



Policies and Procedures Manual

2023-2024

Pell Shaw

INTRODUCTION

The Board Policies have been established by the Board of Directors of the Arkansas River Education Service Cooperative for the administration and operation of the Cooperative. The Board delegates the responsibility for implementing these policies to the Director. In many instances, the Director will delegate responsibility for the performance of duties to the Cooperative staff.

It is the purpose of this publication to set forth the philosophy, attitudes, and operating procedures of the Arkansas River Education Service Cooperative. These policies will be made available to all employees and all other persons affected in any manner by these policy statements for the betterment of educational opportunities in school districts in which the services of the Cooperative are offered.

These policies shall be compatible to and consistent with the laws of Arkansas and the regulations of the Arkansas Department of Education. These policies will require modification as situations and needs change.

These policies were first adopted in a meeting of the Board of Directors on November 21, 1985 and have been revised several times.

ARESC Vision

We are the heart of learning, leadership, innovation, and prosperity.

ARESC Mission

We deliver cooperative support services that foster learners for life.

EDUCATION SERVICE COOPERATIVE ORGANIZATION

I. Legal Status: Statutory Authorization

The Cooperative has its legal origin and was authorized by Act 349 of the 1985 Arkansas Legislative General Assembly: 6-13-1001 Title. The title of this subchapter shall be “The Education Service Cooperative Act of 1985”. It was created by action of the State Board of Education on June 10, 1985, in accordance with the resolutions filed by school districts in Arkansas, Grant, Jefferson, and Pulaski Counties.

II. Name

The official name of this agency shall be “Arkansas River Education Service Cooperative” (ARESC). (The ADE designation is “Region XI ESC”).

III. Function: 6-13-1002 Education Service Cooperatives Established Functions

- A. The State Board of Education is authorized to establish a statewide system of not more than fifteen (15) multi-county Education Service Cooperatives of school districts. Such cooperatives shall be intermediate service units of the state’s elementary and secondary education system and as such shall be eligible to receive and expend funds from state and federal governments, school districts, and other public or private sources.
- B. Education Service Cooperatives established by this subchapter will provide school districts which choose to use them, assistance in:
 - 1. Meeting or exceeding accreditation standards and equalizing educational opportunities;
 - 2. Using educational resources more effectively through cooperation among school districts; and
 - 3. Promoting coordination between school districts and the Department of Education in order to provide services, which are consistent with the needs identified by school districts and the educational priorities of the state as established by the General Assembly or the State Board of Education.

IV. General Goals

A. *Services*

Service desires of the Local Education Agencies (LEA's) shall be the major influence on the design of the ARESK program. The program will also be influenced by the Arkansas Department of Education's (ADE) desire to utilize the ARESK for delivery of services to the LEA's. The ARESK services shall assist LEA's in meeting ADE accreditation standards and other school improvement goals.

Goal 1 - To intentionally create a culture of high expectations and positive energy.

Goal 2 - To establish and maintain an effective working relationship with all stakeholders of the community.

Goal 3 – To model, support, and facilitate learners for life in all services.

Goal 4 – Provide services to children, families, and schools that prepare them for a prosperous life.

Goal 5 – To encourage and facilitate innovative practices, strategies, and learning environments.

Goal 6 – To promote sharing of resources and services among stakeholders based on local, regional, state, and/or federal educational priorities.

Goal 7- To provide assistance to schools in meeting or exceeding accreditation standards and equalizing educational opportunities.

B. Communication and Coordination

C. Governance

The ARESC shall constantly strive to reflect the wishes of the local districts' representatives in its operation, consistent with the applicable provisions of statutes and ADE policies.

D. Personnel

1. With full realization that the quality of the programs depends on the quality of the staff, the ARESC shall strive to employ the best available qualified persons.
2. The ARESC personnel policies and pay schedules shall be designed to attract and hold highly qualified people.
3. The ARESC shall assure non-discrimination practices in all of its personnel policies and actions.

E. Evaluation

The ARESC, its operation and its staff shall be continuously evaluated to guard its integrity and its charge to serve schools effectively. Its accounting procedures and records shall be in accord with generally accepted accounting practices and those of the Legislative Audit Division for the State of Arkansas.

V. Access to Services

A. Needs

The ARESC shall annually survey the needs of its LEA's and those expressed by the LEA's shall be the primary basis for services offered. The ARESC will also be sensitive to the service priorities of the Arkansas Department of Education.

B. Current Practices

The ARESC staff shall strive to stay on "the cutting edge" of educational developments and introduce LEA personnel to new resources and services in which they might be interested.

C. Participation

The participation of any district in any cooperative service is voluntary.

D. Equity

The ARESC shall make services to all interested districts as equally accessible as practicable. Unless otherwise specified in unusual situations, LEAs which begin participation in a service after it has been initiated and supported by other districts shall not have to pay an "equity" cost to participate. Similarly, upon withdrawing from a service to which it had granted support, no district shall be entitled to an "equity consideration" for its contribution to the ARESC's assets unless the ARESC IS DISSOLVED AND NOT SUCCEEDED BY ANOTHER REGIONAL SERVICE AGENCY.

Upon dissolution, where no succession occurs, the ARESC's assets shall be apportioned among member LEA's in a fair and practical manner, by the Board of Directors serving at the time of dissolution and in accordance with ADE policies. Should any LEA or group of LEA's be assigned to another ESC by the State Board of Education, the provisions of this section may be modified in an appropriate manner by the Board of Directors.

VI. Communication and Coordination

1. Public education is a state function and responsibility formerly assigned primarily to the local school districts and the ADE. Education Service Cooperatives now constitute a third agency in the States' system of education. The ARESC will strive to cooperate with LEA's, the ADE and other ESC's to promote a more effective public school program for the State.
2. The ARESC staff will strive to help the LEA's and the ADE better understand each other as the staff strives to serve needs identified by both.
3. The Director of the ARESC shall participate in all meetings of the states' ESC Directors, if possible and practical to do so. This participation will be in keeping with the role of the Director in fostering appropriate relationships between the state and local levels of education.
4. The ARESC shall work with its Local Education Agencies, other Education Service Cooperatives and the ADE to improve communication and coordination throughout the Arkansas network of local school districts.

VII. Governance

A. Board of Directors

The parent governing the body for the ARESC shall consist of a representative from each of the member districts (LEA's). A majority of the representatives shall constitute a quorum and a majority vote of the quorum will rule, except that a majority of the entire Board shall be required for action at the annual meeting or to change ARESC policy. The Board shall meet at least eight (8) times each year, except it may meet only three (3) times annually if an Executive Committee is utilized.

B. Membership

Each School District Board of Directors shall adopt a resolution to appoint an individual as the Board's representative on the Arkansas River Education Service Cooperative Board of Directors during a legally held meeting of the Board that is signed by both the Board president and secretary. The individual selected to represent the ARESC Board shall reside within the boundaries of the District and fall under one (1) of the following:

- The District superintendent;
- An employee of the District;
- A member of the District's Board; or
- A member of the District community.

A copy of the resolution shall be forwarded to the director of ARESC by June 30 of each year and as soon as possible after the Board selects a representative to fill a vacancy.

The appointment as the Board's representative on the ARESC Governing Board shall be for a two (2) year term. An individual shall hold over until the individual's successor is appointed. The Board may appoint the same individual for subsequent terms.

No school district may have official representation on more than one (1) Cooperative Board of Directors. No monetary compensation shall be given any member for serving on a Committee, except in cases where reimbursement may be made to members when expenses have occurred in travel, meals, etc., when carrying out the duties of the Board.

C. Officers

A President, Vice President, and Secretary shall be elected annually in the June meeting of the Board of Directors.

D. Annual Meeting

The ARESC's Board of Directors shall convene annually between May 15th and July 15th, (Act 349 of 1985).

1. The Board shall review the ARESC's activities for the fiscal year ending June 30th.
2. The financial condition of the ARESC shall be reported and discussed.
3. Program priorities for the next year shall be established.
4. A tentative budget for the new fiscal year shall be discussed and approved.
5. If there is to be an Executive Committee, members shall be at the annual meeting.
6. The President of the Board of Directors shall be elected. The President shall also serve as Chairman of the Executive Committee, if there is one. The same person cannot serve as President more than two (2) consecutive years.
7. Other appropriate business shall be conducted.

E. Executive Committee

The Board may elect from its membership an Executive Committee. If the Board decides to establish an Executive Committee:

1. The Executive Committee shall consist of seven (7) members whose selection shall represent a geographic and demographic balance. All members at the annual meeting are eligible to vote to fill all vacancies. After the election of the first Executive Committee, the electees shall immediately draw lots so that a nearly equal number shall serve one, two, and three year terms.
2. Thereafter, all full terms shall be for three years. Vacancies occurring during any term shall be filled by the Executive Committee until the following annual meeting, at which time the Board of Directors shall elect someone to complete the term.
4. A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum and a majority of the quorum may transact business.
5. The Committee shall meet at least nine (9) times each year.

F. Function

The Board of Directors shall function as a public corporate body and exercise general responsibilities for the Cooperative with regard to policies and practices, which guard the integrity of the agency and maintain public trust in its operation. The Board shall meet at least eight (8) times each year.

The responsibilities and duties of the Board of Directors are consistent with, but not limited to:

1. Employment of a Director of the ESC, who shall serve as the non-voting Executive Officer of the Board of Directors. The appointment and dismissal of the ARESC Director shall be a duty of the Board of Directors. The Director may be contracted for a period not to exceed three (3) years. The Director's contract will be considered in January of each year;
2. Appointment and dismissal of other employees of the ARESC upon the recommendation of the Director; employment, upon the recommendation of the Director of the ESC, of such personnel as may be required to provide the services requested by school districts in the area;
3. Preparation of an annual budget estimating income and expenditures establishment of policies and procedures for the operation and management of the ESC, which shall be in written form and filed with the State Board of Education;
4. for programs and services in accordance with procedures established by the Arkansas Board of Education;

5. Receipt and expenditure of funds needed to provide programs and services in the area;
6. Making surveys or other inquiries which may be required to determine the service needs of the school districts in the Education Service Cooperative and developing plans to provide such needed services;
7. Implementation of policies established by the State Board of Education for the operation of the Education Service Cooperative where policies for the operation of ARESA will be filed with the Department of Education which is required by law of school districts, generally.
8. Cooperation with other Education Service Cooperatives, school districts and other agencies to provide programs and services for children and adults residing within their respective areas;
9. Renting, leasing, purchasing, or receiving by gift such facilities and buildings as may be required to provide authorized programs and services; and
10. Carrying out such other duties, which may be required for the efficient operation of the Education Service Cooperative for which the Board is responsible.

G. Teacher Center Committee

The ARESA shall utilize a Teacher Center Committee in accordance with Act 349 of 1985.

1. Each LEA shall have at least one representative on the Committee. Classroom teachers shall constitute two-thirds of the Committee membership. The Board, upon the recommendation of the Director or the Teacher Center Coordinator, shall determine the initial composition of the Teacher Center Committee to achieve a balance of Elementary, Middle/Junior High and High School personnel.
2. Each teacher must be elected by colleagues in his/her district and each Administrator or support person shall be appointed by the Superintendent.
3. The initial composition of the Committee will be determined by drawing for positions. Slips of paper will designate the classification (teacher, administrative/support, Elementary, Middle/Junior, Senior High level) and the length of the term. The initial membership will be divided as equally as possible between one, two, and three year terms. Subsequent terms will be three (3) years.
4. The Teacher Center Committee, with approval from the Board of Directors or the Executive Committee, may make adjustments in its own makeup and may designate the category from which each LEA shall select its representative. This will allow for some rotation of various classifications of memberships among the LEA's.
5. The Committee shall select from its membership a Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Secretary. These officers shall be elected for one (1) year terms and may succeed themselves one (1) time. The first election shall be at the first meeting of the Committee. Subsequent elections shall be held at the last meeting of the fiscal year, with the term of office to begin July 1 of the succeeding year.
6. The Teacher Center Committee serves in an advisory capacity to the Coordinator, Director and the Governing Body. Its advice should cover all areas of curriculum and instruction, such as:
 - a. Materials for the media or instructional materials center.
 - b. Formulation of the staff development.
 - c. Advise on curriculum development/alignment activities and projects for curriculum, instruction, and assessment, and the construction of tasks to support student achievement.
 - d. Plan with the Coordinator the program content, personnel, times and places for preschool in-services meetings to be conducted in August and throughout the year during the Professional Development days.
 - e. Meet at least three (3) times a year.

H. Other Committees

As the ARESC strives to involve LEA staff members in its program design and deliver, the Governing Body will encourage the Director to utilize appropriate committees for advice and assistance. Some of the committees will include:

1. AD HOC Committee: Certain LEA personnel, because of their expertise in specified areas, shall be asked to serve on AD HOC Committees when needed to advise on purchasing procedures, awarding bids or on other matters which the ARESC may address on a one-time basis or at infrequent and irregular intervals. The ARESC staff member working the Committee will call meetings.
2. Behavior Committee: Behavior specialists from member districts will coordinate support and resources to improve behavior in the classrooms.
3. Core Content Committees: The ARESC Content Specialists (Math, Literacy, and Science) should meet with designated content leaders from each LEA to share training information and model best practices for LEAs. This information sharing and networking will promote student achievement at the local level and help in accessing the needs of the LEAs in their local programming.
4. ESOL Committee: Designees from member districts will coordinate support and resources around students and families that utilize English as a Second Language.
5. Federal Programs Committee: This committee shall be composed of the Federal Programs Coordinator for each LEA. It shall advise the ARESC staff on all Federal programs, especially where sharing would be beneficial such as in-services education for Chapter I staff.
6. Gifted and Talented Advisory Committee: This committee shall be composed in accordance with ADE guidelines. It shall advise on planning, resources and other aspects of the ARESC's efforts to assist local districts in program development and implementation including sharing of special programs for gifted and talented students.
7. Library Media Specialists Committee - Library Media Specialists will meet to guide the support and resources needed to successfully implement digital media.
8. Perkins and CTE Advisory Committee: Designees from each member district will meet periodically to guide the usage of resources and efforts for federal, state, regional, and local industry needs.
9. Special Education: The LEA's Special Education Supervisors should meet regularly to discuss and advise on joint endeavors such as in-service programs for teachers, special media needs, scheduling field consultants, balancing Special Education supervisory loads and other matters of mutual concern.
10. Technology Committee: Technology Coordinators in LEAs should meet to collectively address technology matters of importance to member's districts to include E-Rate applications, Educational technology, professional development, and other technology support topics.

EDUCATION SERVICE COOPERATIVE OPERATIONS

I. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT) SECURITY POLICY

In accordance with the updated policy standards established by the Arkansas Department of Education, ARESC shall plan, document, deploy and monitor IT security mechanisms, policies, procedures, and technologies necessary to prevent disclosure, modification or denial of sensitive information. The ARESC Director will be responsible for oversight of IT Security Management and will work directly with ARESC's IT Security Officer (Technology Coordinator) to implement the standards of this policy.

1. Security Management: District management and IT staff shall plan, document, deploy and monitor IT security mechanisms, policies, procedures, and technologies necessary to prevent disclosure, modification or denial of sensitive information
2. Physical Security: Physical access to computer facilities, data rooms, systems, networks and data shall be limited to those authorized personnel who require access to perform assigned duties.
3. Network Security: Network perimeter controls shall be implemented to regulate traffic moving between trusted internal (District) resources and external, untrusted (internet) entities. All network transmission of sensitive data shall enforce encryption where technologically feasible.
4. Access Control: System and application access shall be granted based upon the least amount of access to data and programs required by the user in accordance with a business need-to-have requirement.
5. Application Development and Maintenance: Application development and maintenance for in-house developed student or financial applications shall adhere to industry processes for segregating programs and deploying software only after appropriate testing and management approvals.
6. Incident Management : Monitoring and responding to IT related incidents shall be designed to provide early notification of events and rapid response and recovery from internal or external network or system attacks.
7. Business Continuity: To ensure continuous critical IT services, Districts shall develop a business continuity/disaster recovery plan appropriate for the size and complexity of District IT operations.
8. Malicious Software: Server and workstation protection software shall be deployed to identify and eradicate malicious software attacks such as viruses, spyware, and malware.

II. Ethical Staff Conduct - General

The ARESC Board believes that all employees share basic responsibilities for ongoing successful Cooperative operations. The Board requires of its employees:

1. They make themselves familiar with all of the programs of ARESC, and abide by the laws of the State and the policies and regulations of the Cooperative as these affect their work;
2. Conduct themselves in a highly self-disciplined manner. Obey Arkansas River Education Service Cooperative rules, regulations, standard operating procedures and policies in a manner consistent with a professional image. This behavior is demonstrated in the courtesy and respect demonstrated to districts, patrons, Board Members, and other employees of the Arkansas River Education Service Cooperative. Professionalism will also be reflected in the

- cooperation fostered between ARESC and other organizations.
3. Maintain integrity of character and moral attitudes at all times. Special favors, dissemination of confidential information to anyone not directly associated with the Arkansas River Education Service Cooperative, and acceptances of donations meant to influence decisions or actions are practices which do not exemplify the character of a Arkansas River Education Service Cooperative employee. Soliciting and/or receiving donations must have prior approval from the Director of the Arkansas River Education Service Cooperative.
 4. In all matters of general conduct, employees should be governed by the ordinary and reasonable rules of behavior observed by education professionals and law-abiding and patriotic citizens, and commit no act that brings discredit upon the Arkansas River Education Service Cooperative or its employees.
 5. All Arkansas River Education Service Cooperative employees should take pride in themselves and their jobs. This pride should be evidenced by the care taken with Arkansas River Education Service Cooperative equipment.
 6. They carry out assigned responsibilities with conscientious concern and that they make every effort to implement the program for which grant funds are received;
 7. They exercise faithfulness and promptness in attendance at work. ARESC Board recognizes that the nature of the work of many employees requires after hours work, extra duties, as well as daily work.
 8. They remain mindful that as employees in an educational setting, they are models, teachers, and specialists and that they are often setting the standard for technical assistance, behavior, attitude, appearance, etc. and should bear in mind that ARESC is a service organization.

III. Fingerprinting

All new ARESC employees must submit to a fingerprint screening. If the fingerprint screening reflects behavior or criminal misconduct, the employee may be terminated immediately. This screening will be at the employee's expense. Any employee who fails the fingerprinting screening for criminal misconduct will be terminated according to the law. {{21-15-102 of the School Laws for Arkansas.

IV. Staff Health and Safety

The ARESC Board of Directors seeks to assure the safety of employees. All employees must have photo identifications made that are to be worn when making site visits or presentations. Cooperative employees working in high-risk positions will be required to become familiar with the safety guidelines and protective actions relative to their employment. The ARESC building has an Asbestos Management Plan. All employees are to become familiar with the areas designated as asbestos areas and make every effort to prevent contact. Those areas have been marked for employee safety. Each employee must sign a statement indicating knowledge of risks. All employees must be familiar with the ARESC Crisis Management Plan. Random alarm drills will be conducted. Annually, all staff members will undergo ARESC Safety and Crisis Management training. All employees experiencing workplace health related problems (within the right of the employer to know) must report them to the Director in writing. Confidentiality will be certain.

V. Bidding

ARESC shall follow state guidelines for bidding contracts, sales and purchases including bid process and amount thresholds. Bids must be documented in accordance with state guidelines and ethical best practices.

VI. Equipment Inventory

Tagging Equipment: All ARES equipment must immediately be tagged with the purchasing program information and an ARES sticker within five (5) days of receipt of the equipment. Tags and documentation must be kept on file in the Administration Office for inspection.

Moving Equipment: No equipment shall be moved from one room to another without prior approval. An equipment movement form must be completed before any equipment can change space. The Division Leader of the program must sign the request and file the approved move form in the Administration Office. If the coordinator is absent the Director or the Director's designee shall sign the request. The request shall be dated. The requesting party must fill out the form stating from/to and the purpose of the request to move the equipment.

Reporting Stolen or Missing Equipment: Any equipment missing or stolen from an employee's workstation must be reported immediately to the Program Coordinator. The Program Coordinator shall check to see if an equipment movement form has been filled out. If no form has been filled out, the Coordinator shall report the equipment missing to the Director. The Director or the Director's designee shall call the police and report theft of property. An insurance claim shall be filed on any equipment not recovered and the missing equipment shall be taken off the list. Any employee responsible for equipment stolen at their homes, cars, and etc. will be responsible for replacement of the equipment or the cost thereof. The cost of the equipment will be established by the Director.

Removing Equipment from Inventory: Only the Director or Division Leaders can request the removal of equipment from the inventory.

The equipment must meet 3 of the following 4 requirements:

- Outdated (Equipment was purchased more than three year ago.)
- Not working properly
- Value of replacement parts is more cost of repair
- No longer has purpose for program

Destruction of Equipment/Loss of Equipment: Reference {{6-21-604

Destruction of Property, any person who shall willfully destroy or injure any building used as a schoolhouse, or for educational purposes, or any furniture, fixtures, or apparatus thereto belonging, or who shall deface, mar, or disfigure any such building, furniture, or fixtures, by writing, cutting, painting, or pasting thereon any likeness, figure, words or device without the consent of the teacher or other person having control of that house, furniture, or fixtures shall be fined in a sum double the value of the building, furniture, fixtures, or apparatus so destroyed or damaged and shall be fined in a sum not less than ten dollars (\$10.00) nor more than fifty dollars (\$50.00) for each offense, to be recovered by civil action in any court of competent jurisdiction. The punishment provided in this section is in addition to and not in lieu of the punishment provided by other statutes for such offenses.

Reference {{6-21-605, to cut, write upon, deface, disfigure, or damage any part or appurtenance or enclosure of any schoolhouse shall be a violation punishable by a fine not exceeding one hundred (\$100.00).

VII. Grant Implementation and Space Rental

To determine a consistent process for grant implementation and ensure equity in how grant funds are used by grant recipients, a minimum 5% project management fee will be assessed for all local, state and federal grants. Programs: ARESC may rent space to granted programs at the rate specified in the grant for rent, utilities, telephone services, etc., and or other administrative costs awarded by the funding agency. Other Rental Agreements: ARESC may charge rental fees for public use of facilities. ARESC reserves the right to waive the rental fees and to decline entities use of the facilities.

VIII. Writ of Confidentiality

All ARESC employees shall sign a Writ of Confidentiality to protect private/personnel/client information. This Writ of Confidentiality shall not interfere with the public's right to know.

IX. ARESC Continuity of Operations, Continuity of Services

The ARESC Continuity of Operations and Continuity of Services Plans will be put in place during times of emergencies where working remotely is required.

EDUCATION SERVICE COOPERATIVE PERSONNEL

I. Policies and Procedures

Consistent with the goal of this Cooperative to attract and hold persons with excellent personal, professional, and technical capabilities in service areas provided by the Cooperative, the following policies shall be applicable:

A. Statutes and Regulations

The ARESC shall substantially comply with applicable personnel statutes of the State of Arkansas and the Federal government, applicable rules and regulations of the Arkansas Department of Education, the United States Office of Education and other official agencies affecting employment practices.

B. Non-Discrimination

The ARESC shall not discriminate in recruiting, hiring, or dismissing staff or in the day-to-day working policies and practices affecting its employees. Equal opportunity shall be provided for all employees or potential employees regardless of race, color, sex or national origin.

C. Recruitment

All vacancies shall be announced and posted through the ARESC Website, ARESC Office and other available media outlets when necessary and possible. The assistance of the Arkansas Department of Education and higher education institutions shall be sought when needed.

D. Contracts

An employee shall have thirty (30) days from the date of the receipt of the employee's contract for the following school year in which to return the contract, signed, to the office of the Superintendent. The date of receipt of the contract shall be presumed to be the date of a cover memo which will be attached to the contract. Failure of an employee to return the signed contract to the office of the Director within thirty (30) days of the receipt of the contract shall operate as a rejection of the offer of employment by the employee. No further action on the part of the employee, the Director, or the

School Board shall be required in order to make the employee's rejection of the offer of employment final.

E. Salary

Persons employed by the Cooperative are required to deliver unique and original services. In most cases, this diversification makes it impractical to establish a salary schedule. However, attached to the manual is the current salary schedule. Some positions are related to the schedule and some due to the diversification stand-alone.

Salary step increases are contingent upon sufficient revenue availability from the employee's appropriate funding source. If sufficient revenue is not available in the employee's funding source to support an increase, the employee will remain at the current level. When/If funds subsequently become available, the employee will "step up" to the level which funding allows. If an employee is placed on a salary schedule with a plan in place to secure licensure and or certification, the salary may remain at the initial step level until the plan is fulfilled.

F. Payroll Policies

1. Employees will be paid on the fifteenth of each month via direct deposit, or on the business day prior to the fifteenth when it falls on a weekend or a holiday or at the discretion of the Director.
2. All eligible staff members will be members of the Arkansas Retirement System.
4. All eligible employees will be included in Social Security, Workers' Compensation and Unemployment coverage and all other state or federal mandated deductions as applicable.

G. Hours and Days of Work

The normal hours of work, for full time employees, are Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The workday will include one (1) hour for lunch/breaks (except when job requirements make it necessary to vary this schedule). The Director/Designee may vary this schedule or determine that an alternate, temporary work schedule be followed as needed.

Federal Wage and Hour laws apply to all employees. Certified or Supervisory personnel may be required to perform their duties at irregular hours, on weekends, and away from the office.

H. Leaves of Absence

The ARESC leave of absence policy is for the protection of employees and to provide assurance to stakeholders that we are committed to providing quality services. Professional conduct is evidenced by good attendance employees are expected to come to work each day of their contract. ARESC services suffer each time a person is absent. No substitute can replace a person without some loss of effectiveness. Please use sick leave conscientiously. Excessive absenteeism, to the extent the employee is not carrying out his/her assigned duties, which adversely affects the operation of the team as determined by the team leader and the Director, may result in dismissal. Absences without notification are subject to a write up and/or discipline.

1. Sick Leave

a. Sick leave may be used when a staff member is sick, or in case of sickness of an immediate relative (spouse, child, or parent). A staff member may use sick leave during time of pregnancy or during the times immediately preceding or immediately following child adoption.

b. Computation of Days of Sick Leave

1. Sick leave for full time staff members shall accumulate at the rate of one (1) day per month of duty, minus the number of days used. Sick leave will be awarded at the beginning of the contract. If the employee resigns or leaves employment for any reason, any days taken, but not earned as of that date, will be deducted from the last paycheck. Less than full time staff members shall accumulate sick leave at the rate of ½ day per month of duty, minus the number of days used.
2. Sick leave may be accumulated to a maximum of 120 days.
3. When a staff member resigns, all accumulated sick leave is forfeited.
4. Accumulated sick leave may be transferred from one Arkansas school district or Education Cooperative to another. The maximum amount transferable is 90 days. A notarized statement by the Superintendent/Director of the district/cooperative in which the leave has accumulated will be required.
5. When a staff member's absences exceeds the accumulated sick leave, an amount equal to a day's pay/day exceeded will be deducted from the employee's salary.
6. When claiming sick leave, the staff member must complete a sick leave form upon returning to work (prior to leave when known if possible) and file it with the Director or designee.
7. At the discretion of the Director, the Cooperative may require a written statement from the employee's physician. Failure to provide such documentation of illness may result in sick leave not being paid, or in dismissal.

c. Pay for Unused Sick Leave

Retiring ARESC staff members with ten or more years of service as a member of the ARESC staff shall be paid \$25.00 per day for accumulated unused sick leave.

d. Sick Leave Bank

The ARESC Sick Leave Bank will provide eligible members of the Sick Leave Bank who have exhausted accumulated sick leave a means of possibly obtaining additional sick leave days.

ARESC Sick Leave Bank may be used only for an employee's or his/her immediate family's (spouse/child/parent) major personal illness or injury.

The ARESC Sick Leave Bank membership enrollment period will be during the month of August. In August of each year the balance of the sick leave bank will be evaluated to determine if a contribution is required of veteran members of the sick leave bank.

To be a member of the sick leave bank employees must:

1. Have completed at least 1 year of employment with ARESC.
2. Contribute one (1) day of sick leave to become a member and possess a minimum of two (2) days of sick leave accumulated at the time of membership.

3. Submit the Sick Leave Bank Membership form to the Human Resources Department by August 31 or the last business day prior to the August 31 when it falls on a weekend.

Sick leave bank members will be eligible to request a grant from the Sick Leave Bank only during the contract period in which the employee has made a contribution to the Bank.

The ARESC Policies Committee shall serve as the Sick Leave Bank Committee. Requests will be submitted on the Sick Leave Bank form to the Committee Chairperson. The Committee may request a review of the employee's sick leave records and/or require appropriate documentation from Sick Leave Bank records.

The Committee shall require a physician's statement to verify the reasons for sick leave. Grants from the Sick Leave Bank may not be used for elective surgery, cosmetic surgery or any other elective medical treatment requiring absence from work.

The Committee and Administration Office shall maintain records of Sick Leave Bank. No individual may apply to the Sick Leave Bank more than one (1) time per year if eligible. Leaves must be requested prior to the date of the actual Leave unless an emergency prevents prior notification.

The Bank days may be used only upon exhaustion of a participating employee's accumulated sick leave days, vacation, and personal days. Days used from the Bank are grants and do not require repayment. Employees receiving worker's compensation will not be eligible for sick leave grants.

No individual may apply to the Sick Leave Bank for two (2) consecutive years unless for catastrophic illness or injury.

Sick Leave grants shall be for no more than twenty (20) days for an individual employee per annual contract period.

2. Bereavement Leave

In the event of the death of a family member, the Cooperative employee may take up to three (3) days of Bereavement Leave. An employee may take one (1) day of Bereavement Leave upon the death of a close friend. Bereavement days cannot exceed three (3) days per year or be accumulated. The Bereavement Form and proper documentation should be submitted to the employee's Division Leader upon return.

3. Personal Leave

There are times when employees may need to be absent with little notice for personal reasons. For this type of absence, each employee on a 9-12 month contract will be allowed two (2) Personal Leave days per year with pay. This leave does not accumulate and must be used by June 30th. However, employees may, by submitting a written request to the Director by June 1st of the same year, roll over unused personal leave days (2) to sick leave. Less than full time staff will be allowed one (1) day Personal Leave per year with pay. Employees should complete a leave form requesting to use personal leave in advance when possible.

4. Court and Jury Leave

Any employee who is subpoenaed or must serve jury duty will be entitled to regular cooperative compensation without any deductions from regular salary. Reasonable notice should be given to the employee's supervisor. Documentation is required for approval of leave.

5. Military Leave

Military leave will be granted in compliance with P.L. 93508 (December 1974) as amended by P.L. 94-286 (May 1976), as amended by P.L. 103-503 (October 1994) and Arkansas Act 956 of 1991 (see appendices). The employee must attach a copy of the military orders to each request.

6. Family Leave

In compliance with the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993, the Arkansas River Education Service Cooperative will grant unpaid leave up to a maximum of twelve weeks during any one-year period to an eligible employee for one or more of the following reasons:

- a. For the care of the employee's child (birth, adoption, foster care).
- b. For the care of employee's spouse, child or parent who has a serious health condition.
- c. For a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform his/her job.
- d. In order to qualify for family/medical leave, an employee must have been employed by the Arkansas River Education Service Cooperative for at least one year and must have worked 1,250 hours over the previous twelve months.

Application for Family Medical Leave

- 1.1. The request for family/medical leave must be made in writing to the director thirty (30) days prior to the beginning of the leave. Advance notice is not required in cases of medical emergency or other unforeseeable events.
- 1.2. Medical certification from a licensed, practicing healthcare provider must be provided with the application for FMLA. The certification must verify the need for the leave and the estimated length of the leave. The medical certification must be provided at the time the request for FMLA is presented to the director. If an employee fails to provide timely medical certification, the leave may be denied until medical certification is provided. The medical certification must include a statement from a licensed, practicing healthcare provider that the employee is unable to perform the required functions of his/her position.
- 1.3. An employee who wishes to request unpaid FMLA must provide thirty (30) days advance notice to the director in writing if the need of the leave is "foreseeable". The written request must state the declared reason for the leave and length of time requested. Medical certification from a licensed practicing healthcare provider must also be provided. It must be clearly produced by a doctor and directed to ARESC stating the reason for the leave.
- 1.4. The Arkansas River Education Service Cooperative may require a second medical opinion and periodic recertification at its own expense. If the first and second medical opinions differ, the Arkansas River Education Service Cooperative, at its own expense, may require the binding opinion of a third licensed, practicing healthcare provider approved jointly by the employee and cooperative.

Length of Family Medical Leave

- a. An eligible employee of the Arkansas River Education Service Cooperative is entitled to a total of 12 work weeks of leave during a “rolling” twelve-month period measured backward from the date the employee first uses any FMLA leave. However, the employee must first utilize earned and/or accrued sick leave and unused personal days to substitute for all or part of any unpaid FMLA leave.
- b. FMLA leave because of the birth or adoption of a child expires at the end of the 12 month period beginning on the date of the birth of the child or placement of the child. Any leave must be conducted within this one-year period.
- c. Spouses employed by the Arkansas River Education Service Cooperative are limited to a total of 12 weeks combined leave for the birth or adoption of a child or the care of a sick parent.

Health Insurance During Family Medical Leave

- a. For the duration of the FMLA leave, the employee’s group health insurance will be continued under the same conditions as if the employee had continued working. Since the employee will be on unpaid leave, the employee will be responsible for bringing to the director’s office each month the employee-paid portion of the employee’s health insurance premium. State matching insurance will continue during the period of the leave. Even though the employee is on unpaid FMLA leave, he/she must continue to make his/her contribution to the health insurance premium. Payment of the employee paid portion of the health insurance premium will be due in the director’s office at the same time as if on regular payroll deduction.
- b. If the employee on FMLA leave has received state matching-contribution for health insurance and does not return to work, the amount of the insurance matching provided by the state will be recovered from the employee.

Reporting Requirement During Family Medical Leave

Employees on FMLA shall communicate with the central office every two (2) weeks during the leave period to report on the employee’s leave status and intention to return to work as well as the expected date of return.

Return From Family Medical Leave

- a. As a condition of restoration from FMLA leave, the employee will provide medical certification from a licensed, practicing healthcare provider that the employee is able to resume work.
- b. An instructional employee who begins leaves more than five (5) weeks before the end of a term may be required by the employer to continue taking leave until the end of the term.
- c. If an employee is permanently unable to return from leave, medical certification from a licensed, practicing healthcare provider must be provided to verify the inability of the employee to return to work.
- d. An employee taking FMLA leave is entitled to be returned to his/ her previous position or “an equivalent position”.
- e. In the event an employee is unable to return to work, the director will make a determination at that time as to the documented need for a severance of the employee’s contract due to an inability of the employee to fulfill the responsibilities and requirements of the contract.

7. Vacation Leave -Holidays

One of the employee benefits ARESC Employees receive is the opportunity to earn paid vacation days each contract year.

1. Employees on a 12 month contract earn 10 working days' vacation with pay. Employees who do not fulfill their contracts will earn a pro rata share of the paid vacation.
2. Employees will be allowed to accumulate vacation until December 1 of the following fiscal year. Any remaining unused vacation time from the prior fiscal year will be forfeited. The Director may approve exceptions under special circumstances.
3. Vacation requests must be submitted in writing to the employee's Division Leader. Employees must submit a leave approval request for vacation seven (7) business days prior to the date of leave.

8. Licensed Personnel Public Office

An employee of the Cooperative who is elected to the Arkansas General Assembly or any elective or appointive public office (not legally constitutionally inconsistent with employment by a public school district) shall not be discharged or demoted as a result of such service.

No sick leave will be granted for the employee's participation in such public office. The employee may take personal leave or vacation (if applicable), if approved in advance by the Director, during his/her absence.

Prior to taking leave, and as soon as possible after the need for such leave is discerned by the employee, he or she must make a written request for leave to the Director, setting out, to the degree possible, the dates such leave is needed.

An employee who fraudulently requests sick leave for the purpose of taking leave to serve in public office may be subject to nonrenewal or termination of his/her employment contract.

Legal Reference: A.C.A. §6-17-115

I. Worker's Compensation

It is the policy of ARESC to provide a workers' compensation program at no cost to employees. This program covers injury or illness sustained in the course of employment.

Any employee who sustains a work-related injury or illness should inform his or her Division Leader and call the ASBA Workers Compensation Reporting Line immediately (1-855-769-7900). The workers' compensation claims coordinator will assist the employee with paperwork and arrange for any treatment, if needed. Workers' compensation fraud is a punishable crime. ARESC and our insurer have a "zero tolerance" policy for fraud.

During Worker's Compensation Leave, the employee's group health insurance will be continued under the same conditions as if the employee had continued working. Therefore, the employee will be responsible for the employee-paid portion of the employee's health insurance premium. The premiums will be due at the same time as payroll deductions.

J. Voluntary Resignation

ARESC expects employees to report for work on time according to the terms of their contract and assigned schedule. An employee who is unable to report to work at the designated time is required to notify his or her supervisor (or the Director if the supervisor is not accessible) in accordance with the leave policy. Employees who fail to report to work for three consecutive business days without notifying ARESA of the absence will be considered as having voluntarily resigned as a result of job abandonment.

K. Evaluation

1. Job descriptions are developed for all positions.
2. The Director or his/her designated representative in the various programs shall provide each staff member a written evaluation at least once each year. (See (A-18) for Employee Performance Evaluation).
3. The Director or designee shall discuss the written evaluation with the person being evaluated and that person shall sign the evaluation for the Director's file. The person being evaluated may add written comments to the evaluation.
4. Evaluations will be conducted in a professional, positive manner. The objective will be to help identify employee strengths and weaknesses and to offer suggestions for improvement of performance.
5. The Board or Executive Committee shall evaluate the Director at least annually.

Corrective Actions for Employee Performance

Most workplace performance problems are handled by informal discussion and counseling between the supervisor and the employee. This Corrective Action policy is applied when more formal action is required. When informal discussions and counseling have not resolved the issue or the situation warrants moving directly to formal action, the steps of corrective action may include:

- a. Initial written warning
- b. Subsequent or additional written warning(s)
- c. Implementation of a Performance Improvement Plan (Appendix A-19)
- d. Recommendation for suspension or termination

Copies of written warnings and Performance Improvement Plans should be provided to the employee, the director, and placed in the employee's personnel file.

L. Licensed Personnel Renewal and Termination

Renewal

When determining whether to make a recommendation of renewal of an employee's contract to the Board of Directors, the director, with input from the appropriate employee's supervisor, shall make the determination based upon the following, as applicable:

1. Effectiveness, including the employee's evaluations;
2. Performance, including disciplinary infractions;
3. Qualifications, including licensure areas, relevant education degrees, and the educator career continuum.

Seniority shall be used in determining whether or not an employee shall be renewed only when determining whom to renew and all else is equal between the employees in question.

If the director finds probable cause that an employee has engaged in sexual misconduct with a minor, then the director shall not recommend the renewal of the employee.

Following the director's recommendation for renewal and approval by the Board, a copy of the next year's employment contract shall be provided to each employee.

Termination

The director is empowered to make a recommendation to terminate an employee's employment contract to the Board for an employee's violation of policies; State or Federal laws; State Rules; or Federal regulations. If the director determines that it is necessary to make a recommendation for termination, the director shall provide the employee written notice of the intention to recommend that the employee be terminated. The written notice may be mailed to the employee's address on file, e-mailed to the employee's ARESC provided email address, or hand delivered to the employee. The written notice shall contain a statement:

- Of the grounds for the recommendation of termination that are set forth in separately numbered paragraphs;
- Of the date, time, and location when the superintendent's recommendation for termination shall be presented to the Board, which shall be no earlier than ten (10) days and no later than the next regular scheduled Board meeting following the ten (10) day period unless another date is agreed to in writing by the superintendent and the employee;
- That time shall be provided for the employee to provide a defense against the recommendation for termination at a hearing before the Board;
- That the hearing before the Board shall be open to the public; and
- That the director shall present the reason for recommending termination of the employee to the Board in executive session should the employee choose not to attend the hearing or choose not to provide a defense at the hearing.

The director shall provide the employee written notification of the Board's decision regarding the recommendation for termination as soon as possible by mail to the employee's address on file with the, e-mail to the employee's ARESC provided e-mail address, or hand delivery to the employee.

K. ARESC Funded Coursework

In some cases as a condition of licensure, certification, and employment, employees must complete additional coursework. Some fund sources such as Early Childhood, HIPPI, and PAT make provision for this expenditure. When applicable and when it meets the needs of ARESC programming, the option to approve grant funded coursework for employees may be exercised if the employee agrees to the condition that upon the completion of coursework, he/she will remain employed by ARESC for a minimum of three years. Failure to do so will result in the employee reimbursing ARESC for the tuition costs and/or other training costs accrued. The employee must meet with the Director and sign the agreement attesting to these conditions. (Appendix A-20)

M. Reduction in Force

Per Section {6-17-2407 it is the public policy of the State of Arkansas that each school district shall have a written policy on reduction in force based upon objective criteria for a layoff and recall of employees. A "layoff" is an unavoidable reduction in the workforce beyond normal attrition.

The ARESC Board shall have the responsibility and authority to terminate, demote, or reassign personnel on the ARESC staff when reduction in staff becomes necessary and essential for the successful financial operation of the ARESC, for individual programs or components of specific programs operated by the ARESC.

Specific categorical Federal, State or Local school district funds, or private grants, fund many of the ARESC programs and individual positions.

Should a Reduction In Force become necessary, the Director will recommend implementation procedures designed to maintain a high quality overall program and to assure fair and equitable treatment to all staff members.

When funding for specific programs, specific program components or specific individual positions is reduced or denied, the Director shall make Reduction in Force recommendations to the Board. The Director's recommendations will use the following guidelines:

1. Whether or not the programs, program components or individual positions are required by law or regulation.
2. Whether or not the programs, program components, or individual positions are essential to the effective operation of the ARESC.
3. The feasibility, need and justification for possible re-assignment of personnel to other ARESC programs and/or positions.
4. Considerations will include the areas of certification/evaluation of staff members involved and the level of education of the staff members.

If the Director's recommendations include termination or non-renewal of one or more staff contracts, or reassignment of personnel, the staff member(s) involved shall be provided notice and all due process rights in compliance with statutory requirements and in accordance with ARESC Board Policies.

N. Grievance Procedure

The purpose of this procedure is to secure, at the lowest possible level, equitable solutions from the problems that may arise affecting employees. The employee shall have the right to present grievances and, in so doing, shall be assured freedom from restraint, discrimination, and reprisal. At any point in the procedure, the complainant may employ a representative, at the employee's/plaintiff's expense. This procedure is only available to employees alleging violation of law or policy.

The following steps will be used in any complaint or grievance:

1. An employee with a grievance shall first discuss it with the appropriate supervisor.
2. If the component is not satisfied with the disposition of his/her grievance, he/she may file the grievance in writing with his/her supervisor. The supervisor must answer the grievance in writing within ten (10) working days. (Form A)
3. If the aggrieved employee is not satisfied with the answer, he/she may file the grievance with the Director of ARESC. The Director will answer the grievance in writing within ten (10) working days. (Form B).

4. If the aggrieved employee is not satisfied with the answer, he/she may submit the grievance to the Board by the next Board meeting, provided the meeting is within twenty (20) working days. If there is no meeting scheduled the Board President will call a meeting within twenty (20) working days. The complainant may request a written statement of the proceeding.
5. The designated representative of the Board of Directors will respond to the complainant in writing within 30 days, after hearing of the grievance.

O. Insubordination and Sexual Harassment

Definitions

“Insubordination” means the willful disregard of a supervisor's instructions or the refusal to obey a lawful order from a supervisor. Insubordination does not mean the refusal to follow an order from a supervisor that would violate Federal or state law; Federal regulations; state rules; or a court order.

“Sexual harassment” means conduct on the basis of sex that may not reach the definition of sexual harassment under Policy 3.26 but is nevertheless inappropriate within the education setting. Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Making sexual propositions or pressuring for sexual activities;
- Sexual grooming;
- Unwelcome touching;
- Writing graffiti of a sexual nature;
- Displaying or distributing sexually explicit drawings, pictures, or written materials;
- Performing sexual gestures or touching oneself sexually in front of others;
- Telling sexual or crude jokes;
- Spreading rumors related to a person's alleged sexual activities;
- Discussions of sexual experiences;
- Rating, ranking, or assessing students or other employees as to:
 - Physical attractiveness;
 - Sexual activity or performance; or
 - Sexual preference;
- Circulating or showing emails or Web sites of a sexual nature;
- Intimidation by words, actions, insults, or name calling; and
- Teasing or name-calling related to sexual characteristics or the belief or perception that an individual is not conforming to expected gender roles or conduct or is homosexual, regardless of whether or not the individual self-identifies as homosexual or transgender.

Employee actions that meet the definitions within this policy are prohibited.

In recognition of the level of trust placed in ARESC employees, the duty of care ARESC employees have towards their charges, and the need for ARESC employees to model appropriate behavior for their charges, ARESC has, and will continue to hold, its employees to a high standard of behavior. Employees whose actions are determined to be in violation of the provisions of this policy, another personnel policy, the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education Rules Governing the Code of Ethics for Arkansas Educators, or criminal

conduct that statutorily prohibits employment by a school district may be recommended for discipline up to and including termination of the employee's contract for employment. In addition to other forms of discipline, conduct in violation of the Rules may be reported to the Professional Licensure Standards Board.

Any person who alleges sex discrimination or sexual harassment by any staff member or student may use the equity complaint procedure or may complain directly to the Director. Filing of a complaint or otherwise reporting sexual harassment will not reflect upon the individual's status nor will it affect future employment. Upon receipt of a report of sexual harassment, the Director shall immediately notify the person the complaint was issued concerning in a written form, and work to resolve the complaint. If the complaint involves the Director, the complaint may be filed with the Board President. An investigation conducted by ARESC officials (Director, Board President/Vice President) shall be ordered, which may consist of personal interviews with the person filing a complaint, the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and others who may have knowledge of the alleged incident. Upon receipt of the recommendation that the complaint is valid, the ARESC will take such action as appropriate based on the results of the investigation.

Workplace Bullying

ARESC defines bullying as *“repeated inappropriate behavior, either direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others, at the place of work and/or in the course of employment.”*

The purpose of this policy is to communicate to all employees that ARESC will not in any instance tolerate bullying behavior. Employees found in violation of this policy will be subject to corrective action, up to and including termination.

Bullying may be intentional or unintentional. However, it must be noted that where an allegation of bullying is made, the intention of the alleged bully is irrelevant, and will not be given consideration when meting out corrective action. As in sexual harassment, it is the effect of the behavior upon the individual which is important. ARESC considers the following types of behavior examples of bullying:

- **Verbal Bullying:** slandering, ridiculing or maligning a person or his/her family; persistent name calling which is hurtful, insulting or humiliating; using a person as butt of jokes; abusive and offensive remarks.
- **Physical Bullying:** pushing; shoving; kicking; poking; tripping; assault, or threat of physical assault; damage to a person's work area or property
- **Gesture Bullying:** non-verbal threatening gestures, glances which can convey threatening messages
- **Exclusion:** socially or physically excluding or disregarding a person in work-related activities

P. Drug and Tobacco Free Workplace

Drug-Free Workplace

ARESC strives to provide its employees with a safe, healthy, and professional environment in which to work. To promote this, ARESC adopts this drug free workplace policy. It is this cooperative's policy that ARESC employees are prohibited from engaging in any conduct at any place or any time that violates a state or federal criminal statute related to controlled substances, including the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use thereof. Such actions are prohibited both while at work, and in the performance of work-related tasks while off ARESC property. Violation of this policy will subject the employee to discipline, up to and including termination.

It is a violation of this policy for an employee to be under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance while present at work, or performing work-related tasks while off ARESC property. It shall not be necessary for an employee to be intoxicated to violate this policy. It is enough to constitute a violation that an employee physically manifests being under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance. Those physical manifestations include, but are not limited to: unsteadiness; slurred speech; dilated or constricted pupils; incoherent or irrational speech; and the presence of an odor associated with a prohibited or controlled substance on one's breath or clothing. The fact that an employee may be unintentionally under the influence, e.g., unexpected reaction to prescription medication, does not negate the violation of this policy, but is a factor to be considered in determining what disciplinary action, if any, would result from the violation.

When confronted by an employee who is suspected to be under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance, the Director or an administrator designee may request that the employee immediately submit to a chemical test of the employee's blood, breath, or urine to determine the presence of alcohol or a controlled substance. The test will be at the expense of ARESC. Refusal of a test request or failure to submit to the test by the employee will be considered by the administration as evidence of being under the influence.

Being convicted of violation of a state or federal criminal controlled substances statute is a disciplinary offense and will subject the employee to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Tobacco-Free Workplace

Smoking is prohibited in ARESC buildings and property and is not permitted outside facilities where the smoking may be observed by students. For purposes of this policy, "smoking" will mean all uses of tobacco, including cigars, traditional cigarettes, e-cigarettes, pipes, and tobacco products.

Q. ARESC Children in Workplace Policy

ARESC cannot be responsible for or ensure the safety of minor children who are not being served by our organization and therefore does not permit the presence of children in the workplace.

Parents are responsible for childcare arrangements and planning alternatives for childcare and may use a form of leave or leave without pay when childcare issues arise. This includes regular or sporadic circumstances not limited to:

- 1) Before or after school/camp
- 2) Holidays when day care is not available or school is not in session
- 3) Or when children are ill

In the rare instance when there are no other alternatives, and a staff member must bring a child to the workplace, advance approval should be obtained from the supervisor who will notify the Director of the matter. The parent assumes all responsibility and risk for their child. The duration of the child's visit to the workplace should be kept to a minimum. Examples of these rare instances might include:

- Parent has forgotten an item and needs to come to work to pick it up.
- Parent needs to take care of an essential task of short (15-30 min) duration and the child cannot be left at home.

- Co-workers would like to meet a new baby. If this takes place it should be for a brief visit and should occur in a public space (lobby or atrium) to minimize work disruptions.
- An emergency has occurred and a supervisor has asked the parent to come assist.

Children can never enter a High Risk Area, even if the above rare instance has been approved by the supervisor. It is essential that parents provide close constant supervision of their children while they are in the workplace.

In the unavoidable circumstance when a child must be in the workplace, under no circumstances may the child:

- Have access to any confidential or proprietary information.
- Enter a High Risk Area
- These prohibitions cannot be waived by the department manager or supervisor.

If the child is under 12 years of age, they must be accompanied by the parent at all times and must remain in the same said parent's office or common space.

The presence of children, visitors, or family members during work hours, except for an occasional basis for a brief visit, is to be avoided. Exceptions may be granted for job shadowing, guided tours or other reasons if appropriate precautionary measures are taken, including written consent of parent or guardian, and direct adult supervision.

R. Cellular Phone Policy

The ARESC Director may authorize a cellular phone for Cooperative personnel for business use only, provided appropriate job related need for such phone is justified. The ARESC grant from which the employee works will pay for the approved monthly plan. All expenses that exceed the plan are the responsibility of the employee.

The ARESC Director may authorize reimbursement for business related calls made on an employee cellular phone.

The employee must submit appropriate documentation to justify the charges and request for reimbursement shall be made on the employee TR-1 form. Monthly reimbursements cannot exceed the established minimum plan rate or the budget for telephone use.

S. Employee Travel Policy

Employees of the Arkansas River Education Service Cooperative will be reimbursed for expenses incurred in the fulfillment of their official duties in the following manner:

General

1. All travel and expense reimbursement requests must be submitted on a Cooperative travel expense form by the 5th of each month. The reason for travel must accompany reimbursement forms and receipts. Program exceptions to time frames may be adjusted by the Director.

2. Personal expenditures are not reimbursable. Examples include personal phone calls, entertainment expenses, alcoholic beverages, tips, and other personal related expenditures and should not be on submitted documentation.

Mileage

3. Travel Reimbursement will be paid from your official work station or home (whichever route is shorter) to the destination and return. No allowance will be paid for travel from an employee's home to the work station.
4. The workstation is the Arkansas River Education Service Cooperative. Alternate work stations are determined at the discretion of the Director. Mileage will be paid according to map mileage unless odometer readings are given as documentation which can include vicinity miles on official Cooperative business.
5. Travel reimbursement will be paid at the state rate per mile and rate increases will be made as the rate increase becomes known. These increases will be made as soon as the Cooperative receives notification of a rate increase.
6. Reason for travel must be completed on the mileage reimbursement form in order for mileage to be paid.
7. In consideration of fiscal accountability, staff members should carpool whenever possible.

Lodging

Business related lodging expenses for employees attending conferences will be reimbursed at the conference hotel rate or a vicinity hotel which cannot exceed the conference room rate. Itemized receipts must be provided and submitted on a TR-1 form. Employees are expected to expend funds wisely and to use sound judgment regarding appropriate lodging.

Meals

Cooperative employees are not eligible for meal reimbursements when the employee is traveling within the Cooperative area, unless the meal is a Co-op organized business-related meeting whereby multiple participants are involved (board meetings, seminars, staff development training, etc.) The reimbursement for such meals shall be the actual cost of the meal and the employees are expected to use sound judgment regarding appropriate expenditures and the Director may disallow expenditures that are excessive.

Meals may be reimbursed for travel which necessitates an overnight stay outside the Arkansas River Education Service area. Meals will be reimbursed following a per-diem rate and is not to exceed:

Breakfast – 10.00

Lunch – 12.00

Dinner - 30.00

If a meal is included in registration fee and you choose to go elsewhere for that meal, it will not be a reimbursable expense. Appropriate documentation (agenda, sign in sheet) will be required.

*If your position is provided by a federal grant and/or your grant stipulates meal expenses be reimbursed on a receipt basis, the above per diem rates should serve as your guideline but you must turn in your actual itemized receipt for reimbursement. Reimbursement for these programs will be according to actual receipt expenditure only. Itemized receipts are required. No credit card swipe receipts will be accepted. Meal receipts that include alcoholic beverages and or tips will NOT be accepted for reimbursement.

Out of state travel

Employees traveling out of state must complete appropriate paper work (out of state travel form) and receive prior approval from the Director. Reimbursement for meals and incidentals out of the state will be paid following the per-diem rate of:

Breakfast – 12.00

Lunch – 14.00

Dinner – 35.00

*If your position is provided by a federal grant and/or your grant stipulates meal expenses be reimbursed on a receipt basis, the above per diem rates should serve as your guideline but you must turn in your actual itemized receipt for reimbursement. Reimbursement for these programs will be according to actual receipt expenditure only. Itemized receipts are required. No credit card swipe receipts will be accepted. Meal receipts that include alcoholic beverages and or tips will NOT be accepted for reimbursement.

Incidental reimbursements: Itemized receipts must be provided to receive allowable business-related incidental reimbursement such as travel to and from the hotel. Mode of travel will be determined by the employee and the Director. The guidance under the General heading applies to out of state travel.

T. Dress Code

ARESC will adhere to a minimum dress code standard of business casual. The objective in establishing a minimum standard for dress code is to allow our employees to work comfortably in the workplace. Yet, we still need our employees to project a professional image for our customers, potential employees, and community visitors. There will be times and occasions that call for Formal Professional Dress and that code of dress will be expected at those times. However, business casual dress will be considered the minimum standard for ARES's dress code.

Because all casual clothing is not suitable for the office, these guidelines will outline what is appropriate to wear to work. Clothing that works well for the beach, yard work, dance clubs, exercise sessions, and sports contests are not appropriate for a professional appearance at work.

Clothing that reveals too much (cleavage, stomach, underwear, etc.) is not appropriate for a place of business, even in a business casual setting.

Even in a business casual work environment, clothing should be pressed and never wrinkled. Torn, dirty, or frayed clothing is unacceptable. Any clothing that has words, terms, or pictures that may be offensive to other employees is unacceptable. Clothing that has the company logo is encouraged.

Fridays can be considered dress down days when appropriate. This applies to Fridays spent on-site working in the office. A staff member representing our organization off-site at a meeting or activity should be dressed appropriately. Good judgment should always be exercised to determine if clothing and appearance is appropriate for the meetings, work duties, responsibilities and the activities performed. Jeans will only be tolerated on Fridays (as appropriate) when paired with an ARESC/Program shirt or dress shirt, sweater, or other appropriate apparel. Clothing that is potentially offensive to others is not allowed.

Guide to Business Casual Dressing for Work

This is a general overview of appropriate business casual attire. Items that are not appropriate for the office are also listed: neither list is all-inclusive and both are subject to change. The lists include what is generally acceptable as business casual attire and what is generally not acceptable as business casual attire.

No dress code can cover all contingencies so employees must exert a certain amount of judgment in their choice of clothing to wear to work. If one experiences uncertainty about acceptable, professional business casual attire for work, he or she should ask their Division Leaders or the Director.

Slacks, Pants, and Suit Pants - Slacks that are similar to Dockers and other makers of cotton or synthetic material pants, wool pants, flannel pants, dressy capris, and nice looking dress denim and synthetic pants are acceptable. Inappropriate slacks or pants include jeans, sweatpants, exercise pants, Bermuda shorts, short shorts, shorts, bib overalls, and any spandex or other form-fitting pants such as people wear for biking.

Skirts, Dresses, and Skirted Suits - Casual dresses and skirts, and skirts that are split at or below the knee are acceptable. Dress and skirt length should be at a length at which one can sit comfortably in public. Short, tight skirts that ride halfway up the thigh are inappropriate for work. Mini-skirts, skorts, sun dresses, beach dresses, and spaghetti-strap dresses are inappropriate for the office.

Shirts, Tops, Blouses, and Jackets - Casual shirts, dress shirts, sweaters, tops, golf-type shirts, and turtlenecks are acceptable attire for work. Most suit jackets or sport jackets are also acceptable attire for the office, if they violate none of the listed guidelines. Inappropriate attire for work includes tank tops; midriff tops; shirts with potentially offensive words, terms, logos, pictures, cartoons, or slogans; halter-tops and bare shoulders unless worn under another blouse, shirt, jacket, or dress.

Shoes and Footwear - Conservative athletic or walking shoes, loafers, clogs, sneakers, boots, flats, dress sandals, dress heels, and leather deck-type shoes are acceptable for work. Flashy athletic shoes, casual flip-flops (i.e. beach wear), and slippers are not acceptable in the office. Closed toe and closed heel shoes are required in the Welding area and any other construction area.

Jewelry, Makeup, Perfume, and Cologne - Jewelry, makeup, perfume, and cologne should be in good taste, with limited visible body piercing. Remember, that some employees are allergic to the chemicals in perfumes and make-up, so wear these substances with restraint.

Hats and Head Covering - Hats are not appropriate in the office. Head Covers that is required for religious purposes, medical reasons, or to honor cultural traditions are allowed.

Conclusion - If clothing fails to meet these standards, as determined by the employee's Division Leader, the employee will be asked not to wear the inappropriate item to work again. If the clothing is offensive, the employee will be sent home to change clothes at the employee's expense. Policies about personal time use will apply.

U. Social Media and Applications

Definition: Social Media is primarily Internet and mobile-based tools for sharing and discussing information. The term most often refers to activities that integrate technology, telecommunications, and social interaction, alongside the construction of words, pictures, video, and audio. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- a. Forums
- b. Weblogs (blogs, vlogs, microblogs, presence applications)
- c. Wikis
- d. Social Bookmarking
- e. Social Communication Sites
- f. Podcasts
- g. Photos
- h. Videos (video, vlogs, live casting)
- i. Real-Time Web Communications (chat, chat rooms, etc.)
- j. Earphones/earbuds/Bluetooth that are attached to personal devices

As an organization charged to model the effective use of technology as an accelerator of learning, ARESC recognizes the value of teacher inquiry, investigation, and innovation using new technology tools to enhance the learning experience and to support a more efficient work center. ARESC also recognizes its obligation to teach and ensure responsible and safe use of these technologies.

This policy addresses employees' use of publicly available social media networks including: Personal Web sites, Web logs (blogs), wikis, social networks, online forums, virtual worlds, and any other social media. ARESC takes no position on employees' decision to participate in the use of social media networks for personal use on personal time except to hold employees professionally accountable and responsible for the use of ARESC's name, likeness, or relationship and to restrict any action, posting, or activity even through personal networks on personal time that violate professional ethical standards. However, the use of these media for personal use during ARESC time or on ARESC equipment is prohibited.

In addition, employees must avoid posting any information or engaging in communications that violates state or federal laws or District policies.

V. Licensed Personnel Employee Training (includes unlicensed employee teaching under a waiver of licensure.)

For the purposes of this policy, professional development (PD) means a set of coordinated, planned learning activities for employees who are required to hold a current license issued by the State Board of

Education as a condition of employment that:

- Is required by statute or the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE); or
- Meets the following criteria:
 - Improves the knowledge, skills, and effectiveness of teachers;
 - Improves the knowledge and skills of administrators and paraprofessionals concerning effective instructional strategies and methods;
 - Leads to improved student academic achievement; and
 - Is researched-based and standards-based.

All employees shall attend all local PD training sessions as directed by his/her supervisor.

As part of the the ARES District Support Plan, ARES shall develop and implement a professional development plan (PDP) for its licensed employees. The support plan for each licensed employee shall be known as a Professional Growth Plan (PGP), and in part, align resources to address the PD activities identified in each supporting each school's student performance improvements and closing achievement gaps. At the end of each school year, ARES shall evaluate the PD activities' effectiveness at improving student performance and closing achievement gaps.

Each licensed employee shall receive a minimum of thirty-six (36) hours of PD annually to be fulfilled between July 1 and June 30. A licensed employee may be required to receive more PD than the minimum when necessary to complete the licensed employee's PGP, but not to exceed sixty (60) total hours of PD. All licensed employees are required to obtain thirty-six (36) hours of approved PD each year over a five-year period as part of their licensure renewal requirements. PD hours earned in excess of each licensed employee's required number of hours in the designated year cannot be carried over to the next year.

Licensed employees who are prevented from obtaining the required PD hours due to their illness or the illness of an immediate family member as defined in A.C.A. § 6-17-1202 have until the end of the following school year to make up the deficient hours. Missed hours of PD shall be made up with PD that is substantially similar to that which was missed and can be obtained by any method, online or otherwise, approved by ADE. This time extension does not absolve the employee from also obtaining the following year's required hours of PD. Failure to obtain required PD or to make up missed PD could lead to disciplinary consequences, up to termination of the contract of employment.

The goal of all PD activities shall be improved teaching and learning knowledge and skills that result in individual, team, school-wide, and District-wide improvement designed to ensure that all students demonstrate proficiency on the state's academic standards. The PDP shall be research-based and standards-based and in alignment with applicable DESE Rules and/or Arkansas code.

Teachers, administrators, and paraprofessionals shall be involved in the design, implementation, and evaluation of the plan for their own PD offerings. The results of the evaluation made by the participants in each program shall be used to continuously improve PD offerings.

Flexible PD hours (flex hours) are those hours that an employee is allowed to substitute PD activities, different than those offered by the District, but are still aligned to the employee's PGP, or the ARESC PDP. The District shall determine on an annual basis how many, if any, flex hours of PD it will allow to be substituted for District scheduled PD offerings. The Director and team leaders have the authority to require attendance at specific PD activities. Employees must receive advance approval from the building principal for activities they wish to have qualify for flex PD hours. To the fullest extent possible, PD activities are to be scheduled and attended such that teachers do not miss their regular teaching assignments. Six (6) approved flex hours credited toward fulfilling the licensed employee's required hours shall equal one (1) contract day. Hours of PD earned by an employee that are in excess of the employee's required hours but are either not at the request of the District or not pre-approved by the building principal, shall not be credited toward fulfilling the required number of contract days for that employee. Hours earned that count toward the licensed employee's required hours also count toward the required number of contract days for that employee. Employees shall be paid their daily rate of pay for PD hours earned at the request of ARESC that necessitate the employee work more than the number of days required by their contract.

Teachers and administrators who, for any reason, miss part or all of any scheduled PD activity they were required to attend, must make up the required hours in comparable activities, which are to be pre-approved by the employee's appropriate supervisor.

To receive credit for his/her PD activity, each employee is responsible for obtaining and submitting documents of attendance, or completion for each PD activity he/she attends. Documentation is to be submitted to the building principal or designee. ARESC shall maintain all documents submitted by its employees that reflect completion of PD programs, whether such programs were provided by the District or an outside organization.

To the extent required by DESE Rules, employees will receive up to six (6) hours of educational technology PD that is integrated within other PD offerings, including taking or teaching an online or blended course.

The following PD shall count toward a licensed employee's required PD hours to the extent the PDP or PGP includes such training, is approved for flex hours, or is part of the employee's PGP and it provides him/her with knowledge and skills for teaching:

- Students with intellectual disabilities, including Autism Spectrum Disorder;
- Students with specific learning disorders, including dyslexia;
- Culturally and linguistically diverse students;
- Gifted students.

Beginning in the 2013-14 school-year and every fifth year thereafter, all personnel shall receive two (2) hours of PD related to child maltreatment required under A.C.A. § 6-61-133.

Beginning in school-year 2023-24, teachers shall receive two (2) hours of PD designed to enhance their understanding of effective parental involvement strategies at least one (1) time.

Beginning in school-year 2014-15 and every fourth year thereafter, administrators shall receive two (2) hours of PD designed to enhance their understanding of effective parent and family engagement strategies and the

importance of administrative leadership in setting expectations and creating a climate conducive to parent and family participation.

Beginning in the 2023-24 school-year, teachers shall receive at least two (2) hours of PD in Arkansas History at least one (1) time. A teacher who provides instruction in Arkansas history may be required to receive additional hours of PD in Arkansas history as part of the teacher's annual PD requirement.

Beginning with the 2018-2019 school year, the District shall provide professional development to teachers licensed:

§ At the elementary level for kindergarten through grade six (K-6), in special education for kindergarten through grade twelve (K-12) that is directly related to literacy, or reading specialists for kindergarten through grade twelve (K-12) for one (1) of the prescribed pathways to obtaining a proficiency credential in knowledge and practices in scientific reading instruction; and

§ In an area other than elementary level for kindergarten through grade six (K-6), in special education for kindergarten through grade twelve (K-12) that is directly related to literacy, or reading specialists for kindergarten through grade twelve (K-12) for one (1) of the prescribed pathways to obtaining an awareness credential in knowledge and practices in scientific reading instruction.

The professional development will be designed so that, by the beginning of the 2023-2024 school year, all teachers employed in a teaching position that requires an elementary education license (K-6), special education license that is directly related to literacy, or reading specialists in kindergarten through grade twelve (K-12) shall demonstrate proficiency in knowledge and practices of scientific reading instruction and all other teachers shall demonstrate awareness in knowledge and practices of the scientific reading instruction.

Beginning in the 2019-2020 school year, ARESC shall provide annual training instruction based on the science of reading as set forth in the literacy plan contained within the plans.

Beginning in the 2023-24 school-year and every fourth year thereafter, All licensed personnel shall receive two (2) hours of training related to bullying prevention and recognition of the relationship between incidents of bullying and the risk of suicide.

Beginning in the 2023-24 school-year and every fifth year thereafter, all licensed personnel shall receive two (2) hours of PD in mental health awareness and teen suicide awareness and prevention, which may be obtained by self-review of suitable mental health awareness and suicide prevention materials approved by DESE.

By the beginning of the 2024-25 school year and every fourth year thereafter, a school counselor shall receive Youth Mental Health training to learn the risk factors and warning signs of mental health issues in adolescents; the importance of early intervention; and how to help an adolescent who is in crisis or expecting a mental health challenge.

In addition to the mental health training otherwise required by this policy, all district employees shall receive mental health awareness training.

Anticipated rescuers shall receive training in cardiopulmonary resuscitation and the use of automated external defibrillators as required by DESE Rule. Such training shall count toward the required annual hours of PD.

Starting in the 2024-2025 school year and every two (2) years thereafter, principals, guidance counselors, teachers, and other relevant school personnel with direct contact and supervision of students shall receive seventy-five (75) minutes of training, in person or online, on the recognition of signs and symptoms of seizures and the appropriate steps for seizure first aid that is consistent with training programs and guidelines developed by the Epilepsy Foundation of America. In addition, at least two (2) employees at each school shall receive training that is consistent with training programs and guidelines developed by the Epilepsy Foundation of America to:

1. Administer or assist with the self-administration of a seizure rescue medication or medication prescribed to treat seizure disorder symptoms; and a manual dose of prescribed electrical stimulation using a vagus nerve stimulator magnet; and
2. Recognize the signs and symptoms of seizures and the appropriate steps to be taken to respond to these symptoms.

All licensed personnel shall receive training related to compliance with antibullying policies and the licensed employee's duties under the anti bullying policies.

For each administrator, the thirty six (36) hour PD requirement shall include training in data disaggregation, instructional leadership, and fiscal management. This training may include the Initial, Tier 1, and Tier 2 training required for Superintendents and other designees by DESE's Rules Governing the Arkansas Financial Accounting and Reporting System and Annual Training Requirements.

Building level administrators shall complete the credentialing assessment for the teacher evaluation PD program prior to conducting any summative teacher evaluations.

By the end of the 2014-15 school-year, teachers shall have received professional awareness on the characteristics of dyslexia and the evidence-based interventions and accommodations for dyslexia.

Teachers required by the superintendent, building principal, or their designee to take approved training related to teaching an advance placement class for a subject covered by the College Board and Educational Testing Service shall receive up to thirty (30) hours of credit toward the hours of PD required annually.

Licensed personnel may earn up to twelve (12) hours of PD for time they are required to spend in their instructional classroom, office or media center prior to the first day of student/teacher interaction **provided** the time is spent in accordance with state law and current DESE rules that deal with PD. Licensed personnel who meet the requirements of this paragraph, the associated statute, and DESE Rules shall be entitled to one (1) hour of PD for each hour of approved preparation.

Licensed personnel shall receive five (5) PD hours for each credit hour of a graduate level college course that meets the criteria identified in law and applicable DESE rules. A maximum of fifteen (15) such hours may be applied toward the thirty six (36) hours of PD required annually for license renewal.⁸

The District shall make available annually to licensed personnel at least thirty (30) minutes of professional development on recognizing the warning signs that a child is a victim of human trafficking and reporting a suspicion that a child is a victim of human trafficking.

In addition to other required PD, personnel of Alternative Learning Environments shall receive PD on classroom management and on the specific needs and characteristics of students in alternative education environments.

District administrators as well as licensed personnel selected by the superintendent or building principal shall receive training on the appropriate use of restraint and seclusion in accordance with DESE's Advisory Guidelines for the Use of Student Restraints in Public School or Educational Settings and is in compliance with the requirements of A.C.A. § 6-18-2409. The names of ARESC staff who have received certified training on the use of physical restraint shall be provided to all staff at least annually.

As part of the ARESC implementation of positive behavioral support system, administrators that work directly with students shall receive training in the use of positive behavior support for student behavior and in preventive techniques for teaching and motivating prosocial student behavior and conflict de-escalation and resolution techniques to be employed by school personnel to prevent, defuse, evaluate, and debrief a crisis and conflict situation.

Employees who are members of the behavioral threat assessment team shall receive basic and advanced behavioral threat assessment training through the Arkansas Center for School Safety of the Criminal Justice Institute or another organization or entity approved by the state board.

ARESC shall not require a school employee to complete or participate in implicit bias training, which is defined as a training or educational program designed to expose an individual to biases that the training's or educational program's developer or designer presumes the individual to unconsciously or unintentionally possess that predispose the individual to be unfairly prejudiced in favor of or against a thing, person, or group to adjust the individual's pattern of thinking in order to eliminate the individual's unconscious or unintentional bias or prejudice. An employee may leave a training that the employee is attending if the employee determines that the training addresses implicit biases. ARESC shall not take adverse employment action against an employee for the employee's failure or refusal to complete or participate in implicit bias training.

Employees who do not receive or furnish documentation of the required annual PD jeopardize the accreditation of their school and academic achievement of their students. Failure of an employee to receive his/her required annual hours of PD in any given year, unless due to illness as permitted by law, DESE Rule, and this policy, shall be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Approved PD activities may include:

- Conferences/workshops/institutes;
- Mentoring/peer coaching;
- Study groups/learning teams;

- National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Certification;
- Distance and online learning (including ArkansasIDEAS);
- Micro-credentialing approved by DESE;
- Internships;
- State/district/school programs;
- Approved college/university course work;
- Action research; and
- Individually guided (to be noted in the employee's PGP).

Approved PD activities that occur during the instructional day or outside the licensed employee's annual contract days may apply toward the annual minimum PD requirement.

PD activities shall relate to the following areas:

- Content (K-12);
- Instructional strategies;
- Assessment/data-driven decision making;
- Advocacy/leadership/fiscal management;
- Systemic change process;
- Standards, frameworks, and curriculum alignment;
- Supervision;
- Mentoring/peer coaching;
- Next generation learning/integrated technology;
- Principles of learning/developmental stages/diverse learners;
- Cognitive research;
- Parent and family engagement/academic planning and scholarship;
- Building a collaborative learning community;
- Student health and wellness; and
- The Code of Ethics for Arkansas Educators.

Additional activities eligible for PD credit, as included in the plans include:

- School Fire Marshall program (A.C.A. § 6-10-110);
- Tornado safety drills (A.C.A. § 6-10-121);
- Statewide student assessments (A.C.A. § 6-15-2912);
- Test security and confidentiality (A.C.A. § 6-15-2907);
- Emergency plans and the emergency communication method with law enforcement (A.C.A. § 6-15-1302);
- TESS (A.C.A. § 6-17-2806);
- Student discipline training, behavioral intervention, and classroom management (A.C.A. § 6-18-502);
- Comprehensive School Counseling Program (A.C.A. § 6-18-2004);
- Training required by DESE under The Arkansas Educational Support and Accountability Act and fiscal and facilities distress statutes and rules; and
- Annual lockdown drills (6-15-1303).⁹

W. Licensed Personnel Employment

All prospective employees must fill out an application form provided by ARESC , in addition to any resume provided; all of the information provided is to be placed in the personnel file of those employed.

If the employee provides false or misleading information, or if he/she withholds information to the same effect, it may be grounds for dismissal. In particular, it will be considered a material misrepresentation and grounds for termination of contract of employment if an employee's licensure status is discovered to be other than as it was represented by an employee or applicant, either in writing on application materials or in the form of verbal assurances or statements made to the school district.

It is grounds for termination of contract of employment if an employee fails a criminal background check or receives a true report on the Child Maltreatment Central Registry check.

All teachers who begin employment in the 2023-2024 school year and each school year thereafter shall demonstrate proficiency or awareness in knowledge and practices in scientific reading instruction as is applicable to their teaching position by completing the prescribed proficiency or awareness in knowledge and practices of the scientific reading instruction credential either as a condition of licensure or within one (1) year for teachers who are already licensed or employed as a teacher under a waiver from licensure.

Before the director makes a recommendation to the Board that an individual be hired, the director shall check the Arkansas Educator Licensure System to determine if the individual has a currently suspended or revoked teaching license. An individual with a currently suspended license or whose license has been revoked by the State Board of Education is not eligible to be employed; this prohibition includes employment as a substitute teacher, whether directly employed or providing substitute teaching services under contract with an outside entity.

If the director finds probable cause that an employee has engaged in sexual misconduct with a minor, then the director or the director's designee shall not provide a favorable recommendation of employment on behalf of the employee.

ARESC is an equal opportunity employer and shall not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, disability, or genetic information.

Any person may report sex discrimination, including sexual harassment, to the Title IX Coordinator in person or by using the mailing address, telephone number, or email address provided above. A report may be made at any time, including during non-business hours, and may be on the individual's own behalf or on behalf of another individual who is the person alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sex discrimination or sexual harassment.

For further information on notice of non-discrimination or to file a complaint, visit <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/complaintintro.html>; for the address and phone number of the office that serves your area, or call 1-800-421-3481.

In accordance with Arkansas law, the District provides a veteran preference to applicants who qualify for one of the following categories:

1. A veteran without a service-connected disability;
2. A veteran with a service-connected disability; and
3. A deceased veteran's spouse who is unmarried throughout the hiring process.

For purposes of this policy, "veteran" is defined as:

- a. A person honorably discharged from a tour of active duty, other than active duty for training only, with the armed forces of the United States; or
- b. Any person who has served honorably in the National Guard or reserve forces of the United States for a period of at least six (6) years, whether or not the person has retired or been discharged.

In order for an applicant to receive the veteran preference, the applicant must be a citizen and resident of Arkansas, be substantially equally qualified as other applicants, and do all of the following:

1. Indicate on the employment application the category the applicant qualifies for;
2. Attach the following documentation, **as applicable**, to the employment application:
 - Form DD-214 indicating honorable discharge;
 - A letter dated within the last six months from the applicant's command indicating years of service in the National Guard or Reserve Forces as well as the applicant's current status;
 - Marriage license;
 - Death certificate;
 - Disability letter from the Veteran's Administration (in the case of an applicant with a service-related disability).

Failure of the applicant to comply with the above requirements shall result in the applicant not receiving the veteran preference; in addition, meeting the qualifications of a veteran or spousal category does not guarantee either an interview or being hired.

A.C.A. § 6-16-1507 requires that earning a high school diploma through the passage of a nationally recognized high school equivalency exam, such as the GED test, be treated the same as the receipt of a high school diploma from an accredited Arkansas secondary school for purposes of employment by a political subdivision of the State of Arkansas.

X. Licensed Personnel Duties as Mandated Reporters

It is the statutory duty of school district employees to:

· If the employee has reasonable cause to suspect child abuse or maltreatment, then the employee shall directly and personally report these suspicions to the Arkansas Child Abuse Hotline: by calling 1-800-482-5964 or by submitting a report through the online reporting system. Failure to report

suspected child abuse, maltreatment, or neglect through the Hotline can lead to criminal prosecution and individual civil liability of the person who has this duty. Notification of local or state law enforcement does not satisfy the duty to report; only notification by means of the Child Abuse Hotline discharges this duty.

· If the employee has a good faith belief that there is a serious and imminent threat to the public based on a threat made by an individual regarding violence in or targeted at a school that has been communicated to the employee in the ordinary course of his/her professional duties, then the employee shall make every attempt to immediately notify law enforcement of the serious and imminent threat to the public and have notified law enforcement within twenty-four (24) hours of learning of the serious and imminent threat to the public.

The duty of mandated reporters to report suspected child abuse or maltreatment or serious and imminent threats to the public is a direct and personal duty, and cannot be assigned or delegated to another person. There is no duty to investigate, confirm or substantiate statements a student may have made which form the basis of the reasonable cause to believe that the student may have been abused or subjected to maltreatment by another person or that form the basis of the serious and imminent threat to the public; however, a person with a duty to report may find it helpful to make a limited inquiry to assist in the formation of a belief that child abuse, maltreatment, or neglect has occurred; that a serious and imminent threat to the public exists; or to rule out such a belief¹.

Employees and volunteers who notify the Child Abuse Hotline or who report serious and imminent threats to the public to law enforcement in good faith are immune from civil liability and criminal prosecution.

By law, no school district or school district employee may prohibit or restrict an employee or volunteer from directly reporting suspected child abuse, maltreatment, or a serious and imminent threat to the public, or require that any person notify or seek permission from any person before making a report to the Child Abuse Hotline or law enforcement.

X. Administrative Policies

The Director may develop Administrative Policies to expedite the day-to-day operation of the ARESC. Administrative Policies will be brought to the attention of the Board.

Y. Wellness Policy

Definition

Staff wellness is defined as opportunities for staff to improve their health status through activities such as health assessments, health education and health-related fitness activities (CDC,2008).

Vision

ARESC believes that healthy adults make better role models for others when they are at their optimal health. It is the vision of ARESC that all staff members have the knowledge, skills, and opportunities to make healthy living choices.

Z. Salary Increases for Degree Attainment

In an effort to encourage and support the acquisition of education and skills that promote the effective delivery of services to our patrons, ARESC acknowledges education credentials beyond the minimum credentials required for the position. Full-time employees who have been employed at ARESC for one or more years who earn an bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree in content directly related to his or her current ARESC job function may be recommended for a salary range increase, depending on grant funds and salary schedule. The following guidelines apply:

- This acknowledgement will apply to degrees earned after July 1, 2014 and is not retroactive.
- A salary range increase will not be recommended for more than one degree per level.
- A salary range increase may only be paid for earned degrees beyond degrees already attained. That is, an individual who already has a bachelor's degree would not receive an increase for subsequently earning an associate's degree.
- Recommendations for degree attainment salary increases will be made during the June board meeting. If approved, the new contract will be effective July 1, and payable with the first payroll of the new fiscal year.
- The employee who earns a degree eligible for salary range increase is responsible for providing Human Resources with a copy of their transcript indicating the degree earned by May 31. An unofficial transcript can be accepted by this time if necessary, but an official transcript must be on file by June 15 for a recommendation to be made to the board. Failure to provide the necessary documentation will prevent the recommendation from being made.
- Only degrees in content directly related to his or her current ARESC job function and earned at regionally accredited institutions make employees eligible for this increase. It will be at the Director's discretion to determine if the degree meets eligibility requirements.

APPENDIX

FORMS

Sick Leave Bank Donation Form	A-1
Request for Days from Sick Leave Bank	A-2
Request for Payment of Accrued Vacation Leave at Time of Resignation	A-3
Grievance Report-Form A	A-4
Grievance Report-Form B.....	A-5
Employee Performance Evaluation	A-18
Performance Improvement Plan.....	A-19
Funded Coursework Agreement.....	A-20

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Safety in Workplace.....	A-15
Personnel Policy Receipt.....	A-16
Employee Confidentiality Statement	A-17

SICK LEAVE BANK DONATION FORM

The ARESC Sick Leave Bank will provide eligible members of the Sick Leave Bank who have exhausted accumulated sick leave a means of **possibly** obtaining additional sick leave days.

ARESC Sick Leave Bank may be used only for an employee's or his/her immediate family's (spouse, child, or parent) major personal illness or injury.

The ARESC Sick Leave Bank membership enrollment period will be during the month of August. In August of each year the balance of the sick leave bank will be evaluated to determine if a contribution is required of veteran members of the sick leave bank.

To be a member of the sick leave bank employees must:

1. Have completed at least 1 year of employment with ARESC.
2. Contribute one (1) day of sick leave to become a member and possess a minimum of two (2) days of sick leave accumulated at the time of membership.
3. Submit the Sick Leave Bank Membership form to the Human Resources Department by **August 31, 2018**.

Please read the Sick Leave Bank policies located in the 2018-2019 ARESC Personnel Policy Manual.

Please initial the appropriate statement and sign and date below:

_____ I hereby agree to voluntarily donate one (1) day of my sick leave for deposit in the ARESC SICK LEAVE BANK, for use by other ARESC staff members during the 2018-2019 year ending June 30, 2019.

_____ I have decided not to participate in the ARESC SICK LEAVE BANK for the year 2016-2017. I understand that I will not be able to draw sick leave days from the Bank at any time during the year ending June 30, 2019.

Signature

Date

Print Name

Employees submitting this form after August 31st will be denied membership for the 2016-2017 school year.

Arkansas River Education Service Cooperative

ARESC Employee Request for Days from Sick Leave Bank

Name: _____ Date of Request: _____

Please answer or circle your response to the following questions:

Have all accumulated sick leave days been exhausted? Yes No

Have all vacation days and personal days been exhausted? Yes No

On what date do you expect to exhaust all sick leave, vacation, and personal days? _____

Have you requested Sick Leave Bank days in the past? Yes No

If "Yes", then give approximate date(s): _____

Please explain for the Sick Leave Bank Committee, the circumstances which require additional sick leave days from the Bank:

If request is for immediate family member, in addition to the information above, give the following information:

Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

Please attach required documentation:

- Sick Leave Bank Request Form
- Medical History Packet
- Other pertinent information or documentation
- Attendance Report (Attendance Clerk)
- Verification of Sick Leave Bank Membership (Human Resources)

The Sick Leave Bank Committee will respond in writing within 10 days of receipt of the completed Sick Leave Request Packet.

Arkansas River Education Service Cooperative

GRIEVANCE REPORT FORM A

Step 1.

FROM: _____, Employee

TO: _____, Supervisor

SUBJECT: _____

DATE OF GRIEVANCE: _____

Description of Incident (Include date of incident): _____

(Attach additional pages if necessary)

By signing below, I attest that the facts included below are the honest and true representation of this matter.

Signature

GRIEVANCE RESPONSE

Step 2.

Grievance No. _____
(To Be Assigned Only If Forwarded)

Date Forwarded: _____

Response to Grievance:

Director's Signature

Date

Arkansas River Education Service Cooperative

GRIEVANCE REPORT FORM B

Step 3.

FROM: _____
(Grieving Person)

TO: _____
(Director)

DATE: _____
(Grievance Report (Form A) Must Be Attached)

Signature

DIRECTOR'S RESPONSE TO GRIEVANCE

Step 4.

Date Appeal Received: _____

Date Of Response to Appeal: _____

Response to Appeal:

Signature of Director

Date

Arkansas River Education Service Cooperative

SAFETY IN THE WORKPLACE

I, _____, have reviewed the safety practices for the Arkansas River Education Service Cooperative. I will practice periodic drills for emergencies such as fire, earthquake, etc.

I will attend the scheduled ARESC Safety Training that will be presented by the Safety Coordinator and review the Asbestos Management Plan. I will post a copy of the escape plan for emergencies on the wall in or near my office or workstation if applicable.

If I have any questions about safety in the workplace, I will submit them to the Program Manager, Safety Coordinator or the Director (in that order).

Name: _____ Date _____

Print Name: _____

Program Title _____

Arkansas River Education Service Cooperative

PERSONNEL POLICY FORM

I, _____, acknowledge I received directions on how to access Arkansas River Education Service Cooperative Personnel Policy Manual on the Arkansas River Education Service Cooperative website at <http://www.aresc.k12.ar.us/> and it is my responsibility to review and know the contents of the manual and the Drug and Tobacco Free Workplace policies for the cooperative.

Signed _____ Date _____

Printed Name _____

Program Title _____

Arkansas River Education Service Cooperative

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

At the Arkansas River Education Service Cooperative, protecting confidentiality and understanding the sensitivity of information being provided is the responsibility of every employee. Each employee must strictly adhere to a common policy of non-disclosure.

The Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure Statement:

BE IT HEREBY AFFIRMED THAT I COMPLETELY UNDERSTAND THE SENSITIVE NATURE AND THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF ALL FAMILY, STUDENT, EMPLOYEE, FINANCIAL, AND ANY OTHER RELATED DOCUMENTS.

I THEREFORE ACKNOWLEDGE AND AGREE THAT ANY AND ALL INFORMATION CONCERNING FAMILIES, STUDENTS, EMPLOYEES, FINANCIAL OR OTHER RELATED DOCUMENTS IS CONSIDERED "CONFIDENTIAL DATA" AND SHOULD AT NO TIME BE DISCLOSED. I THEREFORE AGREE NOT TO PERMIT THE DUPLICATION, USE OR DISCLOSURE OF ANY SUCH DOCUMENTS TO UNRELATED PARTIES. INFORMATION DISCLOSURE DOES NOT INCLUDE THAT WHICH IS COVERED UNDER THE "FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT".

Print Name

Employee Signature

Date



EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

Employee Name :	Division:	Date:
Job Title:	How long in current position?	Date of Last Review:
Type of Evaluation:	6 month Review	Annual

KEY TO RATINGS:		
E: Exceeds Standards	M: Meets Standards	N: Needs Improvement

RESPONSIBILITIES: List current overall job responsibilities

ACCOMPLISHMENTS: List major job related achievements since last evaluation

JOB KNOWLEDGE: Employee possesses a clear understanding of the responsibilities and tasks that must be performed

Overall Rating: E: Exceeds Standards	M: Meets Standards	N: Needs Improvement
Comments:		

JOB PERFORMANCE: (Quality) The neatness, thoroughness, accuracy, and overall quality of the employee's work

Overall Rating: E: Exceeds Standards	M: Meets Standards	N: Needs Improvement
Comments:		

JOB PRODUCTIVITY: (Quantity) Employee demonstrates a commitment toward achieving results in job scope and using time for work related tasks. Tasks are completed and managed efficiently and effectively.

Overall Rating: E: Exceeds Standards	M: Meets Standards	N: Needs Improvement
Comments:		

DEPENDABILITY:

Overall Rating: E: Exceeds Standards	M: Meets Standards	N: Needs Improvement
---	--------------------	----------------------

Comments:

COOPERATION: Employee demonstrates a willingness to work with associates, subordinates, supervisors, and others. Responds willingly to changes in procedures, process, responsibility and assignments.

Overall Rating:	E: Exceeds Standards	M: Meets Standards	N: Needs Improvement
Comments:			

INITIATIVE: Employee demonstrates an ability to think and act independently. Originates innovative ideas and methods to improve job or complete tasks better.

Overall Rating:	E: Exceeds Standards	M: Meets Standards	N: Needs Improvement
Comments:			

WORK ENVIRONMENT AND SAFETY: Maintains a safe and pleasant work environment, follows safety regulations, and actively contributes towards a safe workplace.

Overall Rating:	E: Exceeds Standards	M: Meets Standards	N: Needs Improvement
Comments:			

OVERALL PERFORMANCE: Overall appraisal of the employee's job performance.

Overall Rating:	E: Exceeds Standards	M: Meets Standards	N: Needs Improvement
Comments:			

ACTION PLAN: The above criteria is important to properly evaluate your performance. The following Action Plan describes your specific strengths and weaknesses; and what can be done to improve your position toward continued growth.

Areas for Growth:	Actions for improvement in denoted growth areas:		
Areas of Strength:			
Has this report been discussed with employee?	<table border="0"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Yes</td> <td style="text-align: center;">No</td> </tr> </table>	Yes	No
Yes	No		

If No, Why Not?			
If Yes, Employee Comments:			
Supervisor Signature:		Date:	Employee Signature:
			Date:
Director Signature:		Date:	



Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)
Confidential

EMPLOYEE: _____ **DIVISION:** _____

The purpose of this Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) is to define areas of concern, gaps in work performance, reiterate **Arkansas River Education Service Cooperative** expectations and guidelines, and to allow an opportunity for the employee to demonstrate improvement in the defined areas.

Area(s) of Concern:

Bullet point issues and how employee's lack of performance and/or behavior has affected ARESC, students, families, his/her co-workers, clients or customers.

Observations, Previous Discussions or Counseling:

Recap dates/times you have addressed the issues in the recent/relevant past. Reference and attach previous documents when applicable.

Step 1: Improvement Goals: List the goals related to area(s) of concern outlined above. The following should be statement(s) outlining the intended outcomes for improvement in each area of concern and addressed:

1.	
2.	
3.	

Step 2: Improvement Activities: List below actions to be taken to foster and support improvement

to meet Improvement Goals outlined above.

Goal #	Activity	How to Accomplish	Start Date	Projected Completion Date

Step 3: Resources: Listed below are resources available for the completion of Improvement Activities and other duties (may include other people's time or expertise, funds for training materials and activities, or time away from usual responsibilities.)

1.	
2.	
3.	

A-19

Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)

Step 4: Administration Support: Listed below are ways in which your Division Leader will support the Improvement activities.

1.	
2.	
3.	

Step 5: Expectations: The following performance standards must be accomplished to demonstrate progress towards achievement of each Improvement goal. (How do we know that the goal has been accomplished?)

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

Step 6: Progress Checkpoints: The following schedule will be used to evaluate your progress in meeting your Improvement activities.

Goal #	Activity	Checkpoint Date	Type of Follow-up (memo/call/meeting)	Progress Expected	Notes

--	--	--	--	--	--

Follow-up Updates: You will receive feedback on your progress according to the following schedule:

Date Scheduled	Activity	Conducted By	Completion Date
	(Memo, meeting, etc.)	[Supervisor/Manager]	
		[Supervisor/Manager]	
		[Supervisor/Manager]	

Timeline for Improvement, Consequences & Expectations:

Effective immediately, you are placed on a (insert 30, 45, or 60)-day Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). During this time you will be expected to make regular progress on the plan outlined above. Failure to meet or exceed these expectations, or any display of gross misconduct will result in further disciplinary action, up to and including recommendation for termination. Furthermore, failure to maintain performance expectations after the completion of the PIP may result in additional disciplinary action up to and including a recommendation for termination.

Should you have questions or concerns regarding the content, you will be expected to follow up directly with me.

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have received a Performance Improvement Plan and that my supervisor held a performance review conference with me on the date below:

Print Employee Name: _____

Employee Signature: _____

Date: _____

Print Supervisor/Manager Name: _____

Supervisor/Manager Signature: _____

Date: _____



FUNDED COURSEWORK AGREEMENT

I, _____ understand and agree that I must complete courses as a condition of my employment, licensure, or certification. Course work is to be completed over a three year time period-beginning the 1st year of employment at ARESC. If I choose to leave after ARESC has expended funds to support my education, I understand that I must reimburse the ARESC program for the tuition costs and/or other training costs that were accrued.

This agreement will remain in effect for three (3) years after completion of all course work. If I leave ARESC employment voluntarily or via termination prior to the completion of all course work and three years of additional service, funds expended toward completion of my coursework will be recovered from the last checks due to me. This amount will be prorated by the amount of time remaining to serve in the program.

I understand and voluntarily sign the terms of this agreement to go into effect upon the beginning of the course work.

Course Work Start Date: _____ Course Work Anticipated End Date: _____

Staff Signature Date

Director Date

