



MACON COUNTY SCHOOLS
EMPLOYEE
HANDBOOK

www.maconcountyschools.com



General Information,
benefits, policies,
& guidelines

"Inspiring & Empowering Students"

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

In the event of a discrepancy between any of the information contained in our orientation materials, this Employee Handbook, and the Macon County Schools Board Policy, the Board Policy will govern. The purpose of this handbook is to provide information that will help with questions and pave the way for a successful career with Macon County Schools. Not all of the Board policies and procedures are included in this handbook; however, those that are have been summarized.

This handbook is neither a contract nor a substitute for the official Macon County Board Policy; rather, it is a guide to and brief explanation of these policies. The handbook is not intended to alter the at-will status of employees in anyway. The rights and responsibilities of the Macon County Schools employees may be found in Section 5: Personnel in the Board Policy Manual. To view the Policies, click [here](#).

Board policies and procedures can change at any time. For more information, employees may refer to the policy codes that are associated with handbook topics, confer with their supervisor, or call the appropriate Central Office department. It is the employee's responsibility to be knowledgeable of and adhere to Board Policies and Procedures. Updated versions of the Macon County Board Policy Manual can be found by clicking [here](#).

POLICY OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

It is the policy of the Tennessee Department of Education and the Macon County Board of Education not to discriminate against any student, employee, or applicant on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, national origin, disability, age, or veteran status.

The Macon County Board of Education will take all necessary steps to ensure that each employee's work environment is free of unlawful discrimination. No office, officer, or employee of the Board of Education shall intimidate, threaten, harass, coerce, discriminate against, or commit or seek reprisal against anyone who participates in any aspect of the discrimination complaint process associated with this policy.

Legal References:
Title VI of the Civil Rights Act
Title IX of the Education Amendments
TCA 4-4-123

VISION:

It is the vision of the Macon County School System to provide all children with a safe and inviting environment to ensure their success. We want to instill in each student high expectations, morals, and respect enabling them to graduate with the knowledge and skills to become productive and responsible citizens.

MISSION:

The Macon County School System inspires and empowers students to meet high academic standards, lead ethical lives, and demonstrate responsible citizenship.

BELIEFS:

Education, which is an on-going process that begins at birth and continues through the adult years, is the responsibility of educators, parents, businesses, and community populations.

All students have the right to educational opportunities that will provide them with the skills, knowledge, and resources, which enable them to become healthy, successful, productive citizens.

Student achievement is directly related, but not limited to, a high degree of parental and community involvement through meaningful communication in planning and implementing educational programs and opportunities.

Our system maintains a high focus on improving the achievement of all students.

This is the phrase that needs to be added to your report cards, letterhead (as footer at bottom), and any other correspondence to parents. This would need to be the case for correspondence from any organization, sport, or club in your building.

...Inspiring and Empowering Students...

District Information

Board of Education:

The Macon County Board of Education is comprised of individuals representing five (5) districts across the county. The Board is elected to provide oversight and governance for Macon County Schools. The members serve four-year terms, and are responsible for setting district policy and selecting the Director of Schools. The Director is the only employee of the Board, while all other district personnel report to the Director of Schools. The current members of the Board of Education are listed below. For more information regarding the Macon County Board of Education, please see <http://www.maconcountyschools.com>

District 1 & 2	Wayne Marsh
District 3 & 4	Michael Cothron
District 5 & 6	Lionel Borders
District 7 & 8	Tim Case
District 9 & 10	Dale Hix

ADMINISTRATION:

The Director of Schools & County-Wide Supervisors assists in managing the daily operations of Macon County Schools. The current administration is listed below.

Director of Schools	Shawn Carter	(615)666-2125
Supervisor of Instruction	Amanda Groesbeck	(615)666-2125 x1146
Federal Programs Supervisor	Cindy Gammons	(615)666-2125 x1125
Special Education Supervisor	Cathy Stafford	(615)666-2125 x1108
CTE Coordinator	Tony Boles	(615)666-2125 x1140
Supervisor of Attendance	Michael Owens	(615)666-2125 x1106
Technology Director	Crystal Hesson	(615)666-2125 x1114
School Nutrition Supervisor	Tina Mungle	(615)666-2125 x1115
School Nursing Supervisor	Casey Brawner	(615)666-2125 x1135
School Health Coordinator	Casey Brawner	(615)666-2125 x1135
Maintenance Supervisor	Gene Patterson	(615)666-4970
Transportation Supervisor	Rick Taylor	(615)666-3592

District Overview:

Central Elementary School-Erica Woodard, Principal
905 Sycamore Street
Lafayette, TN 37083
615-666-3265
2nd and 3rd Grades

Fairlane Elementary School-Carroll Gunter, Principal
305 Fairlane Drive
Lafayette, TN 37083
615-666-2970
Pre-K, Kindergarten and 1st Grade

Lafayette Elementary School-Kristen Hix, Principal
401 Meador Drive
Lafayette, TN 37083
615-666-8868
4th and 5th Grade

Macon County High School-Daniel Cook, Principal
2550 Days Road
P.O. Box 338
Lafayette, TN 37083
9th thru 12th Grade
Andrea Robertson, Assistant Principal
Kyle Shoulders, Assistant Principal

Macon County Junior High School-Chelsea Workman, Principal
1003 Hwy. 52 By-Pass
Lafayette, TN 37083
615-666-7545
6th thru 8th Grade
Tiffany Clariday, Assistant Principal
Dawn Towns-Assistant Principal

Red Boiling Spring Elementary School-Leslie Goad, Principal
417 Hillcrest Drive
Red Boiling Springs, TN 37150
615-699-2222
Pre-K thru 5th Grade

Red Boiling Springs High School-Don Jones, Principal
415 Hillcrest Drive
Red Boiling Springs, TN 37150
615-699-3125
6th thru 12 Grade

Westside Elementary School-Angela Marshall, Principal
8025 Old Hwy. 52
Westmoreland, TN 37186
615-666-3128
Pre-K thru 5th Grade

Other Helpful Contact Information:

Benefits/Insurance	Teresa Dickens	(615)666-2125 x 1113
Central Office	Operator	(615)666-2125 x 0
Payroll/Paychecks	Roxanne O'Hair	(615)666-2125 x 1104
Direct Deposit	Roxanne O'Hair	(615)666-2125 x 1104
Employee Assistance Program	Optum Health	(855)437-3486
Facilities	Gene Patterson	(615)666-4970
Maintenance	Gene Patterson	(615)666-4970
Transportation	Rick Taylor	(615)666-3592
Travel Reimbursement	Melissa Evetts	(615)666-2125 x 1112
Worker's Compensation	Cindy Freeman	(615)666-2125 x 1100

EMPLOYMENT AND HIRING PRACTICES

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT

Opportunity for employment, as well as continuation and advancement in employment, shall be afforded equally to members of all races, creeds, colors, genders, religions, ages, national origins, and individuals with disabilities or veteran status without regard to any protected genetic information. All employment and advancement decisions will be made only with regard to qualifications for the positions involved. Policy 5:104 Equal Opportunity Employment. To view policy click [here](#).

JOB POSTINGS AND APPLICATION

All Certified positions for the Macon County Schools will be posted on-line. Certified job postings can be found on the Macon County Schools website. <https://maconcountyschools.mysmarthire.com/jobs/>

Most Classified positions are not posted. Check with the Principals about any openings they may have. Classified applications can be found on the Macon County Schools website. <https://maconcountyschools.mysmarthire.com/jobs/379.html>

Substitute applications can be found on the Macon County Schools website. <https://maconcountyschools.mysmarthire.com/jobs/9391.html>

Once the Substitute application is submitted, you will receive an email concerning the next step in the hiring process.

CRIMINAL HISTORY BACKGROUND CHECK

Knowingly falsifying information shall be sufficient grounds for termination of employment and shall also constitute a Class A misdemeanor. In a continuing effort to further the safety and welfare of students and staff, the Macon County Schools require criminal history records checks for all employees. Information is verified by fingerprint and criminal history records check conducted by the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation or other sources as needed. Cost for such fingerprinting is initially incurred by the applicant and after completing 20 days of employment that cost is reimbursed to the employee on a quarterly basis. Policy 5.118 Background Investigations. To view policy click [here](#).

PERSONNEL RECORDS

Upon being selected and approved for employment with the Macon County Schools, a personnel file is established. The director of schools shall maintain all personnel files and school district records required by law, regulation and board policy.

Employee records (except medical records, college transcripts, fingerprint background checks and other security check information such as personal phone numbers and addresses) are public records. Policy 1.407 School District Records. To view policy click [here](#). To view the Macon County Board of Education Employee Complaint Form, Click [here](#).

KEY PERSONNEL STANDARDS AND POLICIES

COMPLAINTS, GRIEVANCES, HARASSMENT, EVALUATION GRIEVANCES

A complaint is a request for remedy or redress of a situation brought by an employee in regard to Board policy and any instances which do not meet the definition of a “grievance.” A grievance is a request for the remedy or redress of a situation brought by an employee for which state or federal statute or regulation supplies a means of addressing the same with the employee’s employer through a formal grievance process. To view Macon County Schools Complaint Managers click [here](#).

Complaints. The Board of Education believes that disagreements arising in the course of employment should be resolved as quickly as possible and at the lowest supervisory level.

In instances of questions by an individual staff member concerning the adherence to policies and procedures, administrative practices with his or her particular school, and relationships with other employees, the staff member concerned must consult the administrative or supervisory personnel to whom he or she reports. If a satisfactory resolution of the problem cannot be reached after ample opportunity for consideration of the matter, the staff member concerned may discuss the matter with the next level of supervision up to and including the Director of Schools. In instances where an individual staff member feels he or she cannot discuss a problem with an immediate superior, the staff member may take the problem to the next level of supervision. Should it become necessary, the Director of Schools may review a complaint and take action and within a prompt, reasonable time shall notify all parties concerned of any decision made regarding the complaint.

Grievances. Grievances concerning employment statutes related to harassment, equal employment opportunity, or medical accommodations should be addressed as provided for in Board policy 5.501 Complaints and Grievances and the Macon County Board of Education Employee Complaint form. To view policy click [here](#).

Harassment. The Macon County Schools do not discriminate in its programs or employment practices nor does it tolerate harassment for any reason including, but not limited to, harassment on the basis of age, actual or preferred gender, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, religion, race, color, genetics, veteran status or any other federally-identified protected area. Harassment by any employee will not be tolerated. Harassment is defined as conduct, advances, gestures or words of a nature which:

- Unreasonably interfere with an individual’s work or performance;
- Create an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment;

- Imply that submission to such conduct is made an explicit or implicit term of employment;
- Imply that submission to or rejection of such conduct will be used as a basis for an employment decision affecting the harassed employee

Victims of harassment should report these conditions to the appropriate school administrator or the Office of the Director of Schools. No reprisals or retaliation shall occur as a result of good faith reporting of charges of harassment and effort will be made to maintain confidentiality.

In determining whether alleged conduct constitutes harassment, all of the circumstances, including the nature of the conduct and the context in which the alleged conduct occurred, will be investigated. The Director of Schools or his designee shall be responsible for investigating all complaints of harassment. If satisfactory resolution of any complaint is not reached, the complainant may refer to the Board of Education.

Any Employee found to have engaged in harassment shall be subject to sanctions, including, but not limited to, warning, suspension, or termination. Policy 5.500 Discrimination/Harassment. To view policy click [here](#).

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USE OF TECHNOLOGY

The District's technology resources will be used only for learning, teaching and administrative purposes consistent with the District's mission and goals. Commercial use of the District's system is strictly prohibited. Other issues applicable to acceptable use include:

- 1) Copyright. All users are expected to follow existing copyright laws, copies of which may be found in each school library.
- 2) Supervision and permission. Student use of computer and/or the computer network is only allowed when supervised or granted permission by a staff member,
- 3) Identity theft. Attempting to log on to a computer or e-mail system by using another's password is prohibited. Assisting others in violating this procedure by sharing information or passwords is prohibited.
- 4) Improper use of any computer or the network is prohibited. This includes the following:
 - a) Use of racist, profane, or obscene language or materials
 - b) Using the network for financial gain, political or commercial activity
 - c) Attempting to or harming equipment, materials or data
 - d) Attempting to or sending anonymous messages of any kind
 - e) Using the network to access inappropriate material
 - f) Knowingly placing a computer virus on a computer or the network
 - g) Using the network to provide addresses or other personal information that others may use inappropriately
 - h) Accessing of information resources, files, and documents of another user or a student without permission

Electronic mail (e-mail) is widely used technology resource that is available to employees as directed by his or her supervisor. General guidelines for email use include the following:

- 1) District email accounts should be used for all official email communication. Please avoid using personal email accounts for work-related purposes or work email accounts for personal use.
- 2) Security Responsibilities.

- a) Usernames and passwords should be protected from unauthorized use at all times. Do not post any of this information where it may be viewed by others.
 - b) Usernames and passwords shall not be shared among staff members or with students.
 - c) Passwords shall never be shared via e-mail. All legitimate requests for this type of information must be requested in person.
- 3) Consequences of Improper Use. The District may suspend or revoke a system user's access to the District's system upon violation of policy and/or administrative regulations regarding acceptable use. Termination of an employee's account will be effective on the date the principal or department head receives notice of user withdrawal or of revocation of system privileges, or on a future date if so specified. Improper or unethical use may also result in disciplinary actions consistent with existing Board of Education policies or procedures and, if appropriate, other local, state or federal laws. This may also require restitution for costs associated with system restoration, hardware, and software costs.
- 4) Confidentiality. This software and hardware that provides e-mail capabilities to Macon County Schools' employees have been publicly funded. For that reason, it should not be considered a private, personal form of communication. The contents of any communication of this type are public records. The District would have to abide and cooperate with any legal request to access e-mail contents. As such, requests for personal information on students or staff members shall never be honored via e-mail. It is critical for a personal contact to be made with any individual requesting personal information. This relates particularly to any requests for student grades, discipline, attendance or related information. In addition, security information such as usernames or passwords should not be sent via e-mail for any reason.
- 5) Network etiquette. System users are expected to observe the following network etiquette (sometimes known as netiquette):
- a) Be polite and use appropriate language: swearing, vulgarity, ethnic or racial slurs, and any other inflammatory or offensive language is prohibited.
 - b) Pretending to be someone else when sending/receiving messages is prohibited.
 - c) Transmitting obscene messages, pictures or videos is prohibited.
 - d) Revealing such personal information as addresses or phone numbers of users or others is prohibited
- 6) Unsolicited E-mail. The Technology department should be notified if a user receives unsolicited e-mail, particularly if it is of a "hate mail" or fraudulent nature. Every attempt will be made to track down the source of the e-mail

and steps will be taken to attempt to prevent the user from receiving additional unsolicited e-mail.

DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE

The Macon County Board of Education and its employees share a commitment to create and maintain a drug-free workplace. The Macon County Board Education is responsible for the instruction and well-being of the students entrusted to its care. The Board of Education declares that the use of illegal drugs, the abuse of alcohol, and the misuse of prescription drugs are prohibited.

The Macon County Board of Education is committed to a safe working environment, to making adequate provisions for the safety and health of students as well as the general public. The Board of Education believes that alcoholism and drug addiction are illnesses and should be treated as such. The Board further believes that employees who develop alcoholism or other drug addictions can be helped to recover and should be offered appropriate assistance. It is in the best interest of the employee and the Board of Education that when alcoholism or drug addiction is present, it should be diagnosed and treated at the earliest possible date. Confidential treatment of the diagnosis and recovery process for alcoholism or drug addiction is essential. See information on Employee Assistance Program for related information.

VIOLATIONS OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

All employees are required to abide by Macon County Schools, policies, procedures and all applicable laws and regulations. Suspected violations of policy and procedures will be investigated. Failure to abide by applicable policies, laws, and regulations or engaging in actions which discredit the Macon County Schools may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. However, all disciplinary actions may be appealed to the next level of supervision, including the Director of Schools.

COMPENSATION

DIRECT DEPOSIT

All regular employees have the option of receiving their pay via direct electronic deposit. Forms are available online by clicking [here](#). Complete the form and turn into the Payroll office at the Central Office. In addition, all paystubs are provided electronically through My Benefits Channel website. Click [here](#) for instructions to set up your MyBenefitsChannel user ID and password and to see how to view your paystubs online. Paper check stubs and direct deposit stubs are all available online. For instructions on viewing your check stubs, click [here](#).

BASE SALARY SCHEDULES

Base salary schedules for all Certified and Classified employees are published online. To view salary schedules for certified employees, click [here](#). Annual base salary will be determined by position, relevant education, and years' experience. To view the employee pay scales for non-certified staff, click [here](#). To view the employee pay scale for cafeteria staff and bus drivers, click [here](#).

EMPLOYEE TYPES

Certified: Certified employees are employees who hold a license issued by the Tennessee Department of Education, and are hired in a position that a license is required. Certified staff members must possess a valid professional license with certification in the subjects or grades taught and/or a specialty service area (e.g. guidance counselor) in accordance with rules and regulations of the State Board of Education.

Support: Support staff members' regular employment status does not require certification in accordance with rules and regulations of the Tennessee Department of Education. Classified staff includes the following employees: school bookkeepers, secretaries, maintenance, custodians, cafeteria, educational assistants, transportation, as well as many central office administrative services positions.

Substitute: Substitutes work as a replacement resulting from any short-term absence for food service, custodial, teaching, educational assistant, secretary, or bus driver positions. Substitutes are not eligible for benefits or participation in the Tennessee Consolidated Retirement System. Substitutes are not allowed to work over 29 hours per week.

Interim: Interim employees hold a position for a teacher or employee who is on leave. For certified positions, interim employees are paid based on degree and experience just like regular, certified staff. Interim teachers are treated like

regular teachers for absence reporting and payroll purposes. For classified positions, interim employees are paid based on beginning pay and position filled.

Interim employees may choose to accept or reject participation in the Tennessee Consolidated Retirement System. However, if working at least 30 hours per week, interim employees are eligible for medical, vision, and dental insurance.

Interim employees have no guarantee of a position beyond the time that the original employee is on leave.

PAYROLL

The following positions are paid on a monthly basis (12 checks per year): Certified staff, central office administrative services positions, school bookkeepers, nurses, cafeteria managers, maintenance supervisor, and transportation supervisor.

These employees are paid on the 15th of each month or the last working day before the 15th if it falls on a weekend or Central Office break.

The following positions are 10-month positions and are paid twice a month (20 checks per year) (August 31 – June 15): secretaries, bus drivers, cafeteria, and educational assistants.

These employees are paid on the 15th of each month or the last working day before the 15th if it falls on a weekend or Central Office break, and the last working day of the month for the Central Office.

The following positions are 12-month positions and are paid twice a month (24 checks per year): maintenance, mechanics, and custodians

These employees are paid the same time of month as the 10-month employees.

Direct deposit & deduction changes must be received in the payroll office by the close of business on the 5th day of the month. The change will be reflected the following month, provided proper documentation is submitted with the change request.

Policy 5.310 Vacations and Holidays. To view this policy, click [here](#).

RESIGNATION

Teacher/Certified Employees. A teacher shall give the Director of Schools notice of resignation at least thirty (30) days before the effective date of the resignation. A teacher, who fails to give such notice, in the absence of justifiable extenuating

circumstances, shall forfeit all tenure status. The Board of Education may waive the thirty (30) days' notice requirement and permit a teacher to resign in good standing. Policy 5.200 Separation Practices for Tenured Teachers. To view policy click [here](#).

Non-Tenured Teachers. A teacher shall give the Director of Schools notice of resignation at least thirty (30) days before the effective date of the resignation. The board may waive the thirty (30) days' notice requirement and permit a teacher to resign in good standing.

Policy 5.201 Separation Practices for Non-tenured Teachers. To view policy click [here](#).

Non-Certified Employees. Classified personnel shall give the immediate supervisor written notice of resignation at least two (2) weeks (ten (10) working days) in advance of the effective date of voluntary termination. The ten (10) working days may be waived by the Director of Schools or designee for justifiable reason.

Policy 5.202 Separation Practices for Non-Certified Employees. To view policy click [here](#).

For a copy of the Resignation Form, click [here](#).

BENEFITS

All regular full-time (employees who work at least 30 hours per week) are eligible for various group insurance plans including medical, dental, life, cancer, disability, heart/stroke, accident, and annuity savings plans. New employees have 31 days from their hire date to select their benefits options. All eligible employees can make changes to existing or add new benefit plans during the annual Open Enrollment period held each fall. Below is brief information on benefits that are available to employees. For more details, please contact the department listed with each benefit.

CAFETERIA PLAN

A Cafeteria Plan is offered allowing eligible insurance deductions to be taken from gross pay before income tax is calculated; reducing taxable income. Each year the company chosen to administer the Cafeteria Plan will visit each employee at their school or in the Central Office in September. To have insurance premiums deducted from taxable income, employees must enroll in the Cafeteria Plan at this time. Also, any changes to insurance or termination of insurance offered by cafeteria plan provider must be done at this time. Enrollment in the Cafeteria Plan is a contract for one year. Employees with no insurance deductions or who do not wish to participate in the Cafeteria Plan must sign a refusal. For more information, contact Payroll.

HEALTH INSURANCE

Macon County Schools Health Insurance Program is administered by Benefits Administration, a division of the State of Tennessee. Currently there are two carriers and six different plans. The carriers are Blue Cross/Blue Shield and CIGNA. There is a premier plan, standard plan, and limited plan for each carrier. Employees may choose from the program that best meets his/her needs. All new full time employees have 31 days to enroll in the health plan with no physical required by the employee or family members. However, in order to enroll beyond this time (except during annual Open Enrollment period), requires special enrollment by qualifying event, or by a late applicant process which requires a medical questionnaire for the employee and family members. All Macon County School full-time employees are eligible all health insurance plans. Single premium policies are at no cost to the employee. All other plans are at a discounted rate. Contact Teresa Dickens for more information

The Benefits Administration office is located in the Central Office and can provide details regarding coverage and premiums.

They should also be advised IMMEDIATELY upon any changes in marital status or the ineligibility of any covered dependents.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

If an employee participates in a health plan through the Macon County Schools, the Employee Assistance program (EAP) is included in that plan. The program is administered by the State of Tennessee via Optum Health Services. The EAP provides confidential counseling and other services for such issues as marital conflict; alcohol or drug dependency; family or parenting issues; stress management; self-improvement; and grief or loss counseling, etc. Please see <http://www.Here4TN.com> or call 855-437-3486 for additional information.

DENTAL INSURANCE

Employees must work 30 hours a week to be eligible for dental insurance. Premiums are paid one month in advance. Enrollment for dental benefits will be completed by USABLE at each school during one week at the beginning of the school year (usually late August or early September). New employees who start work in August will enroll with USABLE at this time. Any eligible employee may also enroll during Open Enrollment period each year. Open Enrollment period is the only time dental benefits may be changed or canceled

without a qualifying event. Eligible new hires who start work after September 1 will have 30 days to enroll.

VISION INSURANCE

Employees must work 30 hours a week to be eligible for vision insurance. Premiums are paid one month in advance. Enrollment for vision benefits will be completed by USABLE at each school during one week at the beginning of the school year (usually late August or early September). New employees who start work in August will enroll with USABLE at this time. Any eligible employee may also enroll during Open Enrollment period each year. Open Enrollment period is the only time dental benefits may be changed or canceled without a qualifying event. Eligible new hires who start work after September 1 will have 30 days to enroll.

BASIC GROUP TERM LIFE INSURANCE

Macon County Board of Education provides \$20,000 of life insurance to all CERTIFIED employees ONLY free of charge. Additional life insurance is also available to ALL regular employees with premiums deducted from payroll checks. For more information, contact Payroll office.

RETIREMENT

All full-time employees are enrolled in one of two mandatory plans sponsored by the Tennessee Consolidated Retirement System (TCRS) of the State of Tennessee. Employees who are part-time or in an interim position can choose to participate in the TCRS retirement plan. Full-time support staff will be enrolled in legacy plan at the beginning of month following 60 days of employment. They may participate in state's 401 (k) plan but the board does not contribute to this plan for support staff. Legacy plan teachers may also contribute to state's 401 (k) plan but the board does not contribute to the plan for them.

The two retirement plans provided by TCRS are the Legacy and the Hybrid plans. The Legacy plan is reserved for teachers that have experience with a TCRS organization prior to July 1st 2014. The plan requires a mandatory 5% pre-tax contribution. The Defined Benefit plan guarantees a monthly benefit which is based on a member's five highest years earnings. The benefit is payable for the life of the member or can be transferable to a member's spouse or beneficiary(ies).

A Defined Benefit retirement plan relieves members of the burden of making investment decisions and assuming the risk associated with those decisions. Unlike an IRA or 401K account, a TCRS retirement benefit is not impacted by stock market performance. The State of Tennessee guarantees TCRS members will receive retirement income for life.

The Hybrid plan is reserved for teachers hired after July 1st, 2014 that does not have prior service with a TCRS organization. The Hybrid Plan provides a combination of a defined benefit plan and a defined contribution plan. The defined benefit portion of the Hybrid Plan will be managed by TCRS. The defined contribution assets will be deposited into the state's 401(k) plan where teachers will manage the investments with the 401(k) plan. This plan requires the board to contribute a percentage of teachers' salaries to the defined benefit portion of the Hybrid Plan.

Also, with both plans, a TCRS retirement benefit can be passed to a beneficiary at a member's death, and the beneficiary continues to receive this income until his or her death depending on the benefit option a retiree chooses. For detailed information, visit the TCRS web site at <http://treasury.tn.gov/tcrs/>.

EMPOWER 401(k)

All employees will receive information through the mail from Empower sometime after receiving first paycheck, about enrolling in an optional 401k plan. Macon County Board of Education does not contribute to this plan for classified staff.

TIME AWAY FROM WORK

COURT APPEARANCES

If an employee appears in court because of a personal interest, whether as a plaintiff, defendant, or witness or voluntarily appears in behalf of family or friends, or if an employee is required to appear in court either as a defendant or plaintiff in a civil case, the employee may use their personal, sick, or vacation leave or leave without pay in accordance with the established board policies on leaves.

Policy 5.301 Emergency and Legal Leave. To view policy, click [here](#).

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

The federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) entitles employees to take reasonable leave for medical concerns, for the birth or adoption of a child, and for the care of a child, spouse, or parent who has a serious health condition. Anyone who has been employed for at least 12 months by the Board of Education and has

worked at least 1,250 hours during the previous twelve month period is eligible for FMLA. The school system will continue to make the board's contribution to the employee's health and life insurance during FMLA leave. The employee is also guaranteed the same or similar employment when he or she returns to work at the end of the FMLA leave.

Policy 5.305 Family and Medical Leave. To view policy, click [here](#).

SICK LEAVE

Sick leave shall mean leave of absence because of illness or death of the following: the employee, husband, wife, mother, father, children, grandfather, grandmother, grandchildren, brother, sister, mother-in-law, father-in-law, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, brother-in-law, or sister-in-law; however, upon written request of the teacher accompanied by a statement from her physician verifying pregnancy, any teacher who goes on maternity leave shall be allowed to use all or a portion of her accumulated sick leave for maternity leave purposes "during the period of her physical disability only, as determined by a physician". Sick leave can also be taken in case of quarantine.

Sick leave is earned one day per 20-day funding period. This is cumulative for teachers, principals, and other professional personnel, and is unlimited. Professional personnel need to be aware that you can use your accumulated sick leave to add to your retirement when you retire. Non-certified personnel will be paid for unused sick leave by June 30.

If persons have knowledge of being absent from their job prior to the day or days taken, please discuss this with the principal. Some principals prefer to get their substitutes, others prefer the teacher obtain his/her own substitute. Upon returning to the school after being absent, the teacher should go by the principal's office and fill out necessary sick leave forms.

All sick leave forms must be completed and given to the principal upon return to work. Non-professional sick leave forms must be submitted with time sheets twice monthly. Note: Do not use any substitute other than those listed on the substitute list.

Policy 5.302 Sick Leave. To view policy click [here](#).

For a copy of the Sick Leave form, click [here](#).

SICK LEAVE BANK

Macon County Schools maintains a Sick Leave Bank for Certified employees only. The Sick Leave Bank provide additional sick leave days to contributors who have suffered a major personal illness, injury, disability or quarantine and whose personal leave and sick leave has been exhausted. Only Certified employees are eligible to participate. To join the Sick Leave Bank, an employee must deposit one (1) sick leave day during the open enrollment period. Participation is voluntary,

and employees must request to complete appropriate forms to join and/or access the Sick Leave Bank.

The maximum number of days in a calendar year that can be used is 60 days.

Policy 5.3021 Sick Leave Bank. To view policy, click [here](#).

Please contact Cindy Gammons for more information.

BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

The board will grant up to three (3) days of bereavement leave for spouse, parent, sibling, child, step child, grandparents, mother-in-law, father-in-law, grandchild and step grandchild. This is for permanent full-time or part-time employees only.

Policy 5.3051 Bereavement Leave. To view this policy, click [here](#).

For a copy of the Bereavement form, click [here](#).

PERSONAL OR PROFESSIONAL LEAVE-CERTIFIED

All certified teachers, principals, or professional employees may receive two days, per year, personal or professional leave if needed. This is based upon 200 days of the school year. If you are employed anywhere between 100-199 days, you may only receive one day personal or professional leave. If you are employed 99 days or less then you will not receive any personal or professional leave. Any person taking more days than earned will be docked the necessary amount on the final school year check. The employee must obtain the substitute in the same manner as for sick leave, but fill out the personal leave form. Personal or professional leave may be

toke for business reasons other than sick leave purposes. These are your own two days to be used as you prefer. If these two days are earned, but not used, they will transfer over to sick leave at the end of the school year.

Policy 5.303 Personal and Professional Leave. To view policy, click, [here](#).

For a copy of the Personal and Professional Leave for Teachers form, click [here](#).

PERSONAL LEAVE – SUPPORT STAFF EMPLOYEES

Full-time (30 hours per week) classified employees shall earn personal leave at the rate of one day for each half-year employed for a total of two (2) days per year.

Part-time (less than 30 hours per week) classified employees shall earn personal leave at the rate of ½ day for each half-year employed for a total of one (1) day per year. Personal leave days may be taken at any time during the year with preferably a five (5) day prior request to be approved by the principal or supervisor. Any personal leave remaining unused at the end of a year shall be terminated.

If, at the termination of services, any employee has been absent for more days than leave has been earned, an amount sufficient to cover the excess days used shall be deducted from the employee's final salary payment.

No substitute shall be used for personal leave days except for certain positions with exceptions.

Policy 5.303 Personal and Professional Leave. To view policy, click, [here](#).

For a copy of the Personal and Professional Leave for Support Employees form, click [here](#).

VACATION DAYS – YEAR ROUND EMPLOYEES ONLY

12 Month employees will earn one vacation day per month worked.** Twelve days will be earned from July 1 through June 30. All vacation leave must have the prior approval of Principal/Supervisor, and a properly completed and approved Vacation Request form must be submitted to payroll with employee timesheet.*

**If a year-round employee is absent without pay (on leave) for any portion of the year, days will be prorated accordingly. All vacation must be scheduled when NO substitute will be required.

*Up to 12 vacation days may be carried forward into the next fiscal year. Anything over 12 will be forfeited and any balance at termination will be forfeited.

Policy 5.310 Vacation and Holidays. To view policy, click [here](#).

For a copy of the Vacation Request form, click [here](#).

WORKER'S COMPENSATION INSURANCE FOR JOB-RELATED INJURIES

The Macon County Board of Education Worker's Compensation claims are administered currently by Tennessee Risk Management Trust in Nashville, where all claims are processed and treatment authorization is given.

All accidents/injuries, no matter how small or seemingly insignificant, must be reported to an employee's direct supervisor IMMEDIATELY, and complete the Worker's Comp packet.

The Macon County Board of Education has established a medical panel consisting of general practitioners to treat on-the-job injuries. Employees may choose from any of the general practitioners listed on the medical panel for treatment of on-the-job injuries. Each school nurse should have a posting of approved providers.

Policy 3.602 Workers' Compensation. To view this policy, click [here](#).

For more information, contact Cindy Freeman at Central Office.

LEAVE WITHOUT PAY

Leave without pay may be granted by the Macon County Board of Education from a properly submitted Leave Request form. Any unpaid absence to exceed 5 consecutive work days must be requested and approved by the Board.

Absences due to illness of the employee, or illness or death of an immediate family member, will be approved for the time requested but not to extend past the current school/fiscal year. Leave requested for other reasons will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

If an employee is on leave at the time of re-hire for the following year, and wishes to be re-employed for that year, an Application for Rehire must be submitted as usual with the school's applications.

Service time will be suspended and will not accrue during leave of absences.

To view all Leave policies click [here](#).

HOLIDAYS – CLASSIFIED

The following days are paid holidays

Labor Day – (1) First Monday of September

Thanksgiving – (2) Fourth Thursday and Friday of November

Christmas Day – (1) December 25th

New Year's Day – (1) January 1st

Good Friday – (1)

In addition, only 12-month employees will receive Memorial Day and July 4th.

Employee will not receive holiday pay if on leave without pay at time of holiday.

To view policy on holidays click [here](#).

JURY DUTY

Employees called for jury duty shall:

- Complete a Special Event Form
- Submit summons to appear in court to the Supervisor/Principal.

Macon County Schools pays regular employees' wages for the days served on jury duty. However, it is required that employees refund any payment for jury duty received from the courts less any travel included in that pay. Please check with the Central Office for more details regarding the submission of these funds.

Policy 5.301 Emergency and Legal Leave. To view policy, click [here](#).

INCLEMENT WEATHER

From time to time it is necessary to delay or cancel classes across the school system due to poor road or school access conditions that have been caused by inclement weather such as rain or snow.

The Director of Schools is the only person who may make the decision to close schools for any reason. The intent is to make the decision as early as possible to allow parents time to make appropriate arrangements. As soon as the decision to close schools is made, the Director will use all means available to inform the public including news media, social media, e-mail, and radio.

Inclement weather days are paid as days worked. If school is out due to inclement weather, put it down as a regular scheduled day worked on your timesheet.

When schools are closed due to inclement weather, custodial, maintenance, mechanics, and Central Office personnel are to still report to work unless the Director closes all offices.

HEALTH SERVICES

EMERGENCY MEDICAL TREATMENT

The following procedure shall be followed in compliance with Board Policy 6.410 Emergency Contact Information. To view policy click [here](#).

First Aid to	First-aid shall be provided to all students in case of an accident or sudden illness until the services of a physician become available (if required).
First Aid Area	A first-aid area with appropriate equipment and supplies shall be designated in each school. At least two (2) adult employees in each school shall have completed and been certified in a standard first-aid course.
Information	Parent/guardian telephone numbers during school day required physician name and telephone number, emergency medical instructions, as well as any specific disability or illness information shall be maintained at each school for all its students.
Emergency	Each Principal shall develop a procedure for the handling of medical emergencies. An Injury/Illness form must be submitted for any injury or serious illness.
Away from school	Emergency Medical Treatment Authorization form signed by parent/guardian must accompany all participants on school-sponsored/related field trips and athletic events out of town. These forms must be taken on trip by the sponsor or teacher/coach in charge in the event emergency medical treatment is required. (Copies of the Medical Authorization on file in Principal's office will suffice.)

ABUSE AND NEGLECT

POSSIBLE SIGNS AND SYMPTONS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

PHYSICAL ABUSE

The child shows evidence of repeated injury-signs of new injury before old injuries have healed.

History not consistent with injuries-the way the child states receiving the injury not consistent with type of injury.

Child complains of abnormal pain.

Child shows evidence of:

- a. Bruises
- b. Welts, marks by lamp cord, rope, belt, etc.
- c. Wounds, cuts or punctures
- d. Scalding liquid burns
- e. Caustic burns
- f. Burns, especially apparent cigarette burns, on the back of the head, neck and extremities. These are seldom self-inflicted.
- g. Frostbite
- h. Hair pulled out
- i. Black eye and other eye injuries.
- j. Human bites
- k. Skeletal injuries
- l. Signs of sexual molestation

NEGLECT

The child consistently or more than occasionally:

- a. is inappropriately dressed for the weather
- b. wears torn, tattered, or unwashed clothing
- c. is unbathed
- d. has poor skin hygiene
- e. is rejected by other children because of offensive body odor
- f. is in need of glasses or dental work
- g. is undernourished
- h. comes to school without breakfast-goes without lunch
- i. begs for food
- j. is lethargic or listless
- k. sleeps in class-always tired
- l. is chronically late or tardy
- m. is frequently absent with flimsy reasons and lame excuses
- n. comes to school much too early
- o. hangs around after school is dismissed
- p. constant re-infestation with itch and lice

PSYCHOLOGICAL SYMPTONS WHICH MAY ACCOMPANY ABUSE

The child is:

- a. unusually aggressive, disruptive, or destructive
- b. unusually shy, withdrawn, passive, or overly compliant
- c. unusually apprehensive when other children cry, and watch them with curiosity.

- d. unusually apprehensive when adults approach a crying child
- e. consistently on the alert for danger
- f. subject to frequent and severe mood changes
- g. is reluctant to trust others
- h. child is fearful, particularly of parents

THE BOARD OF EDUCATION URGES ALL SCHOOL PERSONNEL TO COOPERATE WITH THE SPIRIT AS WELL AS THE LETTER OF THE CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT LAW.

Policy 6.409 Child Abuse and Neglect. To view policy, click [here](#). To view the Abuse and Neglect Reporting Form, click [here](#).

HIV-AIDS

REQUIREMENTS REGARDING MACON COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM STUDENTS DIAGNOSED WITH HIV-AIDS

It is the intent of the Macon County Board of Education to provide, to the maximum extent possible, all rights and privileges to any school system students diagnosed as having AIDS or an HIV-related infection. Since the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act state that people infected with HIV are considered disabled, students with HIV-AIDS will be reasonably accommodated.

Nothing in this policy shall be construed as depriving or superseding any right granted to the child under the Americans with Disabilities Act, Part B, as amended, 20 USC 1401 et. seq., Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or TCA 49-10-101 et seq. The determination of the child's eligibility for special education and related services shall remain the sole responsibility of the appropriate local school system.

- Students infected with HIV-AIDS may attend Macon County public schools and participate in appropriate educational programs. No school system may prevent an HIV-infected student from participating in educational programs on the basis of this diagnosis.
- Mandatory screening for communicable diseases not spread by casual, everyday contact, such as HIV infection, will not be a condition for school entry or attendance.
- If a student's parents/guardians choose to disclose the child's HIV status, all matters pertaining to that student will be under the direct supervision of the superintendent.
- Upon notification by a parent/guardian that a student is infected with HIV, the superintendent shall convene an evaluation team including the student's

parents/guardian, the student's physician, a physician or nurse of the Public Health Department as designated by the Regional Health Officer, and a representative of the LEA as designated by the superintendent. The team will evaluate and review the student's health status in regards to school attendance.

- The superintendent is responsible for requesting medical records from the parent/guardian and a statement from the student's physician regarding the health status of the student. The superintendent will also gather information regarding the student's cumulative school record. This record will be reviewed with the evaluation team.
- The evaluation team will determine when a student's medical condition warrants removal from the classroom. When class removal is warranted, the superintendent, parent/guardian, and the treating physician will develop an appropriate educational program in the least restrictive environment which is medically, legally, and educationally sound. If the HIV-infected student is receiving special education services, these services will be in agreement with established policies. Reassessment of educational placement will be conducted semi-annually.
- Because HIV-AIDS infection is a progressive disease, semi-annual medical and educational monitoring will be conducted by the evaluation team. A yearly health physical will be required in order for the evaluation team to monitor the students' disease process.
- An educational program will be developed for each student infected with HIV-AIDS. Any change in the program will be made within the bounds of confidentiality and will rely on the best available scientific evidence and medical advice.
- HIV_AIDS information will remain strictly confidential. All medical information and written documentation of discussions, telephone conversations, proceedings, and meetings shall be kept by the superintendent in a locked file. If the HIV-infected student is under the age of 18, access to this file will be granted only to those persons with written consent of the infected student's parent/guardian. Individuals will be informed of a student's HIV infection on a need to know basis as decided by the evaluation team and with the written consent of the parent/guardian.

- All students, unless exempted, will be appropriately educated with regard to the nature, transmission, prevention and treatment of HIV infection. In addition, all students will be educated in the use of universal precautions. The universal precautions may be taught by any of the following school personnel or through school media: elementary guidance counselor, school nurse (if employed), physical education teachers K-12, high school wellness program and Channel 1 (where available).

To view Policy 6.404 Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome, click [here](#). To view the Macon County School System's Authorization for Release of Confidential HIV-Related Information form, click [here](#).

REQUIREMENTS REGARDING MACON COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM EMPLOYEES DIAGNOSED WITH HIV-AIDS

It is the intent of the Macon County Board of Education to provide, to the maximum extent possible, all rights and privileges to any school system employee diagnosed as having AIDS or an HIV-related infection.

- No school system employee diagnosed with HIV infection or AIDS shall be prevented from continuing employment based solely on this diagnosis.
- No employee shall be required to have any blood tests or medical consultation to determine HIV status. This does not preclude school officials from requiring an employee to undergo an examination when another communicable illness is suspected.
- HIV-AIDS information will remain strictly confidential. Permissible disclosure will occur pursuant only to a signed authorization for release, appropriate court order, or a lawfully issued subpoena.
- To prevent and manage exposure in the workplace, all school system employees, board of education members and parents will have available to them in-service training and education annually regarding HIV-AIDS and OSHA's Blood-borne Pathogens Standard.
- As may be required by federal or state law, the school system must make reasonable accommodation to enable the employee to perform employment duties.
- In accordance with current law and regulations, the school system will take all reasonable actions to prevent any diagnosed employee from being subjected to adverse or discriminatory treatment.

- No disciplinary action or other adverse personnel action may be taken against an employee solely on the basis of HIV infection or AIDS. Action may be taken only if the employee is disabled and the disability interferes with the employee's ability to perform activities involved in employment.
- Review of employment conditions will include the superintendent, the employee's physician, and a physician or nurse from the Department of Health as designated by the Regional Health Officer.

To view the Macon County School System's Authorization for Release of Confidential HIV-Related Information Employee form, click [here](#).

SPECIAL EDUCATION BELIEFS

Special Education is not a place. It is the most intensive intervention along the continuum of service defined by individual need, services and placement.

Strong leadership at every level is the foundation of a collaborative and inclusive environment that supports ALL students.

All Students are general education students first. Every student can learn, demonstrate growth, and must have access to high quality, evidence-based instruction that maximizes their potential in the least restrictive environment.

Educators are professionals, content experts, and the key to student success. They should be supported instructionally and professionally.

All students can achieve postsecondary success. They should be supported instructionally and professionally.

All students can achieve postsecondary success.

MACON COUNTY SPECIAL EDUCATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES LAWS

The excerpts below were taken from the Rules of State Board of Education Chapter 0520-01-09, Special Education Programs and Services.

- Each Local Education Agency (LEA) shall identify, locate, and evaluate all children who are suspected of having a disability, including children attending non-public schools, regardless of the severity of their disabilities, and who may be in need of special education and related services.
- Make available a free appropriate public education to all children with disabilities, ages three (3) through the school year, which shall be August to August, in which they reach age twenty-two (22).
- Establish guidelines and standards for determining program eligibility criteria, evaluation procedures, and evaluation participants. Each school shall have in place a procedure to ensure that attempts have been made to meet the needs of the child within the regular school program with intervention programs.
- Each school system shall develop and maintain an organized referral process which is communicated to all professional personnel within the system, parents and persons within the community.
- Referrals may be made by parents, school system personnel or other concerned persons. Parental consent is required before initial assessment of a child may be conducted. The length of time between consent for testing and placement shall no exceed 60 days.

When Should a Referral Be Made?

Both of the following area must be present in order to potentially receive services.

- 1 Significant Academic Concerns (shows a pattern of weakness including most or all of the following)**
 - a. A student is not progressing the general curriculum despite any accommodations or modifications being made in the classroom.
 - b. History of Below Basic/Basic TCAP score in area of difficulty
 - c. Benchmarks below the 10th percentile in any area or AIMSWEB
 - d. Lack of Progress shown with Progress Monitoring
 - e. Poor grades (Below 70 or low 70s with significant accommodations)
- 2 There is suspicion of a disability affecting the student's performance.**

Pursuant to IDEA Regulations at 34 C.F.R 300.301(b), a parent or the school district may refer a child for an evaluation to determine if the child is a child with a disability. If a student is suspected of an educational disability at any time, he or she may be referred by the student's teacher, parent or out sources for an initial comprehensive evaluation based on referral concerns.

Request for Support Team Services

Teacher Referral: for non SLD referral or a parent has stated concerns

1. Special Education teacher will provide the teacher with an updated support team packet. The teacher(s) will fill out the entire packet and attach all documents. The documents will be turned into the special education department at the Board of Education.
2. Parents will be invited to an S-Team meeting that may include the regular education teacher, any intervention teacher, special education teacher and special education personnel from the board of education. The team will discuss information that is included in the packet and interventions that may be available at the school and may decide to either or refer the student on for special education testing, continue interventions at the school and reconvene at a later time, or discontinue because the support team is no longer needed.
3. If the student is referred on for special education assessments, permission will be obtained from the parents for the testing.

Referrals for a suspected Learning Disability from a school MUST come from the school's RTI Data Team. The data team is responsible for completing the support team packet.

