

2024 - 2025

# EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK



*This handbook is advisory in nature, creates no contractual obligations on the part of Rock Hill Schools or its employees and does not alter the at-will relationship of nonexempt employees who are free to resign at any time for any reason. Rock Hill Schools has the same right to end the employment relationship (see policy GDB in Section G-Personnel). No statement by an employee, officer, or agent of Rock Hill Schools contrary to this paragraph shall have any force or effect unless it is in writing and signed by the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources.*

# Rock Hill Schools Employee Handbook

## Table of Contents

### Introduction

About your Handbook .....	1
Trusting Rock Hill Schools .....	2
Mission, Vision, and Professional Code .....	2

### General Information

Board of Trustees.....	3
District Office Administrative Personnel .....	4
Directory of Schools .....	5
District Personnel Policies .....	7

### General Procedures

Emergencies and Safety Drills .....	8
Emergency Closings.....	8
Professional Disposition .....	8
FERPA & Mandatory Reporting.....	10
Technology Use in Rock Hill Schools.....	11
Internal Review of Policy Violations and Misconduct Against an Employee .....	13
Field Study and Excursions .....	14
Length of School Day .....	15
Licenses and Certification.....	16
Substitutes.....	17
Transfer Request Procedures.....	17
Cash Handling Procedures.....	18

### Benefits and Well-Being Overview

Deferred Compensation .....	18
Direct Deposit of Payroll Checks.....	19
Insurance .....	19
Staff Leaves and Absences .....	20
Sick Leave Bank .....	29
Nursing Mothers.....	31
Vacation.....	31
Retirement.....	31

### Salary Information

Salary Information .....	33
Deductions .....	33

*“Rock Hill School District Three is committed to providing equal access to educational and employment opportunities regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, disability, pregnancy, age, sex (including gender identity), sexual orientation, spousal affiliation, or any other protected trait or characteristic, as may be required by law. As required by Title IX and its implementing regulations, 34 C.F.R. Part 106, Rock Hill School District Three does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its educational programs and activities. In addition, the District is committed to providing a work and student environment which is free of sexual harassment and will not tolerate sexual harassment activity by any District employee, substitute employee, student or third party. We will act quickly and impartially to address claims of sexual harassment and discrimination and remedy discriminatory effects of inappropriate acts of discrimination.”*

## About Your Handbook

This handbook has been prepared to provide employees with information that Rock Hill Schools believes is essential to achieving a successful relationship in our business. This handbook provides a general description of Rock Hill Schools' policies and procedures in effect as of the date of publication. It will act as a guide to familiarize you with the general practices and procedures. Because the handbook is just a summary, it may not answer all of your questions. Should you need further information, please contact your supervisor or principal or inquire with someone in the Human Resources or the Business Services Departments.

While it is our goal to provide employees with beneficial programs and policies, all of our programs and policies are dependent upon economic and other considerations and cannot be guaranteed. For that reason, Rock Hill Schools reserves the right to eliminate, amend, alter and make exceptions to programs, policies and procedures at any time.

This handbook is advisory in nature, creates no contractual obligations on the part of the Rock Hill Schools or its employees and does not alter the at-will relationship of non-exempt employees who are free to resign at any time for any reason. Rock Hill Schools has the same right to end the employment relationship ([see policy GDB in Section G-Personnel](#)). No statement by an employee, officer, or agent of Rock Hill Schools contrary to this paragraph shall have any force or effect unless it is in writing and signed by the Chief of Human Resources.

## **Trust Rock Hill Schools**

Rock Hill Schools is a diverse community of schools with an established history of innovations designed to meet the needs of all students. We have a long-standing reputation for providing quality education to all students and an unparalleled breadth of committed professionals from the classroom to the board room. The strength of Rock Hill Schools emanates from the expertise of our people. Success stories range from our traditional and choice programs, specialized IB, AP, and Dual Credit offerings focus on the profile of the S.C. Graduate, and reaching students with special needs. We engage students by designing work that is challenging, relevant, and meaningful to them. We earn respect and loyalty by providing a safe and nurturing school environment that builds on students' academic, moral, and social needs. Many of our students have received prestigious awards, scholarships, and recognition for academics, the arts, and athletics. The qualities that sustain us are a determination and commitment to excel. We know our students will need to be well-prepared as lifelong learners for a rapidly changing world.

### **Mission**

Rock Hill Schools will provide all students with challenging work that authentically engages them in the learning process and prepares them for successful futures.

### **Professional Code**

- Put Students First
- Nurture Relationships
- Work Together for a Shared Vision
- Grow Professionally
- Continuously Find Ways to Improve

## Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is the governing body responsible for establishing policies, setting direction, and providing support for quality educational opportunities for all students served by Rock Hill Schools. This school board recognizes that public support and open lines of communication are vital to a successful educational environment for students and employees.

The Board holds a monthly business meeting on the second Tuesday of each month, January through November, at 6:00 p.m. in the Board Room of Rock Hill Schools at 386 E. Black Street unless another location is publicized. All meetings of the Board are open to the public.

### Board of Trustees Members

**Mrs. Helena Miller**  
Chair, Seat 2  
2719 Lake Wylie Drive  
Rock Hill, SC 29732  
(704) 488-4950

**Ms. Melissa Harris**  
Seat 5  
2062 Wade Harris Rd  
Rock Hill, SC 29730  
(803)415-1265

**Mr. Pete Nosal**  
Seat 4  
2191 Ebenezer Rd, #37810  
Rock Hill, SC 29732  
(803) 351-0957

**Ms. Lacy Daniel**  
Seat-At-Large  
250 Heatherland Drive  
Rock Hill, SC 29732  
(864) 346-3445

**Mr. James Burns**  
Seat 3  
1650 Milling Road  
Rock Hill, SC 29730  
(803) 366-9414

**Ms. Jennifer Hutchinson**  
Vice Chair, Seat-At-Large  
1360 Pampas Circle  
Rock Hill, SC 29732  
(843)670-6116

**Dr. Montrio Belton**  
Seat 1  
511 Saluda St., PO Box 566  
Rock Hill, SC 29731  
803-324-4529

## **District Office Administrative Personnel**

### **Superintendent**

***Dr. Thomas Schmolze***

### **Deputy Superintendent**

***Dr. John Jones***

### **Assistant Superintendents**

***Dr. Kershena Dickey***, Assistant Superintendent of Academics and Instruction

***Dr. Keith Wilks***, Assistant Superintendent of Strategic Planning, Engagement, and Program Support

***Mrs. Gina Jenkins***, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources for Certified Employees

***Mr. Darren Wilson***, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources for Classified Employees

***Mrs. Terri Smith***, Assistant Superintendent of Business Services

***Mr. Brian Vaughan***, Assistant Superintendent of Operations

### **Executive Directors**

***Ms. Alicisa Johnson***, Executive Director of Secondary Education

***Dr. Katie Barber***, Executive Director of Elementary Education

***Dr. Joya Holmes***, Executive Director of Professional Learning

***Dr. Marty Conner***, Senior Executive Director of Admin Services

***Dr. Diana Smith***, Executive Director of Student Services

***Ms. ShaQuenna McLaughlin***, Executive Director of ESE

***Mr. Derek McQuiston***, Executive Director of Rock Hill Alternative Learning Programs

***Mr. Maurice Murphy***, Executive Director of Facilities Services

***Ms. Lisa Sagona***, Executive Director of Technology

***Ms. Lindsay Machak***, Executive Director of Communications and Marketing

### **Directors & Assistant Directors**

***Mrs. Deborah Greenwood***, Assistant Director of Elementary Instructional Programs

***Dr. Tonya Belton***, Director of Federal Programs

***Mr. Peter Kosko Ocampo***, Director of ESE

***Mr. Jimmy Duncan***, District Athletic Director

***Dr. Nancy Turner***, Director of Mental Health

***Mr. Tim Allen***, Director of Information Technology

***Mr. Juan Roldan***, Director of Recruitment and Onboarding

***Mr. Patrick Robinson***, Director of Operational Staff Services

***Mrs. Darlene Del Vecchio***, Director of Educator Services

***Dr. Mary Roueche***, Assistant Director of Recruitment & Onboarding

***Mr. Bernard Gill***, Director of Transportation

***Mr. Andrew Jones***, Director of Safety and Security

***Mr. Michael Cox***, Director of Facilities Services

***Mr. Benjie Young***, Director of Network Engineering

# Directory of Schools

## ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

### **Central Child Development Center**

**Director: Mr. Damon Ward**

414 East Black Street

(803) 980-2060

### **Cherry Park Elementary School of Language Immersion**

**Principal: Mr. Pat Maness**

1835 Eden Terrace

(803) 985-2255

### **Ebenezer Avenue Elementary Traditional/Inquiry**

**Principal, Mrs. Sheleea Leonard**

242 Ebenezer Avenue

(803) 981-1435

### **Ebinport**

**Principal: Dr. Rhonda Kelsey**

2142 India Hook Road

(803) 981-1550

### **Independence**

**Principal: Dr. Kimberly Odom**

132 West Springdale Road

(803) 981-1135

### **India Hook**

**Principal: Mr. Christopher Roorda**

2068 Yukon Drive

(803) 985-1600

### **Lesslie Elementary**

**Principal: Dr. Jean Dickson**

250 Neely Store Road

(803) 981-1910

### **Mt. Gallant**

**Principal: Joseph Aaron Clark**

4664 Mt. Gallant Road

(803) 981-1360

### **Mount Holly**

**Principal: Mr. Kevin Hood**

1800 Porter Road

(803) 985-1650

### **Northside**

**Principal: Mrs. Lesley Rouse**

840 Annafrel Street

(803) 981-1570

### **Oakdale**

**Principal: Mr. Jacob Moree**

1128 Oakdale Road

(803) 981-1585

### **Old Pointe**

**Principal: Mrs. Bianca Chivers-White**

380 Old Pointe School Road

(803) 980-2040

### **Richmond Drive**

**Principal: Mr. Robert Hamm**

1162 Richmond Drive

(803) 981-1930

### **Sunset Park**

**Principal: Dr. Nakia Barnes**

1036 Ogden Road

(803) 981-1260

### **York Road**

**Principal: Mrs. Keri Beth Brown**

2254 W Main St.

(803) 981-1950

## MIDDLE SCHOOLS

### **Castle Heights**

**Principal: Ms. Cynthia Robinson**

2382 Fire Tower Road  
(803) 981-1400

### **Dutchman Creek**

**Principal: Mr. Clayton Moton**

4157 Mt. Gallant Road  
(803) 985-1700

### **Rawlinson Road**

**Principal: Ms. Kia Frazier**

2631 West Main Street  
(803) 981-1500

### **Saluda Trail**

**Principal: Dr. Marek Marshall**

2300 Saluda Road  
(803) 981-1800

### **Sullivan**

**Principal: Dr. Jacqueline Persinski**

(803) 981-1450

## HIGH SCHOOLS

### **Northwestern High**

**Principal: Mr. Michael Abraham**

2503 West Main Street  
(803) 981-1200

### **Rock Hill High**

**Principal: Mr. Arthur "Ozzie" Ahl, II**

320 West Springdale Road  
(803) 981-1300

### **South Pointe High**

**Principal: Dr. Valarie Williams**

801 Neely Road  
(803) 980-2100

## OTHER CAMPUSES

### **Adult Education**

**Director: Mr. Kenneth Gaither**

1234 Flint Street Ext.  
(803) 981-1375

### **Applied Technology Center**

**Director: Mrs. Jennifer Newendyke**

2399 West Main Street  
(803) 981-1100

### **ParentSmart/Sylvia Circle**

#### **Family Learning Center**

**Coordinator: Ms. Cindy Taubenkimmel**

929 Sylvia Circle  
(803) 981-1557

### **Alternative Learning**

Executive Director: Mr. Derek McQuiston

1234 Flint Street Ext.  
(803) 981-1975

### **T3 Elementary Program**

**Director: Mr. Frank Palermo**

501 Belleview Road  
(803) 981-1584

### **Rock Hill Academies**

**Director: Mr. Stephen Truesdale**

### **Rock Hill Virtual Academy**

**Director: Mrs. Heather Andrus**

# District Personnel Policies

A link to the District Policy Manual can be found on the website. To view a specific Personnel policy noted in the list below, click on the listed policies.

## **General Policies for All Personnel**

[AC Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity](#)  
[ACG Resolution of Discrimination Complaints](#)  
[ADB Drug and Alcohol-Free Workplace and Schools](#)  
[ADC Tobacco-Free School District](#)  
[ADF District Wellness](#)  
[GBA Open Hiring/Equal Employment Opportunity](#)  
[GBAA Employee Racial/Discrimination and Harassment](#)  
[GBAB Title IX \(Staff\)](#)  
[GBAC Employee Sex/Gender Discrimination and Harassment](#)  
[GBAC-R Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation](#)  
[GBE Staff Rights and Responsibilities](#)  
[GBEA Staff Code of Ethics](#)  
[GBEB Staff Conduct](#)  
[GBEBC Gifts to and Solicitations of Staff](#)  
[AR GBEBC-R Gifts To and Solicitations by Staff](#)  
[GBEBD Acceptable Use of Technology](#)  
[AR GBEBD-R Acceptable Use of Technology](#)  
[GBEBE Gavin's Law \(Sexual Extortion\) \(Staff\)](#)  
[GBEC Drug-Free and Alcohol-Free Schools/Workplace](#)  
[GBED Tobacco-Free Workplace](#)  
[GBG Staff Welfare/Protection](#)  
[GBGA Staff Health](#)  
[GBGD Workers' Compensation](#)  
[GBI Staff Participation in Political Activities](#)  
[GBJ Personnel Records and Files](#)  
[GBK Staff Concerns/Complaints/Grievances](#)  
[AR GBK-R Concerns,Complaints,Grievances](#)  
[GCCAAA Sick Leave Bank](#)  
[AR GCCAAA-R Sick Leave Bank](#)  
[GCC/GDC Staff Leaves And Absences](#)  
[AR GCC/GDC-R Paid Parental Leave](#)  
[GCLE Unencumbered Time](#)  
[AR GCLE-R Unencumbered Time](#)  
[KM Kindness and Civility in Education](#)

## **Policies for Professional Staff**

[GCA Professional Staff Positions](#)  
[GCB Professional Staff Contracts and Compensation](#)  
[GCE/GCF Professional Staff Recruitment and Hiring](#)  
[GCE/GCF-R Professional Staff Recruitment and Hiring](#)  
[GCI Professional Staff Development](#)  
[GCK Professional Staff Assignments and Transfers](#)  
[AR GCK-R Professional Staff Assignments and Transfers](#)  
[GCMD Instructional Staff Extra Duty](#)  
[GCN Evaluation of Instructional Staff](#)  
[GCNA Supervision of Instructional Staff](#)  
[GCO Evaluation of Administrative Staff](#)  
[GCQA-GCQB Professional Staff Reduction in Force](#)  
[GCQC-GCQD Resignation of Professional Staff](#)  
[GCQF Discipline, Suspension and, Dismissal of Professional Staff](#)  
[GCR Non-school Employment of Professional Staff](#)  
[GCRD Tutoring for Pay](#)

## **Policies for Support Staff**

[GDA Support Staff Positions](#)  
[GDB Support Staff Compensation](#)  
[GDBC Support Staff Supplementary Pay/Overtime](#)  
[AR GDBC-R Support Staff Supplementary Pay/Overtime](#)  
[GDF Support Staff Hiring](#)  
[GDJ Support Staff Assignments and Transfers](#)  
[AR GDJ-R Support Staff Assignments and Transfers](#)  
[GDO Evaluation of Support Staff](#)  
[GDQB Resignation of Support Staff](#)  
[GDQD Discipline, Suspension, Dismissal of Support Staff](#)  
[GDR Non-School Employment of Support Staff](#)

## **Personnel Policies Forms**

[GBAA-E Racial Discrimination or Harassment Complaint Form](#)  
[GBAC-E Sex/Gender Discrimination or Harassment Complaint Form](#)  
[GBEBD-E\(1\) Employee Guidelines for the Use of Electronic Resources](#)  
[GBK-E Statement of Grievance](#)  
[GCK-E Transfer Request Application \(Professional\)](#)  
[GDJ-E Transfer Request Application \(Support Staff\)](#)

## Emergencies and Safety Drills

Each school in the district has an emergency preparedness plan which has been developed in cooperation with local law enforcement and other emergency response agencies. The principal will be responsible for implementing the emergency preparedness plan.

**Fire Drills:** Schools will conduct fire drills at least once a month without notice. The staff will fully cooperate to carry out this legal requirement and will train students in prompt and orderly evacuation.

**Tornado and Other Crisis Drills:** The district has an Emergency Response Plan in the event of any crisis which may threaten the school community. Each school conducts emergency drills each year to educate students and staff on responses to a potential threat to safety.

## Emergency Closings

The superintendent or his/her designee is empowered to close the schools and/or other district facilities in the event of hazardous weather, epidemics, or other emergencies that may threaten the safety or health of students or staff. The superintendent will take such action only after consultation with knowledgeable authorities.

When facilities are to be closed, the decision will be communicated as expediently as possible via the district's website, Facebook page, and local radio and TV stations. Digital learning days (E-learning) allows students and employees to make up days missed by inclement weather or emergencies by completing a set of assignments or work within school days.

## Professional Disposition

All Rock Hill School District employees are expected to strive to set an example for students that will serve them well in their conduct and behavior and subsequently contribute to an appropriate school atmosphere. Staff must act in a manner that is consistent with the district's policies and sets a positive example for all.

To that end, in dress, conduct (including conduct communicated or performed in person, in writing and/or electronically), and interpersonal relationships, all staff should recognize that they are being continuously observed by students, other employees, parents/legal guardians, and community members and that their actions and demeanor may impair their effectiveness as employees.

Behavioral decisions that diminish an employee's ability to be effective to such a degree that a potential for substantial disruption to the school environment or that directly compromise safety may result in disciplinary action up to administrative leave and/or termination.

### **Personal Dress & Representation**

All Rock Hill School District employees are expected to serve as a positive role model in dress, behavior and image. In order to provide an atmosphere that promotes learning, limits disruptions, and sets an example for students, all employees should dress in a professional manner. Dress should reflect the role of the employee, with the ability to be presentable to parents and the public at any time. Spirit wear and jeans are appropriate only as designated by district and school leadership.

The enforcement of the prescribed dress code will be the responsibility of a school or office administrator. As a general rule, attire that would violate the dress code for students should be avoided for faculty and staff. To this end, professional discretion may be applied regarding athletic wear, etc... that may be required to carry out job duties included within the approved curriculum. For additional clarification about appropriate dress, employees should consult their school administrator.

To promote a positive atmosphere free of disruptions and distractions, employees must be mindful of decals or stickers on vehicles parked on district campuses. Language, images, and slogans that are profane, objectively offensive, sexually explicit, vulgar, inciting, or characteristic of hate speech impede our ability to promote a positive learning and working environment and will not be allowed on district property.

### **Professional Conduct**

The personal life of an employee, including the employee's personal use of district-issued and non-district-issued electronic equipment, inside and outside of working hours (such as through social networking sites and personal portrayal on the internet), will be the concern of and warrant the attention of the board if it impairs the employee's ability to effectively perform their job responsibilities or if it violates local, state or federal law, or contractual agreements. Employee social media use has the potential to result in disruption of the school/work environment or impair the efficiency of the school/workplace. Employees will be held to the same professional standards in their use of social media as they are for any other conduct. If an employee has a question regarding the appropriate use of social media, they should consult their direct supervisor or building principal for guidance. Unprofessional conduct may subject the employee to disciplinary actions consistent with state law, federal law, and/or board policy.

Employees of the district, while on duty and in the presence of students, will not use profanity, will not use tobacco in any form, and will not possess, consume, or be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, as provided for in Board Policy GBEC (Drug-Free and Alcohol-Free Schools/Workplace).

### **Selling Items or Services for Personal Profit**

In the interest of preserving a completely professional relationship between employees of this district and those whom they serve, the board will not permit district employees to sell on district premises for personal profit products or services of any kind to other employees, students, or patrons of any district facility/school.

### **Soliciting of Employees**

No organization may solicit funds from employees within the district and the schools or distribute flyers or other materials related to fund drives through the district and the schools without the approval of the superintendent or his/her designee. Employees will not be made responsible or assume responsibility for the collection of any money or distribution of any fund drive literature within the district or the schools without such activity having the superintendent's approval. As a matter of policy, the board expects such activities to be kept to a minimum.

### **Kindness Policy (KM)**

Rock Hill Schools is committed to the core value of mutual respect for every person, regardless of their differences or characteristics. We expect all stakeholders to demonstrate this value in their daily behavior. When disagreements arise, we encourage clear, concise, and courteous communication to find a positive solution. It is strictly prohibited to engage in uncivil conduct on district property or at district-sponsored activities by school directors, staff, parents, volunteers, contractors or visitors.

To support this policy, it is expected that all employees:

- Treat one another and students with dignity and respect.
- Use sound and sensible judgment when dealing with disagreements between people
- Show respect, courtesy, and consideration for the dignity and cultural background of others
- Avoid using abusive language
- Do not use offensive language in public or electronic communication
- Demonstrate respectful problem-solving techniques
- Avoid actions or behaviors that could cause undue and productive fear, anger, frustration or alienation

*For a full explanation of the expectations regarding this policy, please see Rock Hill School Board Policy KM.*

## **FERPA & Mandatory Reporting**

The Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act of 1974 underscores the crucial role of each employee in our institution by prohibiting the unauthorized disclosure of student information to individuals not directly involved with the need to know such information. This regulation emphasizes the value of each employee's contribution to our students' academic, social, and behavioral development, and the trust placed in them to uphold this standard. To this end, discussing students' academic, social, or behavioral information with colleagues or in the presence of students or parents of other students is prohibited. This protection extends to written communication including but not limited to social media.

To ensure the safety and well-being of students, all employees are required to report any suspected incidents of physical, emotional, sexual, or drug and alcohol abuse. Immediate reporting and maintaining confidentiality is of utmost importance. Failure to report may subject the employee to disciplinary actions consistent with state law, federal law, and/or board policy.

In May 2024, South Carolina signed into law (H. 4624) requirements for education professionals who may encounter information regarding the biological sex and gender identity of minor students. Specifically, a school's principal, assistant principal, or school counselor must inform a minor's parent or legal guardian if the minor asserts that the minor's gender is inconsistent with their biological sex or if the minor student requests to be addressed by a pronoun that does not align with the minor's sex. Education professionals who interact with the student must inform the designated building leader upon receipt of this information from the student. Notification under this law is a natural extension of parental rights consistent with FERPA and HIPPA, allowing parents full access to information regarding their minor child's educational, medical, and psychological well-being.

## Technology Use in Rock Hill Schools

Rock Hill Schools offers technology training and services throughout the school district. Every classroom is equipped with an interactive classroom package and various other technologies. All schools have 1-to-1 student-to-computer ratios in grades K-12. The district encourages the use of technology for classroom instruction and access to technology anytime and anywhere.

**E-Mail:** District employees are provided with an e-mail account within the district, accessed through **Office 365**.

**Courses:** The district offers many courses for employees who wish to learn more about using the Internet and other programs used in the district. Course titles and schedules are posted on the district's PD management system, [KickUp Pulse](#), which can be accessed to sign up throughout the year.

### Guidelines for the Use of the Internet & Social Media as an Instructional Tool:

- **User Name IDs, Account Numbers, and Passwords:** User names, account numbers, and passwords issued to staff members must remain confidential. Any staff member violating this policy will be subject to disciplinary action.
- It is the expectation that employees consistently monitor and enforce the use of the student cell phone policy. Uniformly maintaining expectations promotes positive school climates and limits disruptions.
- The use of social media during class time, or with the voice and/or image of students, must be in accordance with state, federal, and/or board policy especially as it pertains to

FERPA and media release policies. The use of social media for entertainment purposes during the school day is expressly prohibited.

- At no point may the image, voice, recording, or identifying information about any student be on an employee's personal social media account as an extension of the account holder's professional capacity. All social media posts with images of students must go through the school or district accounts so as not to violate the express written media release permissions of the parent or guardian. Suppose an employee wishes to highlight the learning or special events within their classroom. In that case, they must do so through their school's social media administrator, ensuring students are cleared for media publication.
- **Electronic communications:** Employees are expected to communicate in a professional manner consistent with state and federal laws, including federal guidelines regarding the use of copyrighted materials. The use of electronic communications to display, send, or receive offensive messages or pictures; the harassment, insult, or attack of others via electronic communication; and the use of electronic communications for commercial purposes are strictly prohibited.
- **Independent navigation on the Internet by Faculty and Staff:** Employees are encouraged to explore online resources. Clearly, such explorations should be for educational purposes. Downloading and/or printing files and images containing content that is inappropriate for a K-12 setting is prohibited. Staff members are expected to employ professional judgment in the determination of inappropriate content.
- **Teacher-led exploration of the Internet:** Faculty who are exploring Internet sites with a class do not need special parental permission if the faculty member is in control of the navigation and/or is directing the students to known educational sites. A student who is navigating the Net at the teacher's direction is not considered to be independently using the Internet; this circumstance does not require parent permission. **Students should not be directed to an Internet site that the teacher has not previewed.**
- **Independent Navigation of the Internet by Students:** Independent navigation of the Internet by students requires both the student's signature and parental permission on the Student Assurances Form. The intent of the permission is not to discourage independent research on the Internet; however, constant teacher supervision under these circumstances will not be possible. Students are not permitted to search for, download, or print any objectionable, vulgar, or offensive material. Unsupervised participation in group discussion chats or newsgroups is not permitted. The signed permission form should be maintained by the school and should be obtained prior to assigning independent research on the Internet. Students utilizing the computer lab or 1-to-1 devices before and/or after school for Internet activities of their own choice should also have assurances on file at the school.

- **Installation of Personal Software:** Teachers may install *legal* copies (original disks and documentation must be kept at school) on their classroom computer(s). Shareware and freeware can be used in the classroom. Teachers should be aware that the district periodically updates the network. It is possible that teacher software and/or files will be removed and will require reinstallation. It is recommended that teachers maintain regularly updated backup copies of all files saved on the internal hard drive.

## **Internal Review of Policy Violations and Misconduct Against an Employee**

In the event an employee is arrested for any reason, he or she *must* immediately inform their supervisor and Human Resources.

In the event allegations are made of possible misconduct against an employee, the District will conduct an internal review. During the review, the employee will be placed on paid administrative leave.

The purpose of this leave period is to:

- Reasonably protect all parties from claims of retaliation or unwarranted allegations of misconduct
- Provide an opportunity to gather data that will be used to guide the District's understanding of the allegation
- Establish a safe and secure environment that is free from substantial disruption

For these purposes, the leave period is not considered a disciplinary act resulting from a substantiated claim of wrongdoing and is not considered a disciplinary suspension. Should this status change based on internal review findings, this will be communicated in writing.

The terms of leave are as follows:

- The employee is expected to be available by telephone, email, and video conference during regular business hours and will need to provide a number where you can be reached. Additionally, he/she is expected to be present for any in person meetings as requested.
- The employee is required to turn in their badge and district-issued device to their administrator. These items may be returned at the end of the administrative leave period.
- The employee is not to be present on school premises or district facilities without prior written approval from HR. Additionally, they are not to have any contact with other employees (outside of your direct supervisor and HR contact), students, or parents associated with Rock Hill Schools, whether initiated by the employee under review or by

others, until further notice. This includes in-person activities, electronic communication, telephone calls, or other communications.

In the event of allegations of unwanted physical contact, the district will seek the support of law enforcement. The internal review will resume only after law enforcement has completed their investigation.

In the event of allegations of drug or alcohol use, the employee may be asked to submit to a drug and/or alcohol test. Refusal to provide a sample *may* result in immediate termination.

During the internal review process, Human Resources will review the employee's personnel record, evaluations, communication records, witness statements, video recordings, and any other pertinent evidence. Upon reaching a determination, the employee will participate in an in-person meeting and be provided the written determination of the review. If warranted, disciplinary action, up to and including suspension without pay or termination, will also be communicated at such time.

## **Field Study and Excursions**

**Field Study:** Field study must be subject-matter oriented (see Policy IJOA I-Instructional Program) and teachers must tie the study trip to curriculum maps and other curriculum areas and must prepare follow-up activities. If such field study requires leaving the school premises, prior permission must be obtained from the principal. All students participating in a field study must have parent or guardian permission. The teacher/administrator in charge must have emergency contact information for students while off school premises. Parent chaperones must have secured clearance prior to participating in the field study.

**Overnight Study:** All school-sponsored field studies requiring students to be away from home overnight (in-state) must be approved by the superintendent or his/her designee prior to any plans being booked or fundraising activities being conducted. No extracurricular overnight field study is permitted unless it conforms with the district's attendance policies relating to lawful and unlawful absences. Students can be excused from class(es) for participation in school representational activities if they have a passing average in each class they will miss and have no known unlawful absences. All absences for school representational activities must have prior approval from the principal.

**Out-of-Town Study:** Students who travel out-of-town to participate in group activities such as band, athletic contests, or any activity where they represent the school or participate in a school-sponsored program are the responsibility of and under the jurisdiction of the school while at the activity and are governed by the rules and regulations of the school district. Out-of-state overnight field study requires superintendent approval.

- Students who travel out of town as a group on transportation provided by the school (bus, car, or other transportation) will return with the group unless the parent meets the student at the game or activity and personally requests to the coach, teacher or sponsor that the child be released to his/her custody. Violation of this rule will be considered an unauthorized absence and subject to disciplinary action as prescribed.
- Students who attend an out-of-town activity with a group sponsored by the school must conduct themselves in an orderly fashion and in full compliance with the rules of the school. Students who conduct themselves in any way contrary to school rules will be subject to penalties as prescribed for such conduct while in school.

**Length of School Day**

**For Students:**

- Grades pre-K-5:** 7:45 a.m. and ends at 2:10 p.m.
- Grades 6-8:** 8:15 a.m. and ends at 3:15 p.m.
- Grades 9-12:** 8:45 a.m. and ends at 3:45 p.m.

**Early School Release Days**

- Grades pre-K-5:** 7:45 a.m. - 11:15 a.m.
- Grades 6-8:** 8:15 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.
- Grades 9-12:** 8:45 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

**Central Child Development & ATC Pre-K**

- Morning Session:** 7:25 a.m. - 9:55 a.m.
- Afternoon Session:** 11:25 a.m. - 1:55 p.m.

## Teachers

Teachers are professional, exempt employees, not hourly workers; they are contracted for a job and completion thereof. For them to complete the job of a teacher and work the minimum hours prescribed by law, they must be at school in most cases a minimum of 7.5 hours/day. With faculty meeting days, they are at school longer, so a teacher's work week at school is usually around 38 hours in length. This allows them to be available for lunch duty, after-school tutoring, parent conferences, and staff meetings that are part of their responsibility and may take more than the specific hours listed. Thus, the following should generally be the work time for teachers:

**Elementary:**                   7:30 – 3:00 Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday\*  
7:30 – 3:30 Tuesday  
7:30 – 2:15 Friday (Teachers and staff may leave when all after-school supervision and responsibilities are complete as established by the administration)

\* Teachers are not to begin Be Great Academy work prior to 3:30

**Middle:**                               8:00 – 3:30 Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday  
8:00 – 4:00 Tuesday  
8:00 – 3:20 Friday (Teachers and staff may leave when all after-school supervision and responsibilities are complete as established by the administration)

**High:**                               8:30 – 4:00 Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday  
8:30 – 4:30 Tuesday  
8:00 – 3:50 Friday (Teachers and staff may leave when all after-school supervision and responsibilities are complete as established by the administration.)

**\*Employees may not have their own children under their supervision or care during their regular work hours.**

## Licenses and Certification

Depending on the job role, some employees are required to maintain licenses and/or certification to keep their position. Copies of all licenses and certifications should be given to the Personnel Department after being updated.

Below is a list of some of those roles:

- **Teachers** must hold a valid SC teaching credential in the area(s) they teach.
- **Nurses, LPN's** and other health care providers (PT's and OT's) must maintain valid licenses.
- **Bus drivers** must maintain a valid driver's license and a CDL to be eligible to drive a bus.
- **Paraprofessionals** in Title I schools must be highly qualified as determined by NCLB.

## Substitutes

The district contracts with Kelly Educational Staffing to train and retain daily substitutes for teachers and other staff who serve students. The district employee is responsible for securing his/her substitute through this service, as well as logging his/her own absences via the web-based program, Frontline Education (formerly AESOP Online)

<https://login.frontlineeducation.com/login?signin=907f03576fdc32f5d384862435f9d851&productid=ABSMGMT&clientId=ABSMGMT#/login>

For long-term substitute situations for teachers, the district contracts with Kelly Educational Staffing and pays them certificate pay based on their degree and experience level noted on their certificate, which must be current and valid and in the area of the subbing situation. Long-term subs for non-teaching positions, if determined to be necessary, are paid an agreed-upon amount based on experience.

## Transfer Request Procedures

A “voluntary” transfer is defined generally as a lateral move that is requested by an individual to move to a posted position that is on the same or lower pay scale and group as the employee’s current position. The procedure for requesting a transfer is described below (see Policies [GCK](#) and [GDJ](#) in Section [G-Personnel](#)):

- Transfers are considered for posted positions and are in effect until the vacancy is filled. Appointments under superintendent’s discretion are excluded from this provision.
- The person seeking a transfer should notify his/her immediate supervisor and the Human Resources Office utilizing the district **Transfer Request** form.
- Applications from candidates meeting the minimum qualifications for the position will be considered by the school/department having a vacancy.
- The school/department will recommend the individual who best meets the needs of the students and the instructional program.
- The deadline for the voluntary transfer process must conclude by or before May 30th. Transfers after May 30th must be approved by the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources for Certified Staff.

## Cash Handling Procedures

Many employees are required to deal with cash activity at their schools (see [Policy DM D-Fiscal Management](#)). Each school location or department should follow procedures for the handling or collection of funds to ensure the safeguarding of these funds and to maintain reliable records for financial and managerial reporting.

The following procedures are not intended to replace any specific requirements at the school levels, but should be adhered to as a minimum requirement when employees collect cash or checks at the school level:

- Any employee who collects money on behalf of the school district for any reason should provide a receipt to the student or parents immediately upon receipt of the payment. Only the district receipt book assigned by the school bookkeeper should be used to issue the receipt. Signed activity logs may substitute for receipt documents if collections from students are less than \$5.00 each, which should also be issued to the employee by the bookkeeper. All parts of the receipt for the log should be filled out and must be signed by the employee collecting the funds.
- All funds collected by the employee must be taken to the school bookkeeper each day no later than the time designated by the principal. The employee will be issued a receipt by the bookkeeper to be stapled in the employee's receipt book. Receipt books should be kept in a secure, locked place.
- Schools will not keep more than the following amounts overnight, including cash and checks but excluding start-up cash for curricular activities and food service petty cash. All monies must be kept in a locked, secured place with limited access until deposited.
  - Elementary schools - \$250
  - Middle schools - \$400
  - High schools - \$500
  - Other district locations - \$250
- Funds must be deposited intact; that is, deposited as received. To avoid unnecessary handling, bookkeepers and others should avoid making changes with the receipts. Checks may not be cashed under any circumstances.

## Benefits Overview

### Deferred Compensation

Employees, on a voluntary basis, can participate in the South Carolina Public Employees Deferred Compensation Plan. "Deferred Compensation" is a method whereby employees can put "before-tax dollars" into an account, such as the S. C. Deferred Compensation Plan, and

“defer the taxes” on those dollars until the time when the employee retires. The District will provide payroll deductions for those employees who wish to participate. For more information contact:

## Empower

1-877-457-6263

or visit the website at [www.southcarolinadcp.com](http://www.southcarolinadcp.com).

## Direct Deposit of Payroll Checks

Direct deposit of payroll checks is required of all employees.

## Insurance

**State Dental Plan:** Employees are covered under a state group policy. Coverage for full-time employees is free. Employees may purchase insurance on their spouse and dependents for an additional cost paid by the employee.

**Dental Plus:** Dental Plus is an additional dental program that provides a higher level of coverage for dental services covered under the State Dental Plan. Dental Plus insurance is paid by the employee.

**State Vision Plan:** The State Vision plan, provided through EyeMed Vision Care, is available to eligible active employees, retirees, survivors, permanent, part-time teachers and COBRA subscribers and their covered dependents. Subscribers pay the premium without an employer contribution.

**Disability:** Insurance is available for employees to purchase for protection against long-term disabilities. Please contact the Finance Department for more information about available coverage.

**Health:** Employees can choose a plan offered through a state group policy processed by Blue Cross Blue Shield. Coverage for a spouse or dependent(s) can be purchased by the employee. Forms for making claims can be obtained from the S.C. PEBA website, [www.peba.sc.gov](http://www.peba.sc.gov).

Employees new to the district must complete insurance forms within 31 days of employment if they want insurance for themselves, their spouse, or dependents. If an eligible employee begins work on the first working day of the month (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays) and it is not the first calendar day, the employee may choose to have coverage start on the first day of the month or the first of the next month. If an employee begins work on any other day after the first working day of the month, health coverage goes into effect on the first day of the following

month, provided the employee is actively at work on the effective date of coverage. Questions about claims through the State Health Plan should be directed to 1-800-868-2520.

Employees on **leave of absence without pay** (i.e., FMLA leave) must pay their monthly premium to the Finance Department. In some cases, the state portion will also have to be paid.

*Special Note:* Employees who plan to resign or retire should contact Insurance and Benefits to find out the termination date(s) of their insurance benefits. Any insurance benefits received during FMLA leave must be repaid to the District if the employee chooses not to return to work following the leave.

**Liability:** The district carries a liability insurance coverage of \$1,000,000 for each employee and each member of the Board of Trustees. Types of coverage include school board liability, general tort liability, and automobile liability and physical damage.

**Life:** Each employee covered under the state group insurance program is provided \$3,000 worth of life insurance at no cost. Employees can purchase life insurance on their spouse and dependent children (See definition of “dependent” below). Employees should contact the Finance Department for further information.

**Optional Life:** The State of South Carolina offers additional life insurance benefits for all eligible employees. “Optional Life” insurance is paid by the employee.

**Worker’s Compensation:** All employees who are injured on the job are covered by Worker’s Compensation. The district pays the annual premium at no cost to employees. When employees are injured on the job, incidents should be reported immediately to the employee’s supervisor and as soon as possible to Laney Burris in the Finance Department.

## **Staff Leaves and Absences**

**Attendance:** All employees are expected to arrive at the agreed-upon time and be ready to work every day they are scheduled to serve.

If an employee cannot arrive at work on time or is absent for an entire day, the employee must contact the supervisor as soon as possible. Until a direct supervisor provides an affirmative response, voicemail, text, and e-mail messages do not constitute acceptable notification. Excessive absenteeism, tardiness, or other unapproved leave may result in discipline up to and including termination and/or loss of pay. Failure to show up or call in for a scheduled shift without prior approval may result in discipline up to and including termination. If an employee fails to report to work or calls in to inform the supervisor of the absence for three consecutive days or more, the employee may be considered to have voluntarily resigned employment.

Vacation or personal leave during standardized testing periods or other school-wide activities may not be approved if the absence would create significant hardship to the school or the employee’s

absence would compromise the safety and smooth operation of the school environment. If the denial of a leave request is under consideration by the supervisor, he or she will contact Human Resources for guidance.

*\*Please refer to board policy for the complete outline regarding personal and sick leave.*

**Personal Leave:** Five of your sick days per school year (non-cumulative) may be used for personal reasons provided (1) that no employee requests such a day for personal business on the last day before holidays officially begin or on the first day after holidays officially end; (2) that no employee requests such a day during the first two weeks or the last two weeks of the school session; and (3) that the employee has given as much advance notice as possible prior to the day of the requested leave. Any exceptions to (1) and (2) above will require approval from the Superintendent via the Request for Approval of Personal Leave Form. Personal leave will be deducted from accrued sick leave up to 5 days. Absences for personal leave are granted for half days or full days, and the employee does not have to state the reason for the personal leave. Any personal days taken above 5 days will be unpaid.

**Standard Sick Leave:** Standard sick leave may be used for absences caused by the illness of the employee, incapacity due to personal injury, surgery, pregnancy, or to attend to the illness of a spouse, children or parents.

All regular employees shall accrue standard sick leave on the basis of 1-1/4 days per month of active service. The standard sick leave accrued to nine-month employees will be rounded to 12 days for the nine-month period. New employees may transfer accumulated days (up to 90) from another school district or state agency in South Carolina to Rock Hill Schools. Standard sick leave that is earned, but not used, is cumulative to 90 days. Sick days are not paid out when employment ends.

Employees who are absent due to illness beyond the number of days accrued will not be paid for the number of days that exceed the number accrued. Employees who have earned standard sick leave and who are using it in compliance with this policy will not be terminated from employment, nor shall any such personnel be terminated during a continuing sick leave of less than 91 workdays. Absences included under this policy are counted on a half-day basis.

**Absence of five or fewer consecutive workdays:**

A "standard sick leave absence" of five or fewer consecutive workdays must be accompanied by a statement signed by the employee stating the reason for the absence. Such a statement will be provided via the district's "Absent Employee Report" form and filed within two workdays following the employee's return to active service. The district may require the written statement of a physician attesting to the employee's physical and emotional fitness to resume employment duties.

*Absence of more than five, but fewer than 11 consecutive workdays:*

A “standard sick leave absence” of more than five but less than eleven consecutive workdays must be supported by a statement signed by a licensed physician that identifies the nature of the illness/disability and attests to the employee’s physical and emotional fitness to resume employment duties. The physician’s statement will be attached to the “Absent Employee Report” and filed within two workdays following the employee’s return to active service. The district may require the written statement of a physician attesting to the employee’s physical and emotional fitness to resume employment duties.

*Absence of more than ten consecutive workdays:*

A sick leave absence that is expected to exceed ten consecutive workdays must, upon reaching the fifth consecutive day of absence, be supported by a licensed physician’s written statement of diagnosis and prognosis which contains a projected date of return to active work. The district may require a written statement of a physician attesting to the employee’s physical and emotional fitness to resume employment duties. Please see FMLA (Family and Medical Leave Act) below.

**Absence for Childbirth or Adoption**

Standard sick leave for the purpose of recovering from childbirth or for purposes of child adoption shall be limited to a period of six consecutive weeks (30 days) immediately following the birth of the child – eight weeks (40 days) for childbirth via C-section. For adoption, leave shall be granted only for children of very tender age, i.e. just days or weeks old, or when adoption agency rules and regulations require the adoptive parent(s) full-time availability for a prescribed initial period of time.

Sick leave in excess of six weeks must be supported by a written certification of a licensed physician prior to taking such leave. The limit for use of accrued paid sick leave will be thirty (30) days for standard recovery (40 days for C-section) and child adoption or the actual number of accrued days credited to the employee if less than the above. Days beyond thirty (30) – forty (40) for a C-section – or the actual number will be unpaid.

**\*Certified employees must have 152 paid days in a school year to receive a year of experience with the SC Department of Education.**

**Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993:**

**Family Leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)**

“FMLA” leave is a supplemental form of leave governed by the terms of the federal “Family and Medical Leave Act” of 1993 (P.L. 103-3). This means that it is available in addition to standard “sick leave” benefits.<sup>1</sup> FMLA also includes a special leave entitlement that permits eligible employees to take up to 26 weeks of leave to care for a covered service member during a single 12-month period. In complying with the FMLA, the district will adhere to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act as well as other applicable federal and state laws.

To be eligible for “FMLA” leave, an individual must be employed by the school district for a total of twelve (12) months and have worked at least 1,250 hours during the previous twelve (12) months.

Eligible employees are entitled to up to a combined total of twelve (12) work weeks of unpaid leave per “rolling” 12-month period measured backward from the date an employee uses any FMLA leave for the following five leave situations:<sup>1</sup>

1. The birth and first-year care of a child;
2. The adoption or foster placement of a child;
3. The “serious health condition” of an employee’s spouse, parent, or child;
4. The employee’s own “serious health condition”; and
5. A qualifying exigency arising out of a spouse, child or parent who is on active duty or has been notified of impending call to active duty in support of a contingency operation.

**Benefits accrued before “FMLA” leave is taken will not be altered,<sup>3</sup> and upon return, the employee** is entitled to restoration to an equivalent position with equivalent pay, benefits, and conditions of employment. However, the employee will not accrue seniority or employment benefits during the time he or she is on “FMLA” leave.

Limits on child care/spouses employed by the district:

In dealing with birth, adoption, and foster placement, the entitlement for childcare ends after: (a) the child reaches age one, or (b) twelve (12) months after the adoption or placement. When both spouses are employed by the district, the combined amount of leave for birth, adoption, foster placement, and illness of a parent will be limited to twelve (12) weeks. The limit for use of accrued paid sick leave for adoption, foster placement, or birth and first year care of a child, will be thirty (30) days or the actual number of accrued days credited to the employee if less than thirty (30). Days beyond thirty (30) or the actual number will be unpaid.

Leave taken intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule:

Childcare leave under situations “1” and “2” shall not be taken intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule unless the employee and the district Superintendent agree otherwise.

Leave under situations “3” and “4” may be taken intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule when medically necessary. If an employee requests such leave that is foreseeable based on planned medical treatment, the district may require such employee to transfer temporarily to an available alternative position for which the employee is qualified and that (a) has equivalent pay and benefits; and (b) better accommodates recurring periods of leave than the regular employment position of the employee.

---

<sup>1</sup> In those instances where the district under its standard “sick leave” policy already provides for paid or unpaid leave in any of these categories, “FMLA” leave extends that leave period to twelve weeks with the period added by “FMLA” leave being unpaid. If the district already provides for twelve or more weeks of leave

in any category, the “FMLA” leave would not add any more leave for that category. Where the district provides paid leave, the district shall require the employee to use any accrued paid leave as “FMLA” leave.

<sup>2</sup> The term “serious health condition” means an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves (a) inpatient care in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility; or (b) continuing treatment by a health care provider.

<sup>3</sup> For example, the district will continue coverage for the employee under any group health plan offered by the district in which the employee is a participant.

---

*Substitution for paid leave:*

An employee using “FMLA” leave shall be required to substitute and exhaust any accrued paid vacation leave, personal leave, or sick leave of the employee in the exercise of “FMLA” leave. If such accrued paid leave is not sufficient to cover the “FMLA” leave entitlement, the additional days of leave necessary to satisfy the “FMLA” entitlement shall be without compensation. The limit for use of accrued paid sick leave for adoption, foster placement, or birth and first-year care of a child, will be thirty (30) days or the actual number of accrued days credited to the employee if less than thirty (30). Days beyond thirty (30) or the actual number will be unpaid.

*Foreseeable leave:*

When “FMLA” leave is foreseeable, the employee must provide at least thirty (30) days notice of the date when leave is to begin - unless circumstances dictate otherwise. In addition, with respect to family or employee medical treatments which are foreseeable, the employee shall make a reasonable effort to schedule treatment (including intermittent and reduced hour leave) so as not to disrupt unduly the operation of the district.

*Certification to take leave:*

The district requires the employee to provide timely certification from his/her health care provider, or a family member’s health care provider as to (a) the date that the condition commenced, (b) the duration, (c) the necessity for the employee’s leave, (d) the employee’s inability to perform his/her job functions, or (e) Form WH-384 or WH-385, as applicable. Where doubt exists as to the certification, the district, at its own expense, may designate a second health care provider (other than a district employee) to provide a second opinion - with the opinion of a third health care provider, if necessary, to be binding

*Certification to continue leave:*

The district may require certification from the health care provider that a serious medical condition of the employee or family member continues to prevent the employee from returning to work.

*Certification to return from leave:*

Upon return to work, the district requires the employee to provide certification by his/her health provider that the employee is able to resume work. Furthermore, if state or local law

requires a public health official to examine an employee as a condition for returning to work, the employee must fulfill that requirement in order to return to work.

Failure to return from leave/recovery of health premiums:

If an employee fails to return to work after the leave period has expired (other than family or personal illness or other circumstances beyond his or her control), the employer may recover the premium expenditures extended during the leave period.

**Paid Parental Leave for Newborn Biological Child or Foster of a Child**

Eligible District employees who are employed by the District and who give birth are entitled to receive six weeks of paid parental leave upon the occurrence of a qualifying event. Other eligible District employees who do not give birth are entitled to receive two weeks of paid parental leave upon the occurrence of a qualifying event.

- Child means a newborn biological child or foster of a child in state custody and under the age of eighteen. No child can have more than two parents eligible for paid parental leave.
- Eligible District employee means an employee defined by the Department of Education using the ..... Professional Certified Staff system or any full-time equivalent position categorized as classified staff.
- Paid parental leave means six weeks of paid leave at one hundred percent of the eligible District employee's base pay or two weeks of paid leave at one hundred percent of the eligible District employee's base pay.
- Qualifying event' means the birth of a newborn biological child to an eligible District employee or after a co-parent's birth of a newborn child or fostering a child in state custody.

Paid parental leave usage includes the following:

- The entitlement of this leave expires at the end of the twelve-month period beginning on the date of such birth or initial legal placement. An eligible District employee shall receive no more than one occurrence of six or two weeks of paid parental leave for any twelve-month period, even if more than one qualifying event occurs. However, nothing in this item prohibits a foster parent from requesting and receiving approval for parental leave in nonconsecutive one-week time periods.
- If the leave is not used by the eligible District employee before the end of the twelve-month period after the qualifying event, such leave does not accumulate for subsequent use. Paid parental leave may not be donated. Any leave remaining at the end of the twelve-month period or at separation of employment is forfeited.
- Days of paid parental leave taken under this policy must be taken consecutively, except that foster parents may request and receive approval for parental leave in nonconsecutive one-week time periods.

- If both parents are eligible District employees, paid parental leave may be taken concurrently, consecutively, or a different time as the other eligible District employee.
- District holidays and vacation on the District calendar must not be counted against paid parental leave.
- When an eligible District employee's entitlement to leave under this policy extends beyond their designated term of employment for their contractual term, the employee may continue their period of paid parental leave in tt.ie subsequent contractual term, provided the employee remains an eligible District employee.
- Paid parental leave must run concurrently with leave taken pursuant to the Family Medical and Leave Act and any other unpaid leave to which the eligible District employee may be entitled as a result of the qualifying event. However, leave granted under this policy is with pay and is not annual leave or sick leave and therefore does not deduct from the eligible District employee's accrued leave balance. An eligible District employee does not have to exhaust all other forms of leave before being eligible to take leave granted under this policy. Eligible District employees shall accrue annual and sick leave at the normal rate while on this leave, if applicable.
- The use of paid parental leave by an eligible District employee shall not prevent the eligible District employee from earning a STEP increase the following year. Paid parental leave is considered paid leave and tt.ie time must count toward tt.ie eligible District employee's years of service.

### **Paid Parental Leave for Adoption of a Child**

Eligible District employees who are employed by the District and are primarily responsible for furnishing the care and nurture of the child, are entitled to six weeks of paid parental leave upon the occurrence of a qualifying event. Eligible District employees who are employed by tt.ie District who are not primarily responsible for furnishing the care and nurture of the child, are entitled to two weeks of paid parental leave upon the occurrence of a qualifying event.

- Child means a child initially legally placed for adoption and under the age of eighteen. No child can have more than two parents eligible for paid parental leave.
- Eligible District employee means an employee defined by the Department of Education using the Professional Certified Staff system or any full-time equivalent position categorized as classified staff.
- Paid parental leave means six weeks of paid leave at one hundred percent of the eligible District employee's base pay or two weeks of paid leave at one hundred percent of the eligible District employee's base pay.
- Qualifying event' means the initial legal placement of a child by adoption.

Paid parental leave usage includes the following:

- The entitlement of this leave expires at the end of the twelve-month period beginning on the date of initial legal placement. An eligible District employee shall receive no more than one occurrence of six or two weeks of paid parental leave for any twelve-month period, even if more than one qualifying event occurs.
- If the leave is not used by the eligible District employee before the end of the twelve-month period after the qualifying event, such leave does not accumulate for subsequent use. Paid parental leave may not be donated. Any leave remaining at the end of the twelve-month period or at separation of employment is forfeited.
- Days of paid parental leave taken under this policy must be taken consecutively.
- If both parents are eligible District employees, paid parental leave may be taken concurrently, consecutively, or a different time as the other eligible District employee.
- District holidays and vacation on the District calendar must not be counted against paid parental leave.
- When an eligible District employee's entitlement leave under this policy extends beyond their designated term of employment for their contractual term, the employee may continue their period of paid parental leave in the subsequent contractual term, provided the employee remains an eligible District employee.
- Paid parental leave must run concurrently with leave taken pursuant to the Family Medical and Leave Act and any other unpaid leave to which the eligible District employee may be entitled as a result of the qualifying event. However, leave granted under this policy is with pay and is not annual leave or sick leave and therefore does not deduct from the eligible District employee's accrued leave balance. An eligible District employee does not have to exhaust all other forms of leave before being eligible to take leave granted under this policy. Eligible District employees shall accrue annual and sick leave at the normal rate while on this leave, if applicable.
- The use of paid parental leave by an eligible District employee shall not prevent the eligible District employee from earning a STEP increase the following year. Paid parental leave is considered paid leave and the time must count toward the eligible District employee's years of service.

*Issued 9/12/22; Revised 6/13/23*

**Bereavement:** The district will grant an employee three days bereavement leave following the notification of the death of a member of his/her immediate family (spouse, children, grandchildren, parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, and in-laws to the same degree). The three days are exclusive of Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays.

**Jury Duty/Lawfully Issued Subpoenas:** All employees who are summoned for jury duty or lawfully subpoenaed to appear in court shall be entitled to a leave of absence from their respective educational responsibilities--without loss of pay, vacation time, or existing leave days. Whenever a prospective juror is dismissed before the end of the working day, the employee will return to his/her official duties. Compensation paid to the employee for serving on jury duty is to be kept by the employee.

**Military Leave:** Employees of the district shall be entitled to military leave without loss of pay, seniority, or efficiency rating for one or more periods not exceeding a total of 15 workdays in one year. Saturdays, Sundays, and state holidays may not be included in these 15 days unless the Saturday, Sunday, or holiday is a regularly scheduled workday for the employee. In the event an employee is called upon to serve during an emergency, he/she will be entitled to such leave of absence for a period not exceeding 30 additional days.

Necessary leave for families of service members could qualify under the Family and Medical Leave Act.

**Professional Leave:** Professional leave may be granted when teachers are attending a meeting of an organization in which they are officers. Generally speaking, an officer is a president, vice president, secretary, or treasurer. The district may also send teachers to various meetings as representatives for which professional leave would also apply; however, such leave must have the specific approval of the superintendent or his/her designee.

*Please adhere to the following guidelines when considering professional development outside of the district:*

**Reservations to attend a conference may not be made until a request for professional development has been approved.** If an employee makes airline or hotel reservations prior to approval and the conference request is not approved, the employee may be responsible for all incurred expenses.

1. Conference attendance will be limited to a minimum number of people from any one school attending the same workshop/conference. Minimum number of people is determined at the principal's discretion.
2. Conference attendance must be aligned with the four focus areas of the district strategic plan (Future Focus, Vision and Beliefs, Nurturing Relationships, Quality Design), with the school improvement plans, or a requirement of the state or federal guidelines.

### **Out of District – One Day Professional Development**

1. Registration should not be made until approval has been granted.
2. Registration and mileage will be reimbursed according to policy.
3. Meals will not be reimbursed for a one-day conference/professional development.

4. Carpooling should occur if more than one is attending the same workshop/conference.

## Sick Leave Bank

Rock Hill Schools maintains a district-wide Sick Leave Bank for active duty employees who earn sick leave. The purpose of the Sick Leave Bank is to protect eligible employees from undue financial burdens which might result when extended absence from work is necessary due to a catastrophic personal illness or accident or when an extended absence is due to such illness or accident involving an immediate family member.

The bank will be administered by a Sick Leave Bank Board comprised of two teachers elected by teachers who are members of the bank; a school administrator elected by school administrators who have joined the bank; two classified employees representing different service areas elected by classified employees who are bank members; and a district office representative elected by bank members employed at the district level. The Employee Well-Being Manager from the Human Resources department and a representative from the Accounting Department will serve as ex-officio members of the Bank Board. As well as the District Lead Nurse to provide advice on medical terminology and diagnosis in paperwork provided to the Sick Leave Bank Board. Two members will rotate off the board annually. Terms for elected members shall be three years. The Board year will be from August 1 through July 31. All representatives to the Sick Leave Bank Board must be members of the Sick Leave Bank.

The Bank Board will receive requests for use of days from the Sick Leave Bank and will decide on these requests and upon appeals arising from their decisions according to the regulations contained in this document. The board may make suggestions for improving the operation of the Bank. However, any changes to these regulations and guidelines must be approved by Rock Hill Schools Board of Trustees.

The Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources will issue an annual report to the membership and to the Board of Trustees.

**Definitions:** A “catastrophic illness or accident” is usually so severe that it is life-threatening and/or may leave significant residual disability. It requires an employee’s absence in excess of 12 consecutive working days. Elective surgery and normal pregnancy and delivery are excluded. For purposes of this policy, the sick leave bank committee will determine whether the illness or accident is catastrophic based on information presented, the extent of impairment to an employee’s ability to function, and the employee’s particular circumstances.

This plan will provide extended sick leave to a member/employee for a physician-certified prolonged catastrophic illness or accident so severe to oneself or an immediate family member that attendance of the employee is impossible.

- **“Immediate family member”** is defined as a spouse or dependent child of the employee.

- **Prolonged illness** is defined as an illness which extends over 20 or more consecutive working days.
- **An immediate family member** is defined as a spouse or **dependent** child (living within the employee's household).

**Eligibility:** All employees who are on full-time active duty with Rock Hill Schools and who earn sick leave are eligible to participate. Participation is voluntary; however, the bank will not operate with less than 30 percent participation.

To become a member, an employee must complete a membership application and contribute one day of sick leave during the open enrollment period. Additional contributions annually, or as needed, will be automatically transferred to the bank according to the procedures below.

**Procedures and Regulations for Membership:** Sick Leave Bank members must contribute one day of sick leave at the initial enrollment period and one additional day each year at the open enrollment period except as follows:

- In any year that the number of sick leave days in the bank is twice the number of members, no days will be contributed for that year, except by first-time members of the bank.
- At any time the total number of days in the bank reaches a level equal to or less than 25 percent of the number of members, an additional contribution of one day will be required and an open enrollment period declared.

An open enrollment period shall occur between July 1 and September 30 of each school year or within the first 30 working days on the job for new hires after August 31 of each school year. A special open enrollment may be declared should the bank become depleted.

Employees who initially choose not to participate in the bank may enroll at a subsequent open enrollment period. However, the employee must contribute a number of days equal to those he/she would have contributed had he/she been a member since the initial enrollment opportunity at hiring or at the initial open enrollment period. In addition, a six-month qualification period will be required prior to any application for use of the bank.

All contributions to the bank remain the property of the bank and under no circumstances can a member withdraw his/her accumulated days from the bank. All contributions to the bank will remain in force for the fiscal year in which they are contributed. However, a member may cancel his/her membership during the open enrollment period by written notification to the Sick Leave Bank Board.

**Regulations for Use of the Bank:** For information on regulations, employees are requested to refer to the school board policy [GCCAAA-R](#).

## Nursing Mothers

As per the [PUMP for Nursing Mothers Act](#) subsection (a), the District will provide a reasonable break time for an employee to express breast milk for her nursing child for one year after the child's birth and a place, other than a bathroom, that is shielded from view and from intrusion from co-workers and the public, which may be used by an employee to express breast milk.

## Vacation

Vacation for twelve-month employees accrues on the basis of 5/6 of a day of vacation for each month worked for a total of 10 days per year. For fractions of a month worked, the number of days worked is figured as opposed to the number of working days in any given month. Once the total number of vacation days is compiled, if a person has earned any fraction more than a whole day, the fraction is figured as a whole day.

Twelve-month employees who have less than two weeks paid vacation may take up to a maximum of two weeks vacation; however, the extra days taken will be without pay.

There is no limit on the number of accumulated vacation days; however, employees may not use more than twenty (20) vacation workdays per year. Vacation time may be taken as half days or full days only. If employees retire or resign, a maximum of two weeks of accrued days will be honored.

## Retirement

In June 2012, the State Legislature passed an act which revised the South Carolina Retirement System and established new rules for retirement based on when someone joined the retirement system. There are now two classes of members: **Class Two** and **Class Three**. Class Two members entered (started paying into) the SC Retirement System prior to July 1, 2012. Class Three members entered on or after July 1, 2012. For more information, contact PEBA Retirement Systems at 1-888-260-9430.

### **Normal Retirement (Unreduced Benefit)**

#### **Class Two Members:**

- 28 years of service on the date of retirement, five years of which must be earned; or
- Age 65 or older on the date of retirement with five years of earned service.

Class Three Members:

- Meet the rule of 90. This means that a person's age and years of service must add up to 90. For example, a member who is 56 years old and has at least 34 years of service, eight years of which must be earned, would be eligible for normal retirement (56 + 34 = 90); or
- Age 65 or older on the date of retirement with eight years of earned service.

**Early Retirement (Reduced Benefit)**

Class Two Members:

- Age 60 with at least five years of earned service. Your benefit is permanently reduced 5 percent for each year of age less than 65; or
- Age 55 or older with 25 years of service, five years of which must be earned. Your benefit is permanently reduced 4 percent for each year of service less than 28.

Class Three Members:

- Age 60 with at least eight years of earned service. Your benefit is permanently reduced 5 percent for each year of age less than 65.

**Optional Retirement Plan (ORP):** The South Carolina General Assembly has passed legislation that provides, as an alternative to participation in the South Carolina Retirement System, an optional retirement program for all employees of South Carolina Public School districts hired after June 30, 2003.

The state ORP is a defined **contribution** plan. Employers and employees contribute to a fund for which only the contribution is defined. The level of retirement benefit may rise or fall based on investment performance. An employee is not eligible to participate in the state ORP unless the employee is eligible for membership in the South Carolina Retirement System.

In contrast, the SCRS is a defined **benefit** plan. Employers and employees contribute to a fund for which a clearly defined and guaranteed level of benefit will be paid to retirees. These promised benefits cannot be reduced. Please contact the Finance Department (981-1000) for further information on this plan.

**EAP:** The District offers an Employee Assistance Program provided through First Sun EAP to all district employees and their immediate family members. Counselors are on call twenty-four hours a day, every day, including holidays and weekends. Initial consultation services are free of charge, and all calls are confidential. Following are some of the areas in which assistance is provided:

- |                        |                                  |
|------------------------|----------------------------------|
| ● Counseling Services  | ● Financial Consulting           |
| ● Legal Services       | ● Parenting/Adoption Resources   |
| ● Adult Care Resources | ● College Consultation Resources |
| ● Childcare Resources  |                                  |

For more information or to participate in the program, call **1-800-968-8143** or their website, [www.firstsuneap.com](http://www.firstsuneap.com)

## Salary Information

The district has salary scales for administrative, teacher, support, maintenance, and transportation staff. Click [here](#) for the link to [salary scales](#). Salaries for new employees or those moving to new positions are determined by considering experience and other factors. Because the district receives state funds for teachers' salaries, their certificates (degree level and years of experience) determine their pay level.

All employees are paid yearly for days worked in a given year divided into 12 equal payments, except for activity bus drivers and Challenger employees. Checks are issued on the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month or on the last working day before the 25<sup>th</sup>.

## Deductions

**Taxes:** Taxes are determined by Federal and State income tax charts.

**Flexible Benefits Plans (Money Plus):** MoneyPlus, administered by WageWorks, is a tax-favored accounts program made available through the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) code to stretch your medical and dependent care dollars. With MoneyPlus, you elect to contribute an annual amount from your salary, and it is deducted from your paycheck, before taxes, to pay your eligible medical and dependent care expenses. As you incur eligible expenses during the plan year, you request reimbursement from WageWorks.

**Insurance:** Health insurance, dental insurance, disability insurance, and life insurance are offered to every full-time employee. A premium for plans chosen by the employee will be deducted based on an employee's pay cycle – monthly.

**Retirement:** All permanent full-time or permanent part-time employees (with the exception of bus drivers) must participate in the S.C. Retirement System (SCRS) or State Optional Retirement Plan (ORP). The employee retirement rate for SCRS and State ORP is 9.00% which will be deducted from the employee's gross pay. If the employee is a member of the Police Officer Retirement System (PORS), 9.75% will be deducted from the employee's gross pay.

**FICA (Social Security):** Until the gross yearly salary reaches \$118,500.00, a deduction of 6.2 percent (average) of the gross monthly salary will be made.

**FICAHI (Medicare Tax):** A deduction of 1.45 percent of the gross monthly salary will be made.

**Absences Not Covered By Leave:** A full day's pay will be deducted for each day the employee is absent. A half day's pay will be deducted for any part of a half-day.