required by the North Carolina State Health Insurance Plan, Newton-Conover City Schools is required to cancel the insurance of employees that leave the district effective June 30th of each year, or the last day of the employee's last month of employment during the school year.

If the employee obtains employment by a different North Carolina school system, the employee's insurance may be carried through the summer, if the employee provides proof of this employment to the Human Resources Office.

North Carolina Teachers and State Employee Retirement

Permanent, full-time employees of the Newton-Conover City Schools are covered by the North Carolina Teacher and State Employees' Retirement System. Employees contribute 6% of their monthly salary and employers contribute a varying percentage amount. Employee contributions are paid with pretax dollars, thereby reducing her or his state and federal income tax liability.

When an employee resigns or is terminated with less than 5 years of service, the accumulated employee contributions may be withdrawn. Members with five or more years of service may withdraw accumulated contributions, or leave contributions in the retirement system and receive future retirement benefits.

The North Carolina Retirement System website below provides employees with access to manuals and all the information regarding the retirement plans. Much of the retirement process requires employees to access this site.

<https://www.myncretirement.com/>

Short-Term Disability Benefits

Employees with at least one year of contributing membership with the North Carolina Teachers and State Employees' Retirement System earned within 36 months preceding a disability are eligible for short-term disability benefits.

After a waiting period of 60 continuous calendar days from the onset of a disability, an eligible employee may receive a monthly short-term benefit equal to 50% of 1/12th her or her annual base rate of compensation plus 50% of 1/12th of his or her annual longevity payment, if any, to a maximum of \$3,000 per month.

An employee who receives short-term disability benefits is covered under the State Employee Health Insurance Plan for their individual coverage, provided that employee has contributed to the Retirement System for at least five years as a public school or state employee at the time of the disability.

An employee who receives short term disability benefits who did not meet the five-year requirement at the time of the disability may elect to continue her or his insurance coverage by paying the full premium required.

Short-term disability benefits may be extended for as many as 365 days beyond the original short-term period in cases where the Medical Board finds that the disability continues to be temporary and is likely to end during the extended period.

Long-Term Disability Benefits

Employees with at least five years of contributing membership service with the Teachers and State Employee Retirement system, earned within 96 calendar months

prior to the end of the short-term disability period, are eligible for long-term disability benefits.

Long-term disability payments are payable after the conclusion of the short-term disability period. During the first 36 months of the long-term disability period, the monthly long-term benefit will equal 65% of 1/12th of the employee's annual base rate of compensation that was last payable prior to the beginning of the short-term benefit period plus 65% of 1/12th of the annual longevity payment, if any, to a maximum of \$3,900 per month.

After the first 36 months of the long-term disability period, the long-term benefit is reduced by an amount equal to the primary Social Security disability benefits to which the employee might be entitled had he or she been awarded Social Security disability benefits.

An employee in receipt of long-term disability benefits is covered under the Teachers and State Employee Insurance Plan, with the state contributing the cost of employee-only coverage.

An employee approved for long-term disability benefits must terminate employment as a permanent employee prior to receiving long-term disability benefits.

An employee approved for long-term disability benefits who has not exhausted accumulated sick leave must be paid a lump sum for any available sick leave, if the employee is unable to apply the sick leave toward retirement.

Death Benefits

After completing one calendar year of employment as a member of the Retirement System, employees are automatically covered by a death benefit while they are being paid a salary and for up to 180 days after the last day for which a salary is paid.

Upon death, the beneficiary will receive a lump sum payment equal to an employee's salary during a 12-month period with a minimum of \$25,000 and a maximum of \$50,000, and the return of their contributions.

Employees should always remember to:

- Keep their beneficiary up to date (births, deaths, marriages, etc.)
- Make your beneficiary knows that they must apply for benefits in the event of your death.

- Make sure your beneficiary knows to furnish a copy of the death certificate to receive the benefit.
- Provide guardianship papers for beneficiaries are minors under the age of 18.
- Contact the Human Resources Office to make changes in beneficiary designations.

Unemployment Insurance

Public school employees are entitled to unemployment insurance. The purpose of such insurance is to provide financial assistance to individuals who through no fault of their own, are now unemployed.

Eligibility and amount of the benefit for individuals who apply are determined on a case-by-case basis and by the claimants past earnings.

Should there be a discrepancy between the claimant and the employer's explanation for unemployment, a hearing is held to determine the facts and a judgment is rendered by an Employment Security Commission adjudicator.

Professional Liability Insurance

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction provides professional liability insurance for all public school employees. Limits of the coverage are \$1 million per occurrence and \$1 million aggregate.

If an employee has no other professional liability insurance, then this coverage becomes primary and has no deductible.

Coverage is provided when arising out of an employee's scope of duties or authorized course of activities in a professional capacity. As occurrence is defined as an event in which the policy will respond on behalf of any insured individual, for damages and/or defence costs, resulting from any claim for a wrongful act by the insured individual. Wrongful Acts must arise from professional activities of the insured individual and occur during the policy period.

Leave Information

Paid Legal Holidays

Permanent public school employees receive pay for the same number of legal holidays occurring within the period of employment as those designated by the State Personnel Commission for North Carolina State Employees.

Who Receives Holiday Pay?: Paid holidays are granted only to employees who are in pay status through the day on which the holiday is scheduled, or in pay status for ½ or more of the workdays in the month. This includes Independence Day for summer employment (or another day at the discretion of the local school board).

- Permanent Part-Time employees are entitled to paid holidays on a prorata basis.
- Temporary employees are not entitled to paid holidays.
- Employees would not earn holidays scheduled before their date of employment or after their date of separation or when the employee is on leave without pay for more than half the workdays and holidays in the month.

What Are the State Holidays?: With the exception of Veteran's Day, the local board of education determines when holidays are scheduled in the school calendar.

The following holidays are designated by the State Personnel Commission for state employees:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr's Birthday
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Veteran's Day (Note: Veteran's Day must be observed as a holiday for students and staff.)
- Thanksgiving Day (Two Days)
- Christmas (Three Days)

Observance of Bona Fide Religious Holidays: Absence from school for bona fide religious holidays may be allowed for a maximum of two days within any school year with prior approval from the superintendent. Days designated may not be already

scheduled as vacation or other holidays in the school calendar. Absence for these religious holidays will be with full pay.

The employee must agree to make up the amount of time for which his or her absence has been excused. The time must be made up at a time agreed upon by the employee and his or her immediate supervisor or principal.

When a substitute is employed on these holidays, payment must be made from the same source of funds as the employee's salary (local, federal, or state funds).

Annual Leave (Vacation Leave)

The purpose of paid annual vacation leave is to allow and encourage all employees to renew their physical and mental capabilities and to remain fully productive. Employees are encouraged to request annual vacation leave during each year in order to achieve this purpose.

Who Is Eligible for Annual Leave? All full-time and part-time permanent employees who work or are on paid leave (including paid holidays and worker's compensation) for one-half or more of the workdays in a monthly pay period are entitled to earn annual vacation leave at the same rate provided by state employees.

Leave for part-time employees is computed on a prorata basis of the amount earned by a full-time employee in that class of work.

Rate of Earning Annual Leave: The rate of earning is based on the length of total state service as follows:

Vacation Leave Accrual Rate

Years of State Service	Monthly Full-Time Accrual Rates	12 Month Full-Time Accrual Rates
Less than 5 years	1.17 days (9.33 hours)	14 days (112 hours)
5 but less than 10 years	1.42 days (11.33 hours)	17 days (136 hours)
10 but less than 15 years	1.67 days (13.33 hours)	20 days (160 hours)
15 but less than 20 years	1.92 days (15.33 hours)	23 days (184 hours)
20 years or more	2.17 days (17.33 hours)	26 days (208 hours)

LEAs have the authority to determine the number of hours in their employee's workday. The above chart is based on the Office of State Human Resources model of an 8-hour day, 40-hour per week employee.

Bus drivers who work less than 20 hours per week and who are not otherwise entitled to earn vacation as described above are entitled to earn one day per year (equal in length to one regular workday for each driver if:

- They are employed to drive a regular daily route (i.e., they are not substitute drivers), and
- They were employed as regular drivers the entire previous school year.

A bus driver who is terminated or resigns before taking the leave day is not entitled to compensation for the annual vacation leave day.

Use of Annual Leave Days: The following describes when and how annual leave may be used:

- For 10-month employees the first 10 days of annual vacation leave must be scheduled in the school calendar and must be taken as scheduled.
- Approval of Annual Leave must be obtained with the authorization of the employee's immediate supervisor and must follow all policies established by the North Carolina State Board of Education and the Newton-Conover City Schools Board of Education.
- Annual leave must be taken in half-day or whole-day increments.
- Classroom teachers who require a substitute and teacher assistants may not take annual vacation leave at any time students are scheduled to be in attendance.
- Other personnel that do not require a substitute may take annual vacation leave on any day school is in session with the approval of their immediate supervisor.
- Employees may elect to use annual vacation leave for absences due to adverse weather conditions only on days with students are not required to attend school due to adverse weather conditions.

Use of Annual Leave by Teacher Assistants

Teacher assistants can only take annual leave on optional workdays. No annual leave can be taken on days students are in attendance. Teacher assistants may take sick leave or leave without pay with supervisor approval.

Special Conditions of Annual Leave Use: Employees may elect to exhaust annual vacation leave during the 60 day waiting period or lieu of short-term disability benefits. NOTE: Instructional personnel who require substitutes may use this leave only on days

that students are not scheduled to be in regular attendance or in accordance with the provisions for Leave for Catastrophic Illness, Leave for New Parents. Electing to do this does not extend the 365 day duration of short-term disability.

Use of Annual Leave by Interim or Temporary Employee: An employee who had previously earned annual vacation leave may not use this leave while employed in an interim position of less than six months, a temporary position, or a position of less than 20 hours per week.

Accumulation and Use of Annual Leave During Summer Employment: Any employee who earned annual vacation leave in the regular school term will continue to earn annual vacation leave during the summer if employed at least 20 hours per week in the same school system. The rate will be prorata if the summer employment is less than full-time. Annual vacation leave may be used under the same conditions as during regular term.

Scheduling Annual Vacation Leave and Workdays in Calendar: Our local calendar is designed to allow employees the opportunity to take annual vacation leave.

Any employees without sufficient earned annual leave to cover any annual vacation leave day scheduled in the school calendar will be placed on leave without pay.

Accumulation and Conversion of Annual Leave to Sick Leave: Annual vacation leave may be accumulated without any applicable maximum until June 30 of each calendar year. On June 30 or upon retirement accumulated annual vacation leave in excess of 30 days will be converted to sick leave so that only 30 workdays of annual vacation leave are carried forward.

Upon separation in order to retire, annual vacation leave over 30 days may be converted to sick leave for creditable service toward retirement.

Annual Leave for Catastrophic Illness: Instructional personnel who require substitutes may take annual vacation leave when students are scheduled to be in attendance if the leave is due to a catastrophic illness of the employee and if the entire employee's available sick leave has been exhausted. THIS LEAVE IS AVAILABLE ONLY FOR THE EMPLOYEE'S PERSONAL ILLNESS.

To determine whether an illness is a catastrophic illness, the following factors are considered:

- The debilitating nature of the condition,
- The life-threatening potential of the condition,
- The duration of the condition,
- The monetary hardship incurred because of the condition,
- The expected length of the leave, and
- Other options available to the employee, such as state disability.

Annual Vacation Leave for New Parents: Employees, including teachers, may use annual vacation leave if applicable to care for a newborn child or for a child placed with the employee for adoption or foster care. Use of annual vacation leave for this purpose is not limited to the days when students are not scheduled to be in attendance.

Sick Leave

Eligibility and Rate of Earning: All permanent, full-time employees working or on paid leave (including paid holidays and workers' compensation) for one-half or more of the workdays in any monthly pay period earn one sick day per month. All permanent part-time employees working or on paid leave (including paid holidays and workers' compensation) for one-half or more of the workdays in any monthly pay period earn sick leave computed on a prorata basis of the amount earned by a full-time employee in that class of work.

Sick leave must be used on half-day or whole-day increments.

Sick leave may be accumulated indefinitely.

Purposes for Which Sick Leave May Be Used: Sick Leave may be used for:

- Actual period of temporary disability caused by or contributed to by personal illness or injury, which prevents an employee from performing his or her usual duties. Sick leave due to pregnancy, miscarriage, abortion, childbirth, or postnatal recovery must be treated in the same manner as another other temporary disability. Sick leave may be used during the 60-day waiting period for short-term disability to supplement, or in lieu of, short-term disability benefits. Sick leave may also be used to supplement, or in lieu of, workers' compensation to maintain 100% salary.

- Up to 30 days of sick leave may be used to care for a child placed with an employee for adoption. (These days should be consecutive and within the first 12 months following the adoption).
- Medical appointments of the employee.
- Illness in the immediate family and medical appointments related to the illness that necessitates the employee's attendance.
- Death in the immediate family (This would include the death of a: spouse, children, parents, brothers, sisters, grandparents, grandchildren, step, half, and in-law relatives, and dependents living in the employee's household.)

Additional Restrictions on Sick Leave

Length of leave granted for illness or death in the immediate family is determined by the district based on individual employee need.

Whenever possible, employees should give 30 days advance notice of plans to take sick leave for medical or surgical procedures, or for childbirth.

Requirement for Verification for Sick Leave

Employees who take sick leave on required workdays are required to submit a statement from a medical doctor or other acceptable proof that the employee was unable to work due to a personal illness; medical appointments; illness or death in the immediate family; or adoption of a child.

Sick Leave Accumulation and Use During Summer Employment

Any employee who earned sick leave during the regular school term will continue to earn sick leave during the summer if employed in the same school system at least 20 hours per week, even if employed in a temporary or interim position for the summer.

The rate of earning sick leave will be pro-rata if that employment is less than full time.

The employee employed in the summer may use sick leave for the same reasons permitted during the regular term.

Limitations on Sick Leave

Sick leave may not be used while on leave without pay or on holidays and annual vacation leave days scheduled in the school calendar. (An absence covered by workers' compensation is not considered to be a leave without pay.)

Sick leave may be used on any workday or student day including the first day employees in permanent positions report to work.

An employee who is not eligible to earn leave, cannot use previously earned accumulated leave.

Leave of Absence Requests

Absences longer than ten days require the submission of a “Leave of Absence Request Form.” These must be submitted to the Board Education for approval at their next meeting. Requests for a Leave of Absence require accompanied documentation from your physician and must be attached to your request.

Sick Leave Earned from Other State School Systems

When an employee is hired by Newton-Conover City Schools, sick leave and other balances do not automatically transfer with the employee. To ensure that this leave balance has transferred, the newly hired employee may want to contact their previous employer and request that leave be transferred.

Extended Sick Leave

Eligibility

Extended sick leave is available to classroom teachers and media coordinators who require substitutes if they are absent due to **their own personal illness or injury and have exhausted all available accumulated leave (sick leave, annual leave, and bonus leave). The employee requesting extended sick must have exhausted all available accumulated paid leave (sick leave, annual vacation leave, and bonus leave.)**

In order to be eligible, the employee must be in a permanent full- or part-time position.

Those who qualify, are allowed extended sick leave **up to 20 work days** throughout the term of employment. ***(Those requesting extended sick leave may not be granted 20 days in a lump sum. They will be granted only the days that their personal illness or injury requires as provided by medical documentation.)***

Guideline for Use of Extended Sick Leave

1-To be eligible, the newly hired employee must report to work.

2-Newton-Conover City Schools required appropriate medical verification for the need for extended sick leave.

3-Extended sick leave days do not have to be used consecutively.

4-Unused days do not carry forward to next school year.

5-It is not available beyond the waiting period of Worker's Compensation or Short Term Disability.

6-The school and district asks for medical documentation for subsequent absences if necessary.

Required Deduction

Employees on extended sick leave receive full salary less the deduction for required substitute. This deduction is required whether or not a substitute is used. The standard deduction is \$50 per day.

Voluntary Shared Leave

Only full-time and part-time permanent employees who have exhausted all available accumulated paid leave (sick leave, annual vacation leave, and bonus leave) are eligible to receive donated leave.

An employee need not have exhausted personal leave and the balance of extended sick leave to be eligible for voluntary shared leave.

Only employees in permanent (leave earning) status can participate in the voluntary shared leave program.

An employee who is receiving benefits or is eligible to receive benefits from the Disability Income Plan is not eligible to receive donated leave. Voluntary shared leave may be used only during the required waiting period.

The superintendent approves all requests for donated shared leave.

Application for Voluntary Shared Leave

An employee who, due to a serious medical condition of self or his or her immediate family; faces prolonged or frequent absences from work may apply to the superintendent for donated leave.

Applications for donated leave may also be made by a third person on behalf of an employee who is unable to complete the application.

Applications for donated leave must include the following:

- Doctor's Statement
- Authorization for release of medical information signed by the person who is suffering the medical condition (parent or guardian of a minor).

Who Can Donate Leave? Immediate Family Members

An employee of a public school system may donate vacation/bonus or sick leave to an immediate family member, who is eligible to receive shared leave in any public school, state agency, or community college. (Note eligibility requirements for donated leave above.)

An eligible employee of a public school system may receive vacation/bonus and/or sick leave from an immediate family member in any public school system, state agency, or community college.

Bonus leave may also be donated.

Employees who donate sick leave shall be notified in writing of the State retirement credit consequences of donating sick leave.

Donors may not reduce their leave balance(s) below one-half of what can be earned in a year.

Who Can Donate Leave? Non-Family Members

A school district employee may donate the following leave to a non-family member:

- Vacation or bonus leave to an employee of the same school district or another school district.
- Vacation or bonus leave to a co-worker's immediate family who is an employee of a state agency or community college.

Donating Leave to Non-Family Member in Same or Another School District

An employee may donate sick leave to a non-family member in the same or another school district under these provisions:

- The donor shall not donate more than five days of sick leave per year to any one non-family member.

- The combined total of sick leave donated to a recipient from a non-family member donors shall not exceed 20 days per year.
- Donated sick leave is not used for retirement purposes.
- Donors may not reduce their sick leave balances below one-half of what can be earned in a year.
- Employees who donate sick leave shall be notified in writing of the State retirement consequences of donating sick leave.

Personal Leave

Personal leave is earned by classroom teachers and school media coordinators who require substitutes. In order to be eligible, the teacher must be in a permanent full- or part-time position.

Personal leave is earned at the rate of .20 days for each full month of employment not to exceed 2 days per year.

Part-time personnel can earn a pro-rata share of the rate for full-time teachers.

Unused personal leave may be carried forward from one year to another and may be accumulated without limitation until June 30. On June 30, personal leave in excess of 5 days is converted to sick leave so that a maximum of 5 days of personal leave is carried forward July 1.

Upon retirement, any personal leave may be converted to sick leave.

Use of Personal Leave

- Personal leave may be used only upon the authorization of immediate supervision.
- A teacher shall not take personal leave on the first day the teacher is required to report for the school year, on a required workday, on days scheduled for State testing, or on the day after a holiday or scheduled vacation day, unless the request is approved by the principal.
- A teacher who requests personal leave at least five days in advance shall be automatically granted the request **subject to the availability of a substitute teacher**. A teacher making the request cannot be required to provide a reason for the request if the request is made at least five days in advance.

- Personal leave may be used on any instructional day or workday except the first day a teacher is required to report for the school year, on required workdays, on days scheduled for State testing, on the day after a holiday or scheduled vacation day.
- Teachers using personal leave receive full salary less the required substitute deduction, except for teachers using personal leave on workdays. Teachers using personal leave on workdays shall receive full salary.

Limitations on Using Personal Leave

- Personal leave should be used with due and proper consideration given to the welfare of the students and teachers alike and shall not be advanced.
- Personal leave may not be used during summer employment.
- When a teacher is no longer eligible to earn personal leave, that teacher may not use previously accumulated personal leave.
- When a teacher resigns or separates from service, personal leave cannot be paid out in lump sum.

Personal leave may only be used in half day or whole day increments. Only teachers who require a substitute in their absence can earn and use personal leave.

Deductions for Personal Leave

Teachers using personal leave receive full salary less the required substitute deduction except when those teachers use personal leave on teacher workdays, in which they will receive full pay.

Personal Leave Balances

Personal leave balances are transferred between school districts.

Parental Leave Without Pay and Leave of Absence Request

All full-time permanent or part-time permanent employees may take a leave of absence without pay for up to one calendar year from the date of birth or adoption to care for a newborn child or a newly adopted child.

The employee may elect to use appropriate earned leave during the time of the leave (See Annual Vacation Leave - Section 3.3 and Sick Leave - Section 4.0). For the purposes of educational continuity, with the approval of the local board, the unpaid

leave of absence may be extended for the remainder of the school year when the leave would otherwise end in the latter half of the school year.

Spouses who are both employed by the same school system are limited to a combined total of 12 months of parental leave during the year following the birth or adoption.

Whenever possible, an employee should give written advance notice of request for a leave of absence. Local boards of education may establish procedures for giving such notice. The local board may also determine when the leave will begin or end, based on a consideration of the welfare of the students and the employee and the need for continuity of service.

Tenured employees approved for a leave of absence retain career status upon return from the authorized leave. Probationary teachers must begin a new probationary period if a leave of absence, paid or unpaid, prevents the probationary teacher from completing four consecutive years of 120 workdays in each year in the same school system. Unless, the probationary teacher in a full-time, permanent position did not work for at least 120 workdays in a 215 day school year because the teacher was on sick leave, disability leave or both, that school year shall not be deemed to constitute:

- (a) A consecutive year of service for the teacher, or
- (b) A break in the continuity in consecutive years of service for the teacher.

Leave of Absence Request

The personal welfare and the professional growth of employees may require occasional extended absences from duty. Employees may be granted a leave of absence for one year or less for maternity, illness, professional study, military service, overseas teaching, family responsibilities, and approved special assignments. Employees, male or female, shall be granted a leave of absence without pay for up to one calendar year for the birth or adoption of a child.

A Leave of Absence Request Form must be submitted to the superintendent in any case where more than ten days are missed. The request should be made 30 days in advance of the absence. The granting of extended leave of absence to any employee **will require board action**. The board of education may determine when the leave will begin or end, based on a consideration of the welfare of the students and the need for continuity of services.

Staff members granted a leave of absence would return to duty at the salary attained at the time the leave began. While assurance cannot be made that they will return to the identical assignment, the assignment given them will be comparable. Upon their return, employees granted extended leave would be credited with unused sick leave they have previously accumulated.

Individuals on leave of absence without pay may arrange to continue any state or system-sponsored benefits by reimbursing the total cost during the period of absence. Failure to pay benefit premiums will result in cancellation of coverage.

Forms to request a leave of absence are located on the Human Resources Department website. In situations of serious illness or disability, a written release from the doctor must be presented to the immediate supervisor and the Personnel Office before returning to work.

District Maternity Leave Protocol

Female employees who anticipate the birth of a child should use the following procedure to communicate with the school district:

1. After the physician confirms pregnancy, and when the employee feels comfortable in sharing the news with others, the principal or direct supervisor should be informed of the pregnancy and the approximate date of delivery. This allows the principal to make adequate plans for the continuation of services to students or for whatever task the employee is responsible. This information should be communicated certainly within three months of the anticipated delivery and earlier if at all possible.
2. Employee is asked to complete an FMLA request online.
3. Employee provides a copy of the FMLA form to the Personnel Benefits Specialist and schedule a meeting to review the maternity leave request.

Type of Length of Leave to Be Taken for Maternity

Normal Delivery: Up to six weeks for the birth of a child.

Caesarean Section Delivery: Up to eight weeks.

If the employee does not have enough leave to cover these terms, request for leave without pay must be made, or the employee must return to work sooner, provided a medical release is submitted.

If the employee has leave balances greater than these terms, they may not take a longer period of time off with pay without submitting a "Request for a Leave of Absence."

Should additional leave be required due to complications, a doctor's documentation is required.

When applying leave to a period of maternity, leave will be used in the following order:

- Sick Leave
- Annual Leave
- Classified Employees (Bonus Leave)
- Personal Leave (For teachers)
- Once all leave is exhausted, any additional leave will be leave without pay.

Donated Shared Leave is only an option when a serious medical condition occurs. Pregnancy itself does not qualify as a serious medical condition unless there are complications.

The Family Medical Leave Act allows for up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave per year for an employee to provide care for a newborn or family member with a serious medical illness.

Any maternity leave is concurrent with FMLA leave. Employees may not request maternity leave and then request 12 weeks of FMLA leave.

Family and Medical Leave

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) as amended, allows eligible employees to take 12 workweeks of unpaid, job-protected leave for their own serious medical condition or that of an immediate family member (parent, spouse or child). In addition the FMLA allows eligible employees to take the same job-protected leave for the birth of a child or the placement of a child with the employee through adoption or foster care. Employers must maintain any employer-paid health benefits while the

employee is on FMLA leave.

The summary in this section does not in any way alter the requirements of the Family and Medical Leave Act. If any part of this section is inconsistent with the Act, the Act takes precedence. School systems should not rely exclusively on this summary for administration of their legal responsibility under the FMLA. More information is available on the Internet at <http://www.dol.gov/esa/whd/fmla/>.

What's a Serious Medical Condition?

An illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves:

1. inpatient care (i.e., an overnight stay) in a hospital, hospice or residential medical facility, including any period of incapacity (defined to mean inability to work, attend school or perform other regular daily activities due to the serious health condition, treatment for or recovery from), or any subsequent treatment in connection with such impairment; or
2. continuing treatment by a health care provider involving one or more of the following:
 - a. a period of incapacity as defined above of more than three consecutive calendar days, and any subsequent treatment or period of incapacity relating to the same condition that also involves:
 - b. any period of incapacity due to pregnancy or for prenatal care, even when the employee or family member does not receive treatment from a health care provider during the absence and even if the absence does not last more than three days (prenatal examinations, severe morning sickness)
 - c. any period of incapacity or treatment due to a "chronic serious health condition," even when the employee or family member does not receive treatment from a health care provider during the absence and even if the absence does not last more than three days, which is defined as one:
 - i. treatment two or more times (within 30 days of the beginning of the period of incapacity and the first visit must take place within seven days of the first day of incapacity) by a healthcare provider, by a nurse or physician's assistant under the direct supervision of a health care provider, or
 - ii. a provider of health care services (e.g., physical therapist) under orders of, or on referral by a health care provider, or treatment on at least one occasion resulting in a regime of continuing treatment (the first visit must take place within seven days of the first day of incapacity) under the supervision of the health care provider

- (course of prescription medication, i.e., antibiotic, or therapy requiring special equipment to alleviate the health condition, i.e., oxygen),
- iii. requiring periodic visits (at least two visits per year) for treatment by a healthcare provider, or by a nurse or physician's assistant under the direct supervision of a health care provider,
 - iv. continuing over an extended period of time (including recurring episodes of a single underlying condition),
 - v. and which may cause episodic rather than continuing period(s) of incapacity (e.g., asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, etc.)
- d. incapacity for a permanent or long- term condition for which treatment may not be effective (Alzheimer's, a severe stroke or terminal stages of a disease)
 - e. multiple treatments for restorative surgery or incapacity for serious conditions that would likely result in a period of incapacity of more than three consecutive calendar days in the absence of medical intervention or treatment (chemotherapy, radiation, dialysis, etc.)
 - f. in case of a member of the Uniformed Services, "serious injury or illness" means an injury or illness incurred by the member in line of duty on active duty in the Uniformed Services or of an existing or pre-existing injury that may render the member medically unfit to perform the duties of the member's office, grade, rank or rating.

NOTE ABOUT WHAT IS CONSIDERED TREATMENTS: Treatment includes, but is not limited to, examinations to determine if a serious health condition exists and evaluations of the condition. Treatment does not include routine physical examinations, eye examinations, or dental examinations. Ordinarily, unless complications arise, the following are examples of conditions that do not meet the definition: common cold, flu, ear aches, upset stomach, minor ulcers, headaches other than migraine, routine dental or orthodontic problems, periodontal disease, cosmetic treatments, etc. The following may meet the definition if all other conditions of this section are met: restorative dental or plastic surgery after an injury or removal of cancerous growths, mental illness resulting from stress or allergies, treatment from substance abuse.

Definitions of Parent, Spouse or Child

Parent: A biological, adoptive, step or foster father or mother or an individual who stood in loco parentis (a person who is in the position or place of a parent) to an employee when the employee was a child.

Spouse: A partner joined in marriage recognized by the state of North Carolina.

Child: A son or daughter who is:

- Under 18 years of age, or
- Is 18 years of age or older and incapable of self-care because of a mental or physical disability and who is:
 - A biological child,
 - An adopted child,
 - A foster child (a child for whom the employee performs the duties of a parent as if it were the employee's child),
 - A step-child (a child of the employee's spouse from a former marriage),
 - A legal ward (a minor child placed by the court under the care of a guardian), or
 - A child of an employee standing in loco parentis.

Medical certification to support a request for leave due to a serious health condition will be required. A second or third opinion (at the employer's expense) may be required. **A release or a fitness for duty report from the physician will be required before the employee can return to work.**

Upon return from the period of leave, the employee will return to the original position or an equivalent position with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms. Contact the personnel office for information or to request FMLA leave. Employees wanting more information regarding FMLA are encouraged to consult the North Carolina Public Schools Benefits and Policy Manual currently located on the web at:

<http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/docs/district-humanresources/key-information/information/policymanual.pdf>

Parental Involvement Leave

In accordance with G.S. 95-28.3, any employee who is a parent, guardian or person in loco parentis may take up to four hours per fiscal year to attend or otherwise be involved at his or her child's school.

Leave for involvement in the child's school shall be granted under the following conditions:

- 1) the leave must be requested at least 48 hours in advance of the time of the leave.
- 2) The leave must be approved by the employee's immediate supervisor.
- 3) Each employee shall be entitled to a maximum of four hours of leave, regardless of the number of school-aged children.
- 4) The employee may be requested to furnish written verification from the child's school that the employee attended or was otherwise involved at the school during the time of the leave.
- 5) Child involvement leave not taken within the fiscal year of employment shall be forfeited.
- 6) The employee shall not be entitled to payment for unused child involvement leave upon separation from the school district.

Short Term Military Leave

Full-time or part-time permanent employees are eligible for short-term military leave. If any part of this policy is inconsistent with Federal law, the Federal law takes precedence.

Leave with pay shall be granted to members of Reserve Components of the U.S. Armed Forces for periods of active duty training.

Reserve components of the U.S. Armed Forces are the National Guard, the Army Reserve, the Naval Reserve, the Marine Corps Reserve, the Air Force Reserve and the Coast Guard Reserve. The National Guard serves both as a Federal Reserve component and as the State Militia.

Periods of Entitlement for All Reserve Components

Military Leave with Pay: Leave with pay shall be granted for up to 15 workdays during the federal fiscal year (October 1 to September 30).

Differential Pay: If paid leave is not available and the military pay is less than the pay with the school district, the employee is eligible for differential pay. The employee must provide military pay vouchers or other documentation and the school district determines the difference between the military pay and pay with the district. Differentiated pay is made from the same source of funds as the employee's salary.

Local Supplement: If a local supplement is paid to employees on the job and the employee is eligible for differential pay, the local supplement is to be paid as a part of the differential pay to employees on short-term military leave.

Physical Examination for Military Service

An employee shall be granted necessary time off when the employee must undergo a required physical examination relating to membership in a reserve component (included in the 15 days paid leave per federal fiscal year).

Scheduled Unit Assemblies

Regularly scheduled unit assemblies usually occur on weekends and are referred to as “drills.” If an employee is required to leave on a workday, the employee may be allowed to use military leave with pay or other eligible paid leave. This military leave with pay is included in the 15 days allowed each fiscal year for training.

Additional Periods of Entitlement for National Guard Only

- Military leave with pay shall be granted for infrequent special activities in the interest of the State when so authorized by the Governor or his designee. This leave is in addition to the 15 days allowed for military training.
- For active duty in excess of 30 days, employees shall be entitled to military leave with differential pay between military pay and regular pay if the military pay is less than the employee’s regular pay.
- Military leave for active state duty is in addition to military leave which may be granted for other purposes.

Periods Ineligible for Paid Military Leave

- Duties resulting from disciplinary actions imposed by military authorities.
- Inactive duty training (drills) performed for the convenience of the members such as equivalent training, split-unit assemblies, make-up drills, etc.

Employee agencies are not required to excuse an employee for unscheduled or incidental military activities such as volunteer work at military facilities and unofficial military activities.

Orders and Leave Documentation Required

The employee must give advance notice to the employer of absence for military service and apply for re-employment following leave of more than 30 days. The notice and application may be either written or verbal.

The school system may request that the employee submit a copy of the orders or other appropriate documentation of required military duty.

If a scheduled military leave creates a problem for the school system, supervisors are encouraged to contact the commanding officer at the military unit to which the employee reports and request a schedule accommodation.

Benefits Retention

Paid military leave is treated like any other paid leave. The employee shall continue to accumulate leave and receive health insurance for self, etc.

Longevity Pay

All permanent full-time or part-time (20 hours per week or more) employees (excluding teachers, principals and instructional support) who have at least 10 years of total qualifying state service are eligible for longevity payments.

Employees will receive full credit for each pay period they are in pay status (working, using vacation, sick, extended sick, or personal leave, on workers' compensation, or on authorized military leave) as a permanent full-time or part-time employee for one-half or more of the regularly scheduled workdays and holidays in the pay period.

Working the contract length for a complete school year (i.e., 10 months) is equivalent to one full calendar year. Credit for a partial year is given on a month- for-month basis.

An employee may not earn more than one year of state service in a 12-month period. If an employee did not earn a full year of state service credit during a 12-month period, summer school employment will be included in state service credit for longevity purposes provided that the employee was employed at least permanent part-time (20 hours per week or more).

Creditable Service for Longevity Pay

- Employment with a North Carolina LEA.

- Employment with a State of North Carolina department, agency, or institution (whether or not subject to State Personnel Act.)
- Employment with a University of North Carolina System institution, local mental health, public health, social services or emergency management agency in North Carolina if such employment was subject to the State Personnel Act. (Telephone the personnel office of the former employer to determine if a former employee was subject to the Act.)
- Authorized military leave as outlined in the military leave policies, provided the employee is reinstated within the time limit as outlined in the military leave section.
- Employment with the General Assembly (except for participants in the Legislative Intern Program and Pages). All time, both permanent and temporary will be counted and the full legislative terms of members.
- Employment with a county agricultural extension service, if the position was subject to the State Personnel Act.
- Employment with other governmental units which are now state agencies.
- Employment with the community college system.

Payment of Longevity

Longevity pay is automatic. Payment shall be made not later than the month following the monthly pay period in which the employee has satisfied all eligibility requirements.

The amount of annual longevity pay is a percentage of the employee’s annual rate of pay on the employee’s anniversary date. The annual rate of pay does not include bonuses, or pay for extra duties. The percentage is determined by the length of total state service as follows:

Years of State Service	Longevity Pay Rate
10 but less than 15 years	1.50 percent
15 but less than 20 years	2.25 percent
20 but less than 25 years	3.25 percent
25 or more years	4.50 percent

Licensure Information

All licensed employees are responsible for maintaining and renewing their professional license. Decisions about professional licensing is made at the state level. Employees who have questions about licenses are encouraged to call North Carolina Licensure 8 AM to 5 PM Monday through Friday at 1-800-577-7994.

Accessing the North Carolina Online Licensure System

North Carolina has an online licensing system where employees can make changes to their licenses, such as adding a licensing area, or renew their licenses. You can also print a copy of your license from this site as well. The web address for this site is below. Employees should use a personal email address when setting up this account.

<https://vo.licensure.ncpublicschools.gov/>

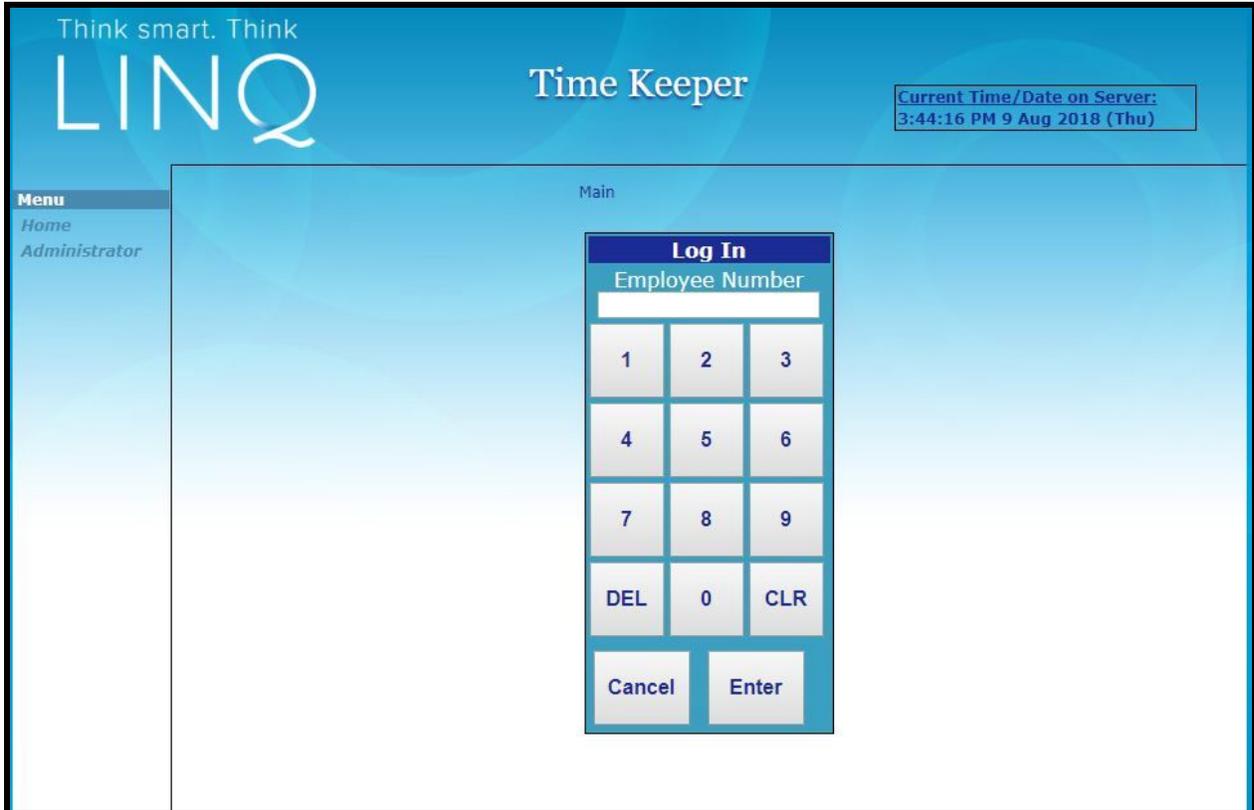
Renewal Credit Requirements for Employees

Credits Required to Renew License	School
Grades K-5 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 3 Subject/Content Area ● 3 Literacy ● 2 Digital Learning Competencies 	Shuford Elementary School South Newton Elementary School North Newton Elementary School Conover School
Grades 6-12 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 3 Subject/Content Area ● 2 Digital Learning Competencies ● 3 General 	Newton-Conover Middle School Newton-Conover High School Discovery High School
Student Services Personnel <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 3 Professional Discipline Area ● 2 Digital Learning Competencies ● 3 General 	Positions: Counselors/Psychologists Media Coordinator/Supervisor CTE/EC Director
Administrators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 3 Executive Role/Leadership ● 2 Digital Learning Competencies ● 3 General 	All Administrators

Directions for Submitting CEUs for Credit

When an employee attends training and receives a certificate for renewal credits, she/he should use the following procedure. Credit cannot be granted unless a certificate is uploaded.

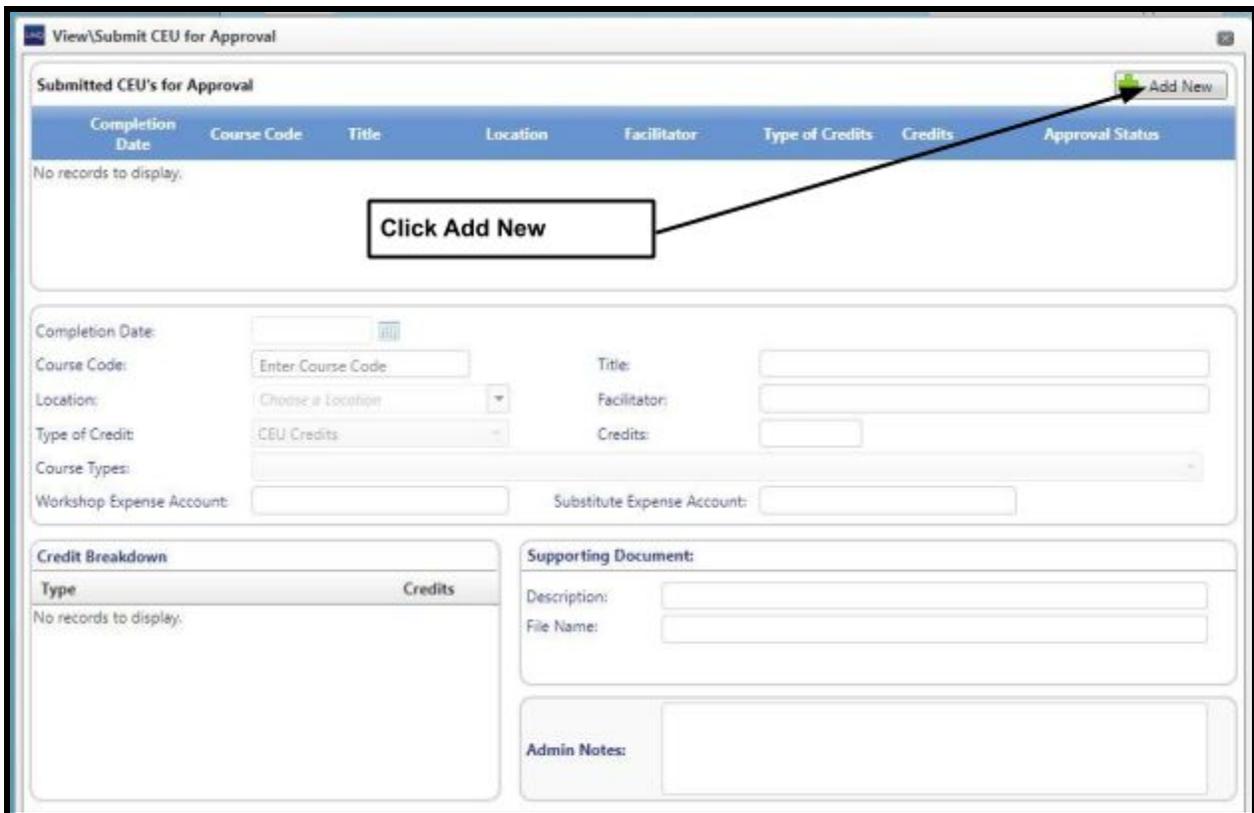
Step 1: Log in to your Timekeeper account.



Step 2: From the main screen, click on the "Submit CEU for Approval" Link on the bottom-left side of the screen.



Step 3: The View/Submit CEU for Approval Box appears. Click on the “Add New” button in the top right corner as illustrated below.



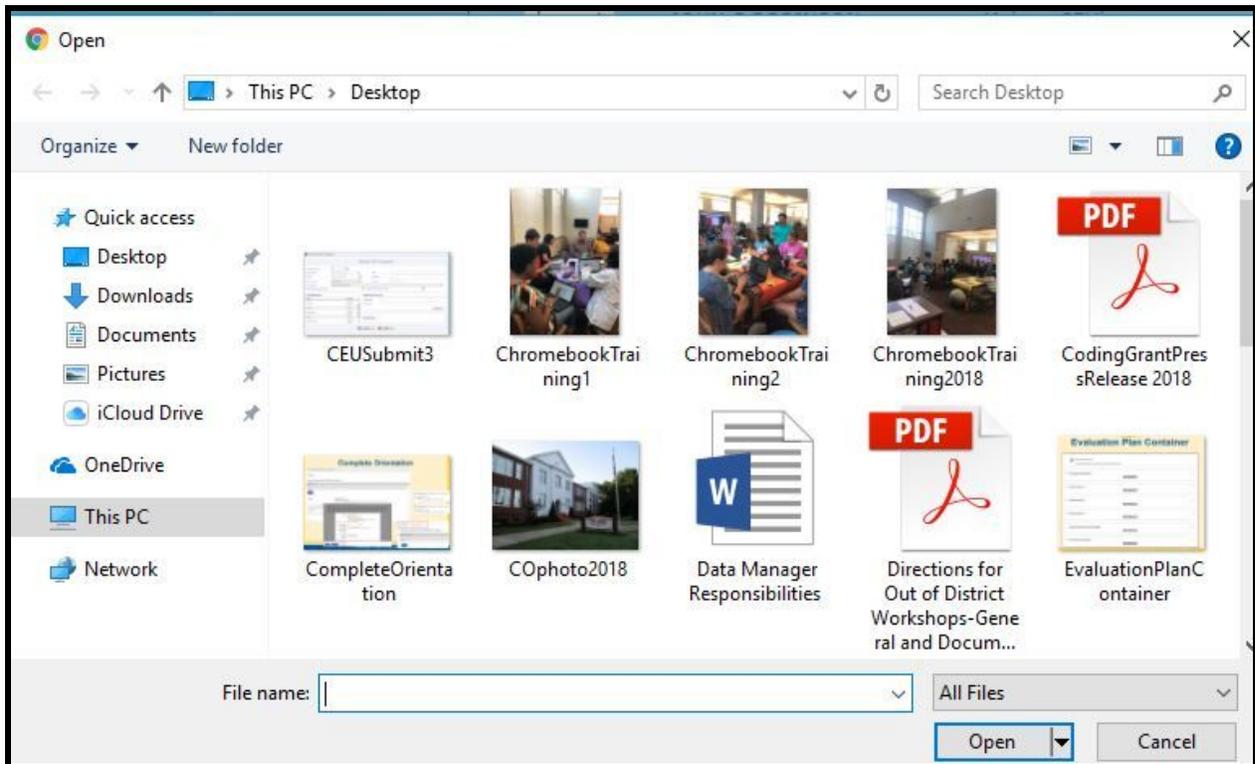
Step 4: The Add New CEU for Approval will appear as below. Enter the following items as indicated.

1-Enter the date training was completed.

- 2-Choose the location of the training.
- 3-Add the title of the training.
- 4-Add the facilitator of the training.
- 5-Enter Type of credit. (If you are unsure of the type of credit, please consult with your administrator.) Each hour of professional development equals 0.1 ceus.
- 6-Enter Name of certificate or documentation to be uploaded. **(DO NOT EMAIL OR SEND CERTIFICATES TO HR. HR WILL NOT UPLOAD THE CERTIFICATES FOR YOU.)**
- 7-Click "Upload File."

FAILURE TO ENTER ALL 7 ITEMS ABOVE WILL PREVENT YOU FROM RECEIVING CREDIT.

Step 5: Upload Box appears as below. Select the certificate or documentation file. Give it a file name. Click Open.



Step 6: Click Save to finish Submitting the CEU for Approval.

Instructions on How to Check Your CUEs and Renewal Status in Timekeeper

You can check your current CEUs in Timekeeper at any time. This is always a good practice to ensure that you have been given credit for any PD that you have participated during the year.

1-Go to the Timekeeper Log-In Page. After you log in, click on “CEU’s” to the left-hand side.



2-Your Licensure Information and CEU Information appears. At the bottom of the screen you'll see your CEUs history. You can scroll through it or print out your complete history.

3-You will also see a table of your Current CEU totals and your Lifetime Totals. This page also tells you when your current license expires and other valuable information.

View/Submit CEU for Approval

Add new "CEU" for approval

1-Enter Completion Date

2-Choose Location

3-Add Title

4-Add Facilitator

5-Enter Type of Credit

6-Enter Name of Certificate of Documentation

7-Click "Upload File"

Completion Date:

Course Code:

Location:

Type of Credit:

Course Types:

Workshop Expense Account:

Substitute Expense Account:

Title:

Facilitator:

Credits:

Type	Credits
Content	0.000
Literacy	0.000
Technology	0.000
Other	0.000
School Admin	0.000

Supporting Document:

Description:

File Name: