



EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

for

Instructional and Support Staff

2024 – 2025

INTRODUCTION

This handbook is intended to be a guide and summary of board policies and procedures for Lauderdale County School (LCS) employees. Each reference to a board policy has been linked so that employees can quickly access more detailed information. Since all LCS Board policies and procedures are not included, employees should refer to the **LCS Board Policy Manual** located on the [district's website](#).

Board policies and procedures can change at any time. Therefore, employees may examine the policy codes associated with handbook topics, check with their supervisor, or contact the district office if they have any questions or concerns. It is the employee's responsibility to be knowledgeable of and adhere to all LCS Board Policies and Procedures.

Suggestions for additions and improvements to this handbook are welcomed and may be submitted to the Assistant Superintendent.

Revised: 06/24/2024

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DISTRICT OVERVIEW

Detailed demographic information and performance data by district and school are available on the [State Report Card website](#) and on the [LCS website](#).

LAUDERDALE COUNTY SCHOOLS



321 Armory Avenue, P.O. Box 350 • Ripley, TN 38063
Phone: (731) 635-2941 • Fax: (731) 635-7985

Core Values, Mission, Vision, and Strategic Priorities

We Value:

- The academic achievement and social development of all children.
- An environment conducive to learning – clean, safe, respectful, and positive.
- The involvement of parents in the education of their children.
- Quality teachers and administrators who are competent, passionate and put children first.
- Accountability in all things and the use of sound, accurate data in decision-making.

Our Mission:

To provide each child with the education and the social skills needed to be productive citizens.

Our Vision:

Our students will experience high academic achievement; be prepared for post-secondary education or the workforce upon graduation; and have a positive impact on the growth and development of Lauderdale County.

Articulation of Core Values

Children: We place the best interest of children at the center of all we do.

Academic Achievement & Social Development: We strive to ensure that each child achieves academically, develops socially and matures into a responsible young adult.

Parental Involvement: We welcome and respect parents as our partners in their child's education.

The Learning Environment: We work to create in each school an environment that is clean, safe, respectful, positive and conducive to learning.

Quality Teachers and Administrators: We expect teachers and administrators to be competent, passionate and focused on children.

Accountability: We pledge to be accountable for results at all levels and to use sound, accurate data to drive all decisions.

Strategic Priorities 2024-2028

Priority 1: Academic Achievement and Social Development

- Goal 1: Increase literacy across all grade levels
- Goal 2: Increase numeracy across all grade levels
- Goal 3: Increase post-secondary/career readiness
- Goal 4: Increase the understanding and focus of positive social development skills

Priority 2: Family and Community Engagement

- Goal 1: Increase community awareness of educational priorities and accomplishments
- Goal 2: Each school will increase opportunities for positive family/community involvement.

Priority 3: Budget/Operations

- Goal 1: Lauderdale County will maximize and align resources in all areas of budget/operations.

Priority 4: Capital Outlay

- Goal 1: Lauderdale County will define capital outlay priorities and develop a long- and short- range plan for meetings those needs.

Priority 5: Political Advocacy

- Goal 1: The board will communicate with its legislative bodies and individual elected officials to advocate for local education concerns.

2024 - 2025

LAUDERDALE COUNTY SCHOOLS



July							August							September						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6					1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
28	29	30	31				25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30					

October							November							December						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5						1	2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	29	30	31				

January							February							March						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4							1							1
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
26	27	28	29	30	31		23	24	25	26	27	28		23	24	25	26	27	28	29

April							May							June						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
30	31	1	2	3	4	5					1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
27	28	29	30				25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30					

TEACHER WORK DAYS

(Students do not attend)

New Teacher Orientation
July 24 & 25

Professional Development Days
Aug. 2, Nov. 1 & Jan. 7

Teacher Inservice Days
July 29, 30, 31 August 5, January 6

SCHOOL DISMISSAL DAYS

Labor Day Sept. 2
Fall Break Oct. 7-11
Thanksgiving Break Nov. 25-29
Winter Break Dec. 20 - Jan. 3
Martin Luther King Day Jan. 20
President's Day Feb. 17
Spring Break March 17-21
Good Friday April 18
Last Day of School* May 23

*Please pick up report cards prior to
10:00am on May 23

ABBREVIATED STUDENT DAYS

Dismissal @ 11:30am

Winter Break Begins Dec. 19
Faculty/Staff Recognition May 22

Family/Teacher Conferences
All Lauderdale County Schools
4:00-7:00 PM
September 5 & 12
February 6 & 13

Marking Periods

1st 9 Weeks - Aug. 6 - Oct. 4 (44 days) 2nd 9 Weeks - Oct. 14 - Dec. 19 (43 days)
3rd 9 Weeks - Jan. 8 - March 14 (46 days) 4th 9 Weeks - March 24 - May 23 (44 days)

Progress Reports and Report Cards

Sept. 5 Progress Reports	Oct. 17 Report Cards	Nov. 12 Progress Reports	Jan. 14 Report Cards	Feb. 6 Progress Reports	March 27 Report Cards	April 15 Progress Reports	May 23 Report Cards
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No
School



Student
Registration



First Day of
School



Last Day of
School



RHS
Graduation



HHS
Graduation

web: www.LCED.net - Also look for us on Facebook, Twitter, & Instagram!

WE ARE MOBILE!

Download on the App Store | Get it on Google Play



SCHOOL DIRECTORY

Ripley Primary School (PreK – 2)

Chantay Dupree, Principal
Darryl Wells, Assistant Principal
Gina Hendren, Curriculum Coordinator
225 Volz Road, Ripley, TN 38063
(731) 635-0691 Fax (731) 635-0312
Enrollment – 665

Ripley Elementary School (3 – 5)

Jessica Newman, Principal
TBD, Assistant Principal
Rhonda Waldo, Curriculum Coordinator
100 Highway 19 E. Ripley, TN 38063
(731) 221-3066 Fax (731) 221-3055
Enrollment – 550

Ripley Middle School (6 – 8)

Golden Howard, Principal
Keyonlia Narcisse, Assistant Principal
Adrienn Perkins, Assistant Principal
Amanda Gray, Curriculum Coordinator
309 Charles Griggs Ave. Ripley, TN 38063
(731) 635-1391 Fax (731) 635-0028
Enrollment – 575

Ripley High School (9 – 12)

Kamisha Dixon, Principal
Dr. Heather Comer, Assistant Principal
John Yarbrough, Assistant Principal
TBD, Assistant Principal
254 Jefferson St., Ripley, TN 38063
(731) 635-2642 Fax (731) 635-7151
Enrollment – 742

Halls Elementary School (PreK – 6)

Andy Campbell, Principal
Tamara Patrick, Assistant Principal
Bailey Turner, Curriculum Coordinator
601 Carmen St., Halls, TN 38040
(731) 836-9651 Fax (731) 836-5573
Enrollment – 603

Halls Junior High School (7 – 8)

Mike Blackwood, Principal
Lisa Ungerecht, Curriculum Coordinator
800 W. Tigrett St., Halls, TN 38040
(731) 836-5579 Fax (731) 836-5555
Enrollment – 196

Halls High School (9 – 12)

Amy Morgan, Principal
Richard Dawson, Assistant Principal
Dr. Kasey Warren, Assistant Principal
800 W. Tigrett St., Halls, TN 38040
(731) 836-9642 Fax (731) 836-1027
Enrollment – 381

Lauderdale Co. Alternative Learning Academy

Billie Young, Principal

92 Viar Ave. Ripley, TN 38063
(731) 635-4856 Fax (731) 635-4821

LAUDERDALE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD

Linda Jennings, Chairman

District # 1 – Amanda Rhodes

District # 2 – Cynthia Glenn

District # 3 – Linda Jennings

District # 4 – Austin Thompson, Jr.

District # 5 – Josh Hicks

District # 6 – Chris Rose

District # 7 – Bradley Adams

District # 8 – Jenny McWilliams

DISTRICT OFFICE

321 Armory Avenue
Ripley, TN 38063
731-635-2941
Fax 731-635-7985

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Shawn Kimble – Superintendent of Schools skimble@k12.lced.net

Melinda Hutcherson – Assistant Superintendent mhutcherson@k12.lced.net

Chris McCorkle – Director of Operations cmccorkle@k12.lced.net

Glenda Booker – Director of Human Resources glendabooker@k12.lced.net

Memory Gaines – Director of Data and Compliance mgaines@k12.lced.net

Teresa White – Director of Elementary and Middle Learning (3-8) twhite@k12.lced.net

Jennifer Kimble – Director of Assessment and Accountability jkimble@k12.lced.net

Latonya Jackson – Director of Secondary Education/CTE (9-12) ltjackson@k12.lced.net

Cynthia Campbell – Director of Early Learning (PreK – 2) ccampbell@k12.lced.net

Nicholas Stevens – Director of Exceptional Student Services nstevens@k12.lced.net

Samantha Culver – Director of Federal Projects/OCR/Technology sculver@k12.lced.net

Stephen Byrd – Director of Transportation, Safety & Student Support sbyrd@k12.lced.net

Kerri Carmack – Director of School Nutrition kcarmack@k12.lced.net

Michael Mann – Director of Maintenance mikemann@k12.lced.net

Michelle Brazier – Director of Coordinated School Health mbrazier@k12.lced.net

Lindsey Smith – Director of AWARE lindseysmith@k12.lced.net

Kim Brewster – Finance Manager kbrewster@k12.lced.net

SUPPORT STAFF

Beth Latham – Administrative/Board Secretary

Vance Brewster – System Analyst

Kendy Jones – Receptionist/ESS Secretary

Eric Wright – Technology Technician

Flora Morton – Payroll Clerk

Andrea Kiestler -HR/Payroll Clerk

Rose Heath – Bookkeeper

Janet Ray – School Nutrition Clerk

FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER

Ollie Fields – FRC Coordinator

(731) 635-2352 ofields@k12.lced.net

LAUDERDALE COUNTY SCHOOLS

HEALTH AND WELLNESS STAFF

HEALTH STAFF

Michelle Brazier, RN – Director of Coordinated School Health mbrazier@k12.lced.net

731-221-0959 (office) 731-612-0212 (cell)

School Nurses:

- **Mary Brown, LPN** – Ripley Primary School mbrown@k12.lced.net 635-0691 (office)
- **Melissa Meadows, LPN** – Ripley Elementary School mmeadows@k12.lced.net 221-3066 (office)
- **Jessica Lowe, LPN** – Ripley Middle School jlowe@k12.lced.net 635-1391 (office)
- **Anita Michaels, RN** – Ripley High School amichaels@k12.lced.net 635-2642 (office)
- **Jessica Rose, LPN** – Halls Elementary School jrose@k12.lced.net 836-9651 (office)
- **Angela Barnes, LPN** – Halls Junior High and Halls High abarnes@k12.lced.net 836-9642

AWARE STAFF

Lindsey Smith – Director of AWARE/Ripley Primary School- lindseysmith@k12.lced.net 731-221-0761 (office)

Social Workers:

- **Zhanebria Henderson** – Ripley High School/Ripley Elementary
zhanebriahenderson@k12.lced.net 731-413-3280 (cell)
- **Heather Vernon** – Halls Schools – hvernon@k12.lced.net 731-413-5578 (cell)
- **Crystal Smith** – Ripley Middle/Alternative Learning Academy –
crystalsmith@k12.lced.net
 - 731-413-2129 (cell)

EMPLOYMENT AND HIRING PRACTICES

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

Lauderdale County Schools (LCS) provides an equal opportunity for employment, and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, religion, sex, marital status, economic status, disability, veteran status, age, or other categories protected by federal, state, and local anti-discrimination laws. All employment and advancement decisions will be made only with regard to qualifications for the positions involved. [Policy 5.104](#)

EMPLOYMENT PROCESS

Job Postings – All available positions with LCS will be posted on the [LCS website](#). Job postings and the employment process are managed by the Director of Human Resources.

Job Applications – Individuals interested in employment with LCS may apply online through the district website. The supervisor or principal has the authority to interview any person(s) from the pool of applicants and select a qualified individual to fill the vacant position, and recommend his/her selection to the Superintendent for approval.

Criminal History Background Check – To ensure the safety and welfare of students and staff, the district shall require criminal history background checks and fingerprinting of applicants for all positions. Knowingly falsifying information is illegal and shall be sufficient grounds for termination of employment and prosecution. All employees are required to have a background check at least once every (5) five years after the date of hire. Any costs incurred to perform these background checks shall be paid by the applicant. [Policy 5.106](#), [Policy 5.118](#)

Child and Protective Services Background Check – State law prohibits the school district from hiring or retaining any individual who has committed child abuse, child sexual abuse, or child neglect. To comply with this statute, LCS will conduct background checks through the Department of Children's Services database on all its employees.

Personnel Records – Upon being selected and approved for employment with LCS, a personnel file is established. Employees may view the contents of his or her personnel file that contains information pertaining to evaluations and other employment matters by making an appointment with Human Resources. If an employee wants to receive a copy of his or her records, a nominal fee per page may be assessed. Employee records (except medical records, college transcripts, background checks, and other personal information) are public records. As such, any individual or agency including the news media may request access to a personnel file. However, a record of the person inspecting the file and the date of the inspection shall be kept. The file must be reviewed in the presence of a Human Resources employee. [Policy 5.114](#)

Release of Personal Information –LCS will only confirm dates of employment and position in response to verbal requests for employment verification from outside agencies and vendors. The release of any additional information will require a written request from the outside agency and signed authorization from the employee.

Probationary Period – Upon initial employment, a probationary period of ninety (90) working days may be required by classified personnel. All classified employees begin accumulating leave from the first day of employment but shall not use these benefits until the probationary period has

ended. For more information, consult the appropriate supervisor. [Policy 5.106, 5.107](#)

Performance Evaluations – All employees, including paraprofessionals and support personnel, will be evaluated at least twice a year in accordance with the procedures outlined by the specific department. Evaluations are state-mandated for all teachers and school-based certified employees. These employees will be evaluated in accordance with state regulations and using the Tennessee Accelerated Educator Model ([TEAM](#)). [Policy 5.109](#)

EMPLOYEE TYPES

Certified – Certified employees are any employees who hold a license issued by the Tennessee Department of Education. Certified staff members require a valid professional license based on training that covers the subjects or grades taught and/or a specialty service area in accordance with rules and regulations of the State Board of Education.

Classified – Classified or non-certified staff employment status does not require certification in accordance with rules and regulations of the Tennessee Department of Education. Classified employees may be hourly or salaried and include the following: bookkeepers, secretaries, receptionists, clerks, maintenance employees, custodial employees, cafeteria employees, educational assistants, transportation employees, administrative support employees, and professional personnel (such as nurses and therapists).

Substitute – Substitutes work as a replacement resulting from any short-term absence for food service, custodial, teaching, educational assistant, or secretary positions. Substitutes are not eligible for benefits or participation in the Tennessee Consolidated Retirement System regardless of hours worked per week. Substitute teachers may work no more than an average of four days a week without prior written approval from the principal/supervisor.

Interim – Interim employees hold a position for a teacher or employee who is on leave. For teaching and other certified positions, interim employees are paid based on degree and experience similar to regular, certified staff provided the regular employee does not have leave days to cover the absence. Interim employees have no guarantee of a position beyond the time that the original employee is on leave or the end of the current school year.

Full-time Employees – Full-time employees are those employees who work a regular schedule of at least 37.5 hours per week. These employees are eligible for all benefits offered by the district.

Part-time Employees – Part-time employees are those employees who work a regular schedule less than 37.5 hours per week. These employees are eligible to earn sick leave on a prorated basis and may be eligible for health insurance benefits if employed more than 30 hours per week.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

ONLINE PAYCHECK STUBS

LCS utilizes www.mybenefitschannel.com to meet IRS Reporting and the Affordable Health Care Act requirements, to provide a time clock system for variable hour employees, and to allow employee access to previous paycheck stubs and other benefit information.

RETIREMENT

Tennessee Consolidated Retirement System (TCRS) provides the Legacy and the Hybrid retirement plans for LCS employees. The Legacy plan is reserved for employees who have been contributing to the TCRS prior to July 1, 2014 and have not taken a distribution of the account balance. The plan requires a mandatory five (5) percent pre-tax contribution. Upon retirement, the Legacy guarantees a monthly benefit that is based on a member's five highest years of consecutive earnings and service.

The Hybrid plan is reserved for certified personnel hired after July 1, 2014. The Hybrid Plan requires a five (5) percent contribution of salary to TCRS and a two (2) percent voluntary employee contribution toward a 401K in which the employee manages these investments. Information about retirement is available on the [TCRS website](#) or through the Human Resources Department.

OPTIONAL BENEFITS

LCS offers a variety of optional benefits and products as described below. Employees may visit www.mybenefitschannel.com and consult with the Human Resources department for specific information. Certain payroll deductions are included in a **cafeteria plan** and are not subject to federal income tax. These may include premiums paid for medical, dental, vision and cancer insurance, and contributions to a medical flexible spending account. Premiums for products placed in the cafeteria plan cannot be discontinued during the plan year unless there is a qualifying change in family status.

Health Insurance – All full-time personnel have the choice of participating in the State Partnership for Health plans under Blue Cross Blue Shield of TN or Cigna. Several plan options are available. Currently, the district pays a large percentage of the premiums for all employees and their dependents.

New employees may enroll in an insurance plan during the first month of employment. Depending on the hire date, premiums will be paid one to two months prior to the effective date of coverage.

Current employees may enroll in a medical insurance plan during the open enrollment in October through the state's Edison system. All employees desiring to make coverage changes must do so online at <https://sso.edison.tn.gov/> using the Edison number and password delivered by mail to each employee. This plan will take effect January 1 and run through December 31. Unless an employee experiences a qualifying event, changes in medical insurance provisions may only occur during the open enrollment period.

Dental and Vision Insurance – Full-time employees will be given an opportunity to enroll in dental and/or vision plans at the beginning of each school year. Effective date of coverage usually begins October 1.

Other Insurance – Life, cancer, critical care, and disability insurance options are available to employees. Enrollment periods will be announced at the beginning of the school year.

Medical Flexible Spending – A medical flexible spending account can be used to offset any medical expenses such as deductibles, co-pays, prescription costs, and other allowable expenses. This option allows the individual to set aside a specific amount for the year to pay for medical expenses not covered by insurance. The amount, deducted in ten equal payroll deductions, is not taxable and the entire annual contribution is available for immediate use. An employee can roll up to \$500 of unused contributions into the next plan year.

Other Programs – Other products and programs, such as credit union memberships, identity theft protection, and emergency air transportation support, may be available to employees. LCS requires that at least 25 employees participate in a particular program in order to qualify as a payroll deduction.

403b Account – Any employee may own and contribute to a 403b account through district-approved providers.

HIGHER EDUCATION DISCOUNT

A child of a certified employee may qualify for a 25% discount on post-secondary tuition. The child must be under the age of 24 as of the first day of classes and live with or previously lived in a parent-child relationship with the eligible employee. Additional information and discount form are available at the [THEC website](#).

TIME AWAY FROM WORK

SICK AND PERSONAL LEAVE

Paid sick leave may accumulate over the course of employment. Sick leave may be used for personal illness of the employee or illness/death of an immediate family member, including the employee's spouse, parents, grandparents, children, grandchildren, brothers, sisters, mother-in-law, father-in-law, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, brother-in-law, and sister-in-law. Employees may be granted up to three days of paid bereavement for the death of only a child or a spouse. Faculty/Staff attendance is necessary and is vital to student and school success. The immediate supervisor may require a physician's certificate or other proof indicating the reason for absence. Employees should guard their sick leave and use accrued days for legitimate purposes only. Accumulated sick leave will be credited toward total service time at retirement. [Policy 5.302](#)

LCS employees are granted either two or three days personal leave each year depending on the classification. Personal leave may not accrue from year to year. A maximum of two unused personal leave days will be converted to sick leave days at the end of the school year. Personal days may be used for any reason as long as employees obtain principal/supervisor approval in advance. Taking personal leave immediately before or after a holiday should be avoided. [Policy 5.303](#)

Full-time certified teachers and classified educational assistants are paid for 200 days spread over 12 months, including 180 instructional days, 10 built-in vacation days, and 10 in-service and other

designated days [Policy 5.113](#). Employees earn paid sick and personal leave as indicated:

<u>Certified Employees</u>	<u>Sick Leave</u>	<u>Personal Leave</u>
200-day contract (10 months)	10	3
220-day contract (11 months)	11	3
240-day contract (12 months)	12	3

<u>Classified Employees</u>	<u>Sick Leave</u>	<u>Personal Leave</u>
200-day contract (10 months)	10	2
220-day contract (11 months)	11	2
240-day contract (12 months)	12	3

Transfer of Sick Leave – Accumulated sick leave from another Tennessee public school district may be transferred to LCS. The certified employee should request that the previous school district submit a notarized letter to Human Resources indicating the number of accrued days or hours.

ANNUAL LEAVE

Only twelve-month classified and certified employees receive ten (10) vacation/annual days each year.

FMLA LEAVE

Employees are eligible to take up to twelve (12) weeks of unpaid leave through the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) for the birth or adoption of a child or the care of yourself, a child, spouse, or parent who has a serious health condition. To qualify for FMLA, an employee must have been employed by the school district for at least twelve (12) months. At a minimum, he/she must work a total of 1,250 hours over the previous twelve (12) month period. Medical documentation shall be required for approval. Employees are to notify Human Resources prior to taking leave and upon returning to work to avoid accumulating additional leave days. More information concerning FMLA may be found in [Policy 5.305](#).

OTHER LEAVE

Provisions for other types of employee leave are addressed in the [LCS Board Policy Manual, Section 5](#).

COMPENSATION

DIRECT DEPOSIT

LCS pays its employees via automatic electronic disbursement. All pay stubs are provided electronically through [My Benefits Channel website](#). Instructions for setting up an employee account is provided by the Human Resources department. All new employees must enroll in direct deposit by utilizing a regular bank account or a loadable debit card. If employees desire to change banking or payroll information, they should contact HR and schedule a meeting time or phone call. Communication through an employee's **My Benefits Channel** account is safe and secured with encryption. Sensitive employee information should never be sent through personal or work email. Human Resources or district staff will never request employee banking account, social security number, or other personal information via email or text.

SALARY SCHEDULES

The base salary schedule for certified employees is published on the LCS website. Annual salary is determined by the pay schedule and is based on position, relevant education, and applicable experience. Supplements may be provided for coaching and/or additional responsibilities. Salary verification letters will be distributed to certified employees in September after receipt of the August payroll. [Policy 5.110](#)

PAY PERIODS

Regular monthly payroll checks are deposited on the 28th of each month, or the last working day prior to the 28th of each month. Bus drivers are paid twice monthly for 12 months. Food service personnel are paid twice monthly during the months worked. Certified employees and classified educational assistants who work 10 months will have their annual salary paid over 12 months. Payroll may be paid early if a payroll occurs during an extended break or holiday.

PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS

Deductions that are normally withheld from an employee's pay include Social Security (FICA), Medicare, federal income taxes, retirement, insurance premiums and other optional items. Most payroll deductions are prorated over 12 months. Some optional products may be deducted over 10 months. Changes to payroll deduction and direct deposit must be submitted to the Payroll department by the close of business on the 5th day of the month to be reflected in the following paycheck.

OVERTIME AUTHORIZATION

LCS strongly discourages overtime work by classified employees. Employees may not work overtime without **prior** written approval of their supervisor. Principals and supervisors will monitor employees' work hours and adjust daily schedules to prevent employees from working more than forty (40) hours per week. If it is determined by the immediate supervisor that compensatory time cannot be granted or without severe disruption of the operation of the facility, overtime may be authorized and paid at time and one-half (1 ½) for all hours physically worked in excess of forty (40) in a week. Accurate and complete time sheets of actual hours worked each week will be signed by the employee and supervisor and submitted to the payroll department. [Policy 5.602](#)

COMPENSATORY TIME

In lieu of overtime compensation, full-time classified employees may receive compensatory time off at a rate of one and one-half (1 ½) hours for one hour of overtime worked. An employee may not be granted compensatory time without prior written approval from the supervisor and only when absolutely necessary. [Policy 5.602](#)

WORK SCHEDULE

The workday for full-time licensed and professional staff will be a minimum of seven hours and one-half (7 ½) hours daily and will continue until professional responsibilities to the student and the school are completed. Administrative meetings, curriculum development, student supervision, assigned duties, parent conferences, group or individual planning, and extra-curricular activities may require hours beyond the stated minimum. Teachers shall be allotted a planning period of not less than two and one-half (2 ½) hours each week for lesson planning, preparation for effective teaching, and instructional collaboration.

ABSENCE REPORTING

The employee shall notify the supervisor or school designee as soon as it has been determined that he/she will be absent. All substitute teachers will be selected from a list approved by the Director of Human Resources, supervisors, and/or principals. Employees must obtain prior approval from the principal and the superintendent in order to miss any scheduled in-service and professional development days. All classified and certified employees who miss work, regardless if substitute is used or not, are required to complete and submit an ***Affidavit of Absence***.

ADJUSTMENTS TO PAY

Paychecks will be adjusted for employees who take leave without pay or exceed available leave days. In order to determine the pay adjustment, the annual salary is divided by the number of contracted days to determine the value of a day. This daily pay rate is multiplied by the number of days not covered by accumulated leave. The resulting amount is the cost of the absences. Teachers and educational assistants are paid for 200 days spread over 12 months. Employees are given the benefit of applicable holiday/vacation days that are built into the 200-day calendar. The total amount owed to the district is subtracted from the employee's pay. An employee who has exhausted all leave days available should expect a reduction in pay at any time during the school year. Settlement calculations and pay adjustments usually occur during the months of March through July.

For employees who are hired after the regular school year begins, a similar adjustment may be necessary. Ten-month employees paid over 12 months may receive a decrease in pay during the months of June and July. The adjustment will depend on the total number of days worked during the school year.

PAY INCREASES FOR ADDITIONAL DEGREES

To add a degree to a license, the educator must:

1. Complete a transaction in [TNCompass](#);
2. Ensure that the institution of higher education has submitted all official transcripts of all credits earned with the confirmation date of the degree to [state licensing](#) either electronically or mailed to 710 James Robertson Parkway, 12th Floor, Nashville, TN 37243. Transcripts uploaded into TNCompass by the educator will not be accepted; **and**
3. Notify the Director of Finance once the degree has been added and validated in TNCompass.

EMPLOYEE WELFARE

CONTACT INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

It is the employee's responsibility to keep his/her address and contact information current in order to be quickly informed of school closings, emergencies and other important information. Utilizing the LCS mobile app is an excellent tool to obtain the latest news across the district and within each school.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

From time to time it is necessary to cancel classes across the school district due to poor road or hazardous conditions that have been caused by inclement weather such as snow. The Superintendent of Schools is the only person who may make the decision to close school. As soon as the decision to close schools is made, the Superintendent will use all means available to inform the public including news media, e-mail, LCS mobile app, and/or mass telephone notification. When all schools in the district are closed, supervisors within each department or school will provide instruction about required attendance and work hours of specific personnel. If school is not in session or is dismissed early due to inclement weather, all scheduled activities in which students are involved will generally be postponed or cancelled. [Policy 1.8011](#)

EMERGENCY/CRISIS MANAGEMENT

At the beginning of each school year, the principal or supervisor of each school will provide annual training in the crisis management procedures for all employees. Crisis management plans will be in place in case of a crisis, including but not limited to, suicide, shooting, natural disaster, and death of a student, parent or faculty member. In the event of a crisis, the principal shall notify the Superintendent and any necessary emergency services. [Policy 3.203](#)

SAFETY

All staff members should report current and potential hazards to the immediate supervisor. The principal shall implement procedures for keeping school facilities safe and conducting emergency drills as required by law. Only persons with lawful and valid business with the school may enter onto the grounds or into the buildings. Staff members shall report any suspicious activity on the school premises or any person without a valid visitor's pass. *Per state law, schools must ensure that all exterior doors leading into a school building are locked at all times and access to school buildings is limited to the school's primary entrance, unless otherwise determined by school policy.*

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Accident/Injury reporting for all employees is managed at the employee's work location and through Human Resources. The Tennessee Worker's Compensation statute changed in July 1, 2014 and requires timely submission of the **First Report of Injury C-20 Form** within 24 hours. Employees experiencing a work-related accident/injury should report the situation to the immediate supervisor and complete the C-20 form whether or not medical attention is required. In conjunction with the First Report of Injury, an **Employee Accident Report** form is also required. If medical treatment outside of the school nurse is needed, a **Panel of Physicians C-42G Form** must be completed before an appointment can be established. Contact Human Resources for the *Panel of Physicians*. Employees are to keep Human Resources informed of their status throughout the process including the time away from work. The federal government will impose penalties for non-compliance of the Worker's Compensation program, so it is imperative that employees familiarize themselves with the procedures and form requirements. All forms associated with Worker's Compensation are located on mybenefitschannel.com.

REQUIRED TRAINING

All employees will receive in-service training and education regarding HIV/AIDS and blood-borne pathogens, including universal precautions on handling blood and other body fluids, to prevent and manage exposure in the workplace. Also, employees must participate in suicide prevention training annually along with any other training required for their respective position. All employees will be trained at the beginning of each school year. [Policies 5.401, 5.402](#)

SICK LEAVE BANK

Certified employees who elect to become members of the Sick Leave Bank shall donate two days of their own sick leave. Participants who have exhausted all of their own leave may apply to utilize a maximum of 20 days annually from the bank. Applications must be submitted to Human Resources and approved by a board-appointed committee. Days contributed stay with the bank regardless of the employee's employment status. [Policy 5.3021](#). Currently no sick leave bank exists for classified employees due to the lack of participation.

HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION

LCS does not discriminate in its programs or employment practices nor does it tolerate harassment for any reason including, but not limited to, harassment on the basis of age, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, religion, race, color, genetics, veteran status or any other federally-identified protected area. Employees shall be provided a work environment free from discrimination and harassment. It is a violation of board policy for any employee or student to discriminate against or harass an employee through disparaging conduct or communication that is sexual, racial, ethnic or religious in nature. Alleged victims of sexual, racial, ethnic and religious discrimination/harassment should report the incident immediately to their supervisor, Federal Rights Coordinator or the Superintendent/Assistant Superintendent. Allegations of discrimination/harassment will be fully investigated. [Policy 5.500](#)

GRIEVANCES AND COMPLAINTS

Differences of opinion may arise in the course of employment and will be resolved as quickly as possible and at the lowest supervisory level. If an employee has a complaint or grievance, he/she must first consult the administrative or supervisory personnel to whom he/she is responsible. If a satisfactory resolution cannot be reached, the staff member may discuss the matter with the next level of supervision up to and including the Superintendent. [Policy 5.501](#)

PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY

While coverage for no-fault situations is provided by the district's liability insurance, teachers are encouraged to discuss liability insurance with the issuer of individual homeowner's policies or liability insurance offered by professional organizations.

TENURE

Certified employees may be granted tenure once they have met all criteria specified by state statute. [Policy 5.117](#)

SEPARATION PROCEDURES

RESIGNATION

Classified personnel shall give the immediate supervisor written notice of resignation at least two (2) weeks or ten (10) working days in advance of the effective date of voluntary termination. The immediate supervisor shall forward copies of the written notice and **Separation Record** on the day received to the Human Resources Department. [Policy 5.202](#)

Certified personnel shall give the Superintendent notice of resignation at least thirty (30) days before the effective date of the resignation. A teacher who fails to give such notice may be considered in breach of the employment agreement. Such a breach may lead to a complaint being filed with the Commissioner and a request to suspend the teacher's certificate. Please see [Policy 5.201](#) for full details and procedures.

DISMISSAL OR NON-RENEWAL

Non-tenured teachers are subject to the same contractual rights as tenured teachers except that they have no claim to continuing employment at the end of the school year. The district is under no obligation to re-employ non-tenured teachers at the end of the contract year. Written notice of non-renewal shall be sent to the employee by registered mail or overnight carrier, or by email within five (5) business days following the last instructional day of the school year. All classified employees are employed at the will of the Superintendent and/or Principal. Classified employees may be dismissed during the contract year for any lawful reason. [Policy 5.200, 5.201, 5.202](#)

SUSPENSION

The Superintendent may suspend an employee at any time when deemed necessary. Before an employee is suspended she/he shall be: (1) provided with reasons for the suspension; (2) given an opportunity to respond; and (3) given a written decision of the suspension. Employees shall be suspended without pay. If or when reinstated, the employee shall be paid full salary for the period of suspension, unless the suspension without pay is deemed to be an appropriate penalty. [Policy 5.200, 5.201, 5.202](#)

RETIREMENT

Employees eligible for retirement benefits may elect to retire at any age according to the provisions of the retirement system. District office personnel shall assist employees in securing retirement benefits. However, it shall be the responsibility of the retiring employee to provide verification of eligibility from TCRS and file for benefits. [Policy 5.201](#)

EXIT CONFERENCE

All employees are required to participate in an exit conference with the supervisor and complete an **Exit Survey** when ending employment with LCS. During the exit conference, the employee shall return any district/school property, including but not limited to keys, laptop computer and ID badge. [Policy 5.203](#)

FINAL PAY SETTLEMENT

A final pay calculation will be conducted for all employees leaving the district who are not 12-month employees. For more detailed information, contact the Director of Finance.

EMPLOYEE CONDUCT

JOB RESPONSIBILITIES

The employee's immediate supervisor or principal shall establish and assign specific job responsibilities and expectations.

WORK PERFORMANCE

Conduct at work must always be professional, whether dealing with the public, coworkers, supervisors, students or parents. Misconduct and/or insubordination are grounds for disciplinary action. The level of disciplinary action is at the discretion of the supervisor and depends upon the seriousness of the offense and other relevant information. If work performance falls below acceptable standards, the supervisor will utilize performance review, supervisory counseling, and if necessary, a corrective action plan (CAP), to improve this deficiency. In some instances, a disciplinary action may be taken.

OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

Employees shall be permitted to hold employment outside the school district so long as such activities do not occur during the workday, interfere with regularly scheduled or assigned duties, or reflect unfavorably on the school district.

IDENTIFICATION BADGE

Each employee will be issued a district ID badge. The badge should be worn at all times while on district property or while on official duty.

DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE

No LCS employee will be allowed to work under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs, nor possess or partake of such during work hours. Furthermore, no LCS employee will be allowed to work under the influence of prescribed or other lawfully obtained drugs when the taking of these drugs impairs the employee's ability to perform his/her job. Appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination, will be taken for those employees not in compliance with [Policy 1.804](#) and [Policy 5.403](#).

CRIMINAL ARRESTS

All employees shall report being arrested or charged with any criminal offense to their immediate supervisor or principal within 48 hours of the offense. The supervisor/principal shall report the offense to the Superintendent.

SMOKING AND TOBACCO USE

All uses of tobacco and tobacco products, including smokeless tobacco, vapor products and associated paraphernalia are prohibited in all district buildings and vehicles that are owned or operated by the district. Adult staff members may be permitted to smoke outdoors, but not within one-hundred feet of any building and not in the presence of children or students. District employees are not permitted to use

tobacco products, including smokeless tobacco and electronic cigarettes/vapor products, while they are participants in any class or activity in which they represent the school district. Further, in the interest of student and staff safety, employees may not possess electronic cigarettes/vapor products and associated paraphernalia in district buildings and vehicles, and at any school-sponsored activity. [Policy 1.803](#)

USE OF PERSONAL VEHICLES

Employees and volunteer workers (including parents) must be authorized by school and district administration to transport students in their personal vehicles. An up-to-date **Private Vehicle Use Authorization** must be completed and kept on file at the school and the Superintendent's office along with a verification of adequate liability insurance coverage on the vehicle being used. The employee/volunteer worker must acknowledge that his/her liability insurance is the primary coverage in the event of a liability claim. Written parental permission must be obtained before any employee or authorized volunteer may transport students. No student shall be sent on school errands with his or her automobile, an employee's automobile, or a district-owned automobile. [Policy 3.404](#)

DRESS AND GROOMING

All employees are expected to maintain a professional standard of dress and grooming that reflects good taste. LCS employees should dress appropriately for their office or working conditions. Employees must be well groomed and neatly dressed in appropriate attire. Specific dress codes may be established for some departments.

EQUIPMENT

All employees have an obligation and responsibility to conserve and protect property belonging to the district. Improper use and maintenance of equipment can lead to unnecessary losses in time and money. When not in use, equipment should be stored according to administrative directives. Employees must immediately notify their supervisor when district property has been lost, stolen or damaged. Attempting to repair equipment could cause further harm and void any existing warranties. In cases of negligence, employees shall be held liable for damages of district property occurring while in the employee's possession or issued to him/her. District/school equipment, keys and other items must be returned upon separation. [Policy 3.300](#)

ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS

An employee may not accept, directly or indirectly, any gift, money, gratuity, or favor of any kind from anyone other than the school district that is intended to influence an action or judgment in executing employee responsibilities. Employees may accept gifts of token value from students. However, employees are prohibited from accepting items of material value from individuals or companies doing business with the school district except in the case of minor items that are generally distributed as part of the company's public relations. [Policy 5.605](#)

MEDIA RELATIONS

LCS employees may not speak on behalf of the school or school district to the media without express approval of the supervisor, principal and/or superintendent.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

It is important that employees' use of networking websites does not damage the reputation of the Lauderdale County School District, its employees, its students or their families. Employees shall exercise care in setting appropriate boundaries between their personal and public online behavior, understanding what is private in the digital world is easily searchable, shareable, and often has the possibility of becoming public, even without their knowledge or consent.

Employees should adhere to these regulations:

1. Employees shall not utilize or post to their personal social media accounts or Internet sites while supervising students or performing any assigned duty, including but not limited to instruction, recess, planning time, and early/late duties.
2. Employees who desire to use social media as an enhancement to their instructional or school-based responsibilities must obtain written authorization from both the principal and district technology supervisor and register/maintain the account according to district procedures.
3. Employees are prohibited from engaging in private/personal messaging exchanges with students. Any online conversations or electronic communication between an employee and student shall be carried out via school email or through a district-approved, secure messaging service/site under the condition that the parent/guardian receives the same exchange or notification simultaneously. Any exception to this provision may be granted on a case-by-case basis by the principal or supervisor.
4. As a protection, the Board advises employees to refrain from students being "friends" or "followers" on their personal social media sites. The Board advises that employees not accept students as friends or initiate friendships with students (relatives excluded) through their personal social networking sites.
5. Posts involving students, including photos, videos, news about individual students, and displays of student work, are not allowed on an employee's personal social media sites.
6. Employees shall immediately remove any Internet postings, public or private, that the District determines are inappropriate or unprofessional, including but not limited to Internet postings that mention a student by name or that cast students unfavorably.
7. If an employee's Internet postings or profiles identify him/her as a representative of the Lauderdale County School District, employees must make it clear that any views expressed are the employee's alone, and do not necessarily reflect those of the district.
8. All data including electronic mail communications stored or transmitted on school district computers shall be monitored. Employees should have no expectation of privacy with regard to such data. Email correspondence may be subject to public inspection under the public records law.

More details concerning the use of electronic communications are found in the following LCS Board Policies:

[Policy 1.805](#) – Use of Electronic Mail

[Policy 4.406](#) – Use of the Internet

[Policy 4.4061](#) – Employee Internet Postings

[Policy 4.407](#) – Web Pages

CONFIDENTIALITY

LCS employees often find themselves privy to confidential education records. Such confidential information, or information reasonably related to confidential records, shall never be shared or posted on the Internet. An employee shall not disclose any confidential information of the district or confidential information obtained during the course of his/her employment, about any individuals or organizations, including students and/or their families.

TRAVEL

All travel must be authorized in advance by the appropriate supervisor to qualify for reimbursement. To obtain reimbursement, a **Travel Report** along with any required receipts must be submitted to the Director of Finance. [Policy 2.804](#)

PURCHASES

Purchases made by anyone not authorized by the appropriate supervisor shall become the personal responsibility of the individual making the purchase. The school district will not be responsible for payment of any unauthorized purchases. No purchase shall be made until an approved purchase order is issued by the school or district. [Policy 2.804, 2.808](#)

INVENTORIES

Employees are responsible for keeping accurate and current inventories of all district property under their care. Textbook, equipment and supplies inventories shall be maintained by the employee with duplicate copies submitted to the appropriate supervisor(s) at the end of each school year. [Policy 2.702](#)

EXPECTATIONS FOR INSTRUCTIONAL AND SUPPORT STAFF

Below are the district expectations set forth by Lauderdale County Schools (LCS). These expectations are minimum requirements. Each school may have additional expectations over and above those listed below. Teachers and educational assistants should refer to procedures provided by the building principal for more specific guidelines applicable to each school.

District Calendar – The district calendar is set prior to each school year. In-service, district-wide Professional Development Days, and Family/Teacher Conferences appear on the district calendar and attendance by teachers and school staff is mandatory. The Superintendent must approve any absences from In-service, district-wide Professional Development, and Family/Teacher Conferences. [Policy 1.800](#)
[Policy 5.113](#)

In-Service Days – Employees are required to complete five (5) scheduled in-service days annually as specified by state law. Employees who miss in-service days must make up any required trainings that they missed on those days. In addition to making up mandated trainings, employees must claim absences as personal leave or leave without pay. [Policy 5.113](#)

Professional Development Days – The district strives to incorporate embedded professional development within the school day to reduce the demands on employee personal time. Three professional development days are provided throughout the year for administrators, teachers and paraprofessionals to collaboratively work together.

Family/Teacher Conferences – Family/Teacher Conferences are scheduled twice yearly to discuss students' academic progress and individual needs. Teachers should be prepared with documentation of current/accurate grades, behavior, and student work samples to support a productive conversation.

Attendance – Personal and family illness and other emergencies arise. However, research indicates that teacher attendance patterns have significant impact on student achievement. While student attendance impacts an individual student, teacher attendance impacts all students assigned to a teacher. Attendance to scheduled faculty/staff meetings and/or any other routine meetings of the like will be required unless otherwise approved through the direct supervisor.

Extra Duties – Teachers will be required to serve in many additional capacities, which may include, but not limited to, bus duty, hall duty, extra-curricular activities, parent-teacher organizations, and gate duties. Fulfilling such duties enables the teacher to contribute to the total success of the school.

Teacher Code of Ethics – Educators must adhere to the *Code of Ethics* (pages 27-29) as mandated by state statute. The highest degree of ethical conduct must be maintained as specified in the educator's obligations to students and to the education profession. Any unethical employee conduct or failure to report colleague misconduct may result in disciplinary action.

Mandated Trainings – Annual verification of training in blood borne pathogens, bullying/harassment, child abuse reporting, suicide prevention, AED use, and concussion/sudden cardiac arrest training (where applicable) is required. Time for annual training is usually scheduled during in-service days. [Policies 6.409, 6.413, 6.414, 6.415, 6.3041](#)

Test Security – All employees are expected to adhere to state and local test security mandates. State test security procedures apply to all locally developed assessments as well as state mandated assessments. Annual training by district-authorized person(s) is required for all instructional personnel. In addition, instructional personnel will sign an annual agreement to acknowledge training and to honor all testing rules and regulations. [Policy 4.701](#)

Teacher Licensing – Certified personnel are expected to maintain proper licensing for their assigned position. Licensing/certification is the responsibility of the individual educator. More information concerning licensing may be obtained at the [state licensing website](#) or through a district instructional supervisor.

Professional Development Points (PDP) - Certified personnel are required to accrue Professional Development Points (PDP) for license renewal. Teachers must obtain prior written approval from the appropriate district administrator/supervisor for activities, events or trainings for which personnel desire to earn PD points. Points will not be granted for scheduled district professional development days or other professional development delivered during the school day.

Name Changes – If an employee has a name change, he/she should follow the procedures in TNCompass to change his/her name with the TDOE and inform HR/payroll immediately. It is the responsibility of the employee to maintain the same name with the district office (HR and payroll) and state licensing. Once the name change is complete, the employee must file a new W-4 form with the HR department.

Professional Dress – LCS recognizes that teachers are role models for the students. The manner in which teachers present themselves may be reflected in the conduct of the students and the respect given to teachers, staff, and the school district within the community. Employees are expected to present

themselves in a professional manner through appropriate dress and grooming. Staff members must appear neat, clean, and appropriately dressed. Clothing must be non-distracting in style, length and fit.

[Policy 5.6001](#)

Lesson Plans – All teachers are required to submit weekly lesson plans using the district-approved *Lesson Plan Template* to a designated administrator in each school. [Policy 4.200](#)

Substitute Folder – Each teacher is expected to provide a clearly marked substitute folder or notebook. Appropriate plans and materials for any absence from the instructional day should be included. The substitute folder should be visible and accessible upon arrival of the substitute or delivered by the beginning of the school day. Items to be included in the folder: seating chart, attendance sheet/roster, procedure for submitting attendance, bell schedule, classroom management procedures, location of hall passes, safety procedures (fire, lock-down, inclement weather, etc.), name of fellow teachers for support and their location, crucial student information (health needs), and location of emergency lesson plans.

Emergency Lesson Plans – Emergency plans should be submitted according to individual school procedures. Emergency plans should reference or include all required documents found in the substitute folder and two days of generic lesson plans and materials that would be appropriate throughout the year. Emergency plans are only used for unforeseen events and are not to be used in lieu of a substitute folder.

Positive Behavior Support – Response to Instruction and Intervention-Behavior (RTI²-B) is an evidence-based approach for meeting the behavioral and social needs of all students. The district RTI²-B initiative is known as ROAR and it promotes Responsibility, Optimism, Accountability and Respect. Desired behaviors and expectations are directly taught and modeled. Students receive positive feedback for these behaviors when observed in specific areas, including the classroom, playground, cafeteria, hallway, restroom, and bus. All staff members are expected to follow their school's ROAR implementation plan. ROAR requires a commitment from all stakeholders (educators, support staff, parents, peers and community) to teach and reinforce positive behavior. This team effort will help students build the social skills and behavioral habits needed to be successful.

Classroom Management – Teachers should develop, communicate, and implement appropriate classroom management techniques that are conducive to student learning. Classroom rules and procedures are vital parts in establishing effective classroom management. Teachers should communicate their classroom rules and procedures in a positive, explicit manner as to be understood by students and parents. Classroom rules and procedures should be aligned with the district's ROAR initiative at the school, team, and /or grade level.

Procedures are simply methods or processes for how things are to be done within the classroom to maintain appropriate discipline and student behavior. Effective teachers spend substantial time the first weeks of the school year introducing, teaching, modeling, and practicing ROAR procedures until they become routine. Teachers should establish procedures for students entering the classroom, getting the teacher's attention, turning in work, completing make-up work, exiting the classroom, and any other regular class activity.

Student Supervision – Supervision of students is a critical component of school safety. Students are the legal responsibility of the teacher. ***Leaving students unattended constitutes negligence.***

Student Dress Code – All certified and classified personnel will be responsible for consistently enforcing the Dress Code policy, and reporting violations of the dress code to the site administrator/designee. [Policy 6.310](#)

Student Use of Equipment – Teachers and educational assistants must constantly monitor students utilizing computers and classroom equipment to prevent damage/abuse and misuse.

Communication - Educating students is a team effort involving the student, parents and family members, teachers, and administrators. Open communication is the key to success. Parents need to know that the teacher is willing to talk, listen, and work cooperatively with them. It is important to establish contact as early as possible in the school year and become acquainted with students' parents. Teachers should make an initial contact with the family by either calling or sending an introduction letter during the first few days of school. Frequent contact will improve the effectiveness of the message. Positive ways to communicate include phone calls, conferences, written notes, newsletters and emails. [Policy 4.5021](#)

Documentation – The teacher shall establish a method to document all communications with parents and family members, including praise and positive progress/comments and steps taken to correct disruptive behavior. Student's name, date, behavior description, and actions taken by the teacher should be included. Examples of documentation may include, but not limited to, copies of notes, phone call logs, emails, conference notes involving students and/or parents. Classroom rules and procedures should be simple and aligned with those of the school, team, and grade level.

Record Keeping – Teachers are held accountable for keeping an accurate account of student performance and attendance. All teachers must maintain grades and attendance records in the district's student information system. Each teacher must adhere to deadlines for submission of attendance and grades per the school administrator's requirements. All personnel utilizing the system must be trained via the Director of Data and Accountability or designee. Student Information System (SIS) users and teachers must follow confidentiality and security measures at all times. No students may be allowed to enter grades, access grade book or acquire a teacher's pass code for any reason. The Director of Data and Accountability must be notified immediately if there has been a breach of security so that account information can be changed. Student work should be graded and recorded promptly. These records are legal documents; therefore, the online grade book should be kept up-to-date at all times. Teachers are responsible for maintaining hard copy records of all student grades and attendance for auditing purposes. Teachers are fully accountable for attendance and grade records for the students they teach.

Confidentiality – Records, files, documents and other materials, which contain information related to a student fall under confidentiality laws. Confidentiality laws include FERPA, IDEA, HIPPA, and local board policies.

IEP Information – In collaboration with and support of special education staff, classroom teachers are responsible for reviewing and implementing the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) of each student served.

504 Plans – Similar to an IEP, a 504 Plan helps a child with special health care needs to fully participate in school. The 504 Plan is generally used for students not eligible for special education services. A 504 Plan specifies accommodations related to a child's disability to participate in the general classroom setting and educational programs.

Bullying/Harassment/Discrimination – A safe, civil and supportive environment is necessary for high academic achievement and positive social development. In order to maintain such an environment, any act of bullying, discrimination, harassment, or any other victimization of students and employees is prohibited. Victims of such offenses shall report incidents immediately to a teacher, counselor, social worker or building administrator. Allegations of conduct that may meet the definition of bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, discrimination, intimidation, and/or hazing that are conveyed to or witnessed by any staff member must be reported to the principal/designee immediately as required by [Policy 6.304](#). All other members of the school community, including students, parents, family members, volunteers and visitors are encouraged to report any act that may be a violation of this policy. The principal and/or his designee shall be responsible for investigating and resolving complaints. Allegations of sexual harassment should be reported to the Title IX Coordinator as required by [Policy 6.3041](#).

Child Abuse Reporting – Employees are required by law to report any suspected child abuse to the Child Abuse Hotline 1-877-237-0004 and law enforcement. Also, the Child Abuse Coordinator/Principal should be notified of the report. More information is located on the state’s [child abuse website](#). [Policy 6.409](#)

Student Illness – Students who self-report illness at school or who are observed to be ill should be referred to the school nurse. The teacher must complete a sick form and send with the student. The nurse will assess the student and determine the appropriate course of action. A student may be sent home or may be returned to the classroom. No student is to be sent home without documentation by the school nurse. If a school nurse is not available, the school administration should be consulted.

Accidents – Incidents that involve injuries of students or faculty/staff/adults must be reported to the school administration immediately, and a legible and complete written report filed with the school administration and the school nurse. Students injured at school MUST be seen by the school nurse even if at dismissal time. The school nurse will determine the extent of injury and notify the parent(s). If a nurse is not available, a school administrator should handle the situation. [Policy 6.410](#)

Student Medication – Instructional staff may not administer prescription or nonprescription medication to students. ONLY certified medical personnel or trained staff may administer prescription or nonprescription medication. In some instances, with written parental consent, special arrangements for administering medication may be necessary.

Multimedia Use – All multimedia used in the classroom must either be provided by the school (district-sponsored electronic links, library materials, videos, etc.) or have the prior written approval of the principal. A **Multimedia Approval Form** must be submitted to and approved by the building principal before students may view a media selection. Media use with students in the classroom MUST be of educational value and correspond to the curriculum. [Policy 4.408](#)

Guest Speakers – Teachers are encouraged to use community and business resources such as guest speakers to enhance classroom instruction. Prior written approval of the building principal is required using the **Speaker Approval Form**. [Policy 4.500](#)

Field Trips – Field trips should reflect educational experiences tied to relevant curriculum. With the building principal’s consent, all field trips requests must complete the online **Field Trip Request Form** located on the district’s website. The request must be submitted a minimum of 15 school days in advance and via the district’s network. The field trip organizer will follow the district field trip procedures and consult with the school bookkeeper about costs of bus driver fees, fuel, and other related expenses. Three days prior to the scheduled trip, the bus reservation should be verified with the transportation department (731) 635-7872. [Policy 4.302](#)

Parent Permission – A signed **Parent Permission Form** is required from all students participating in a field trip. One set of the permission forms should be in possession of supervising personnel on the field trip and duplicate copies should remain with the principal for access in the case of an emergency.

Volunteers – To work with or transport students, volunteers (including parents) must submit an application for a background check to the school and be approved by the district. [Policy 4.501](#)

Fundraisers – A school-sponsored fundraiser is considered to be any activity conducted by the school or a school-based organization that is intended to generate a profit. **All fundraisers require the approval of the Superintendent.** The number of fundraisers by a given organization should be limited. All monies received must be receipted and deposited in the appropriate school account. All accounts are subject to the regulations and auditing under the Tennessee Internal School Uniform Accounting Policy. [Policy 6.701](#)

After School Safety – Occasionally employees may choose to be in a building or on campus beyond a normal working day. Employees who choose to work after hours (later than 5:00pm) on school days, weekends, or holidays must notify their supervisor in advance. Employees who work after hours should keep the building and/or classroom locked and be aware of their surroundings at all times. Working with co-workers rather than alone is strongly recommended. Employees should choose well-lit parking spots that are closest to the entrance that will be used to exit the building and vacate the premises no later than 10:00pm. Any site-specific procedures designated by the supervisor/principal about working after hours should be followed, including campus access and security.

Staff Rights & Responsibilities – In fulfilling any citizenship rights and responsibilities, employees shall give proper consideration to the educational welfare of students and ensure that no conflict exists with their actual duties. Educators have the responsibility to make themselves familiar with and abide by, the laws of the state as these affect their work, the policies of the board and the procedures designed to implement them. [Policy 5.600](#)

Acknowledgment of Board Policies – All personnel are required to sign the **LCS Acceptable Use Agreement** (AUP) for computer use and an annual **Acknowledgement of LCS Policies and Procedures**.

TEACHER CODE OF ETHICS

Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-5-1002 **Legislative findings**

The general assembly finds and declares that:

- (1)** An educator, believing in the worth and dignity of each human being, recognizes the supreme importance of the pursuit of truth, devotion to excellence, and the nurture of democratic principles. Essential to these goals is the protection of freedom to learn and to teach and the guarantee of equal educational opportunity for all. An educator accepts the responsibility to adhere to the highest ethical standards; and
- (2)** An educator recognizes the magnitude of the responsibility inherent in the teaching process. The desire for the respect and confidence of one's colleagues, of students, of parents and of the members of the community provides the incentive to attain and maintain the highest possible degree of ethical conduct.
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Teacher Code of Ethics, continued

Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-5-1003

Educator's obligations to students

- (a)** An educator shall strive to help each student realize the student's potential as a worthy and effective member of society. An educator therefore works to stimulate the spirit of inquiry, the acquisition of knowledge and understanding, and the thoughtful formulation of worthy goals.
- (b)** In fulfillment of this obligation to the student, an educator shall:
- (1)** Abide by all applicable federal and state laws;
 - (2)** Not unreasonably restrain the student from independent action in the pursuit of learning;
 - (3)** Provide the student with professional education services in a nondiscriminatory manner and in consonance with accepted best practices known to the educator;
 - (4)** Respect the constitutional rights of the student;
 - (5)** Not unreasonably deny the student access to varying points of view;
 - (6)** Not deliberately suppress or distort subject matter relevant to the student's progress;
 - (7)** Make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to learning or to health and safety;
 - (8)** Make reasonable effort to protect the emotional well-being of the student;
 - (9)** Not intentionally expose the student to embarrassment or disparagement;
 - (10)** Not on the basis of race; color; creed; disability; sex; national origin; marital status; political or religious beliefs; family, social, or cultural background; or sexual orientation, unfairly:
 - (A)** Exclude the student from participation in any program;
 - (B)** Deny benefits to the student; or
 - (C)** Grant any advantage to the student;
 - (11)** Not use the educator's professional relationship with the student for private advantage;
 - (12)** Not disclose information about the student obtained in the course of the educator's professional service, unless disclosure of the information is permitted, serves a compelling professional purpose, or is required by law;
 - (13)** Not knowingly make false or malicious statements about students or colleagues;
 - (14)** Ensure interactions with the student take place in transparent and appropriate settings;
 - (15)** Not engage in any sexually related behavior with the student, whether verbal, written, physical, or electronic, with or without the student's consent. Sexually related behavior includes, but is not limited to, behaviors such as making sexual jokes or sexual remarks; engaging in sexual kidding, sexual teasing, or sexual innuendo; pressuring the student for dates or sexual favors; engaging in inappropriate physical touching, groping, or grabbing; kissing; rape; threatening physical harm; and committing sexual assault;
 - (16)** Not furnish alcohol or illegal or unauthorized drugs to the student;
 - (17)** Strive to prevent the use of alcohol or illegal or unauthorized drugs by the student when the student is under the educator's supervision on school or LEA premises, during school activities, or in any private setting;
 - (18)** Refrain from the use of alcohol while on school or LEA premises or during a school activity at which students are present; and
 - (19)** Maintain a professional approach with the student at all times.
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Teacher Code of Ethics, continued

Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-5-1004
Educator's obligations to the education profession

- (a) The education profession is vested by the public with a trust and responsibility requiring the highest ideals of professional service. In the belief that the quality of the services of the education profession directly influences the nation and its citizens, the educator shall exert every effort to raise professional standards, to promote a climate that encourages the exercise of professional judgment, to achieve conditions which attract persons worthy of the trust to careers in education, and to assist in preventing the practice of the profession by unqualified persons.
- (b) In fulfillment of this obligation to the profession, an educator shall not:
- (1) Deliberately make a false statement or fail to disclose a material fact related to competency and qualifications in an application for a professional position;
 - (2) Misrepresent the educator's professional qualifications;
 - (3) Assist entry into the profession of a person known to be unqualified in respect to character, education, or other relevant attribute;
 - (4) Knowingly make a false statement concerning the qualifications of a candidate for a professional position;
 - (5) Assist a noneducator in the unauthorized practice of teaching;
 - (6) Disclose information about colleagues obtained in the course of professional service unless the disclosure serves a compelling professional purpose or is required by law;
 - (7) Knowingly make false or malicious statements about a colleague;
 - (8) Accept any gratuity, gift, or favor that might impair or appear to influence professional decisions or actions; and
 - (9) Use illegal or unauthorized drugs.
- (c) In fulfillment of this obligation to the profession, educators shall:
- (1) Administer state-mandated assessments fairly and ethically; and
 - (2) Conduct themselves in a manner that preserves the dignity and integrity of the education profession.
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Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-5-1006
Report of breach of teacher code of ethics -- Failure to report

- (a) An educator who has personal knowledge of a breach by another educator of the teacher code of ethics prescribed in §§ 49-5-1003 and 49-5-1004 shall report the breach to the educator's immediate supervisor, director of schools, or local board of education within thirty (30) days of discovering the breach.
- (b) Failure to report a breach of the teacher code of ethics, or to file a report of any criminal activity or other misconduct that is required by federal or state law, is a breach of the teacher code of ethics.
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**Policies and Procedures
Employee Acknowledgment
2024 – 2025**

My signature and initials below verify that I have been advised of my professional responsibility to familiarize myself with the contents of the **Employee Handbook** for Lauderdale County Schools (LCS). I understand that this information is available by accessing the LCS website. If I have any questions regarding the information provided in the handbook, I should consult the Human Resources Department or the appropriate principal/supervisor.

I acknowledge that LCS policies and procedures are subject to change at any time. All such changes will be communicated through official notices, and I understand that any revisions may supersede, modify or eliminate existing policies and/or procedures. Only the elected members of the Lauderdale County Board of Education have the ability to adopt any revisions to policies, and only the Superintendent may authorize changes to the Employee Handbook and administrative procedures.

I acknowledge that the **Employee Handbook** is neither a contract of employment nor a legal document. Rather, it is a guide and summary of policies and procedures important to LCS employees. I understand that it is my responsibility to read and comply with the policies and procedures contained in the most recent handbook and any revisions made to it. Furthermore, I acknowledge that I must participate in **annual mandatory trainings as specified by local/state board policy and state/federal laws**.

Please read and initial each statement:

1. _____ I have received and reviewed the current **LCS Employee Handbook** pertaining to my position and role within the school district. I agree to abide by all procedures outlined in this handbook and the *Code of the Ethics*.
2. _____ I understand that the LCS Board Policy Manual and Administrative Procedures are located on the district website under *School Board Policy Manual*.
3. _____ I have an Employee ID badge and I understand it is my responsibility to wear at all times while performing my duties on or off LCS property.
4. _____ I have completed blood borne pathogens training as required annually.
5. _____ I have completed suicide prevention training as required annually.
6. _____ If I suspect child abuse and/or neglect, I am required by law to immediately report the incident to the Child Abuse Coordinator, the DCS hotline and law enforcement.
7. _____ I am required to immediately report all alleged or suspected acts of bullying, harassment or discrimination to my principal or supervisor and understand the Title IX procedures.
8. _____ I have completed AED training as required annually (if applicable).

I understand that a copy of this acknowledgement will be held as evidence of my receipt and knowledge of LCS policies/procedures and completion of required trainings.

Employee Name (Print)

Employee Signature

Date

School or Department

All employees are required to sign and submit a copy of this form to the appropriate principal or supervisor by August 11th.