



# ***Bedford County Public Schools***

## **Employee Handbook**

*August 2016*

## **Notice**

This handbook is provided as an easy reference to assist employees in understanding the policies and practices of Bedford County Public Schools. For more information, employees should refer to the Bedford County School Board Policy Manual and Regulations. Copies are maintained in each school library and school principal's office, in the Bedford County public libraries, and in the superintendent's office at the School Board Administration Building. If there are questions concerning the contents of this handbook or in understanding policies or procedures, feel welcome to consult with your school principal or immediate supervisor.

This handbook does not constitute a contract. Bedford County Public Schools, as the employer, reserves the right at any time to adjust or make modifications regarding procedures at its sole discretion.

# **Bedford County Public Schools**

**310 South Bridge Street**

**P.O. Box 748**

**Bedford, Virginia 24523**

## **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Bedford County School System is to ensure that all children of school age in Bedford County receive the highest quality education appropriate to their individual needs and abilities.

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**Bedford County Public Schools**  
School Administration Building  
310 South Bridge Street  
P.O. Box 748  
Bedford, Virginia 24523  
(540) 586-1045 FAX:  
(540) 586-7703  
Website: [www.bedford.k12.va.us](http://www.bedford.k12.va.us)

Dr. Douglas Schuch	Superintendent
Dr. Cherie Whitehurst	Deputy Superintendent - Instruction
Dr. Mac Duis	Chief Operations Officer
Tim Parker	Director of Human Resources
Dr. Edward Hoisington	Director of Technology and Media
Randy Hagler	Chief Financial Officer
Tim Overstreet	Director of Instruction
Dr. Tony Francis	Director Elementary/Secondary Serv.
Sara Staton	Director of Special Services
Kimberly Morris	Special of Services Supervisor
Joshua Neighbors	Supervisor Secondary Special Education
Kelly Jennings	Supervisor Elementary & Adaptive Special Education
Patricia Knox	Supervisor of Health Services
Melanie Simmons	Supervisor of Grants and Pre-School
Mark Blankenship	Supervisor of Testing/Planning
Tracy Piestrak	Supervisor of Alternative Education
Kimberly Halterman	BSTC Administrator
Cathey Burks	Title I Coordinator
Todd Reichert	Supervisor of Reading & English
Caroline Wray	Supervisor of Personalized Learning
Dawn Verhoeff	Supervisor of Science and Gifted
Sarah Danaher	Math Supervisor
Ryan Edwards	Coordinator Public Inform. & Community Outreach
Dr. Fred Conner	Assistant Director of Instruction
Gary Lowry	Safety & Security Manager
Karen Arthur	Supervisor of School Nutrition
Linda Welch	Field Manager – School Nutrition
Pat Whorley	Supervisor of Transportation
Jennifer Neel	Transportation Coordinator
Dennis Overstreet	Supervisor of Maintenance
Charles Peterson	Clerk of the Works
Randy Barlow	Environmental Services Coordinator

**Bedford County School Board**

**Chairman**

Mr. Gary Hostutler (4)  
101 Paddock Lane  
Forest, VA 24551

Mr. Jason Johnson (2)  
6735 White House Rd.  
Moneta, VA 24121

Dr. John Hicks, Jr. (3)  
3579 Evington Road  
Evington, VA 24550

**Vice-Chairman**

Ms. Julie Bennington (5)  
108 Shadwell Drive  
Lynchburg, VA 24503

Mrs. Susan Kirby(6)  
926 Watson Place  
Bedford, VA 24523

Mr. Richard Downey (1)  
16 Duma Circle  
Goodview, VA 24095

Mr. Martin Leamy (7)  
2523 Sheep Creek Rd.  
Bedford, VA 24523

# School Directory

## Secondary Schools

### **Bedford Science and Technology Center**

600 Edmund Street, Bedford, VA 24523  
Ph.: 540-586-3933 Fax: 540- 586-7711  
Kimberly Halterman Administrator

### **Jefferson Forest High School**

1 Cavalier Circle, Forest, VA 24551  
Ph.: 434-525-2674 Fax: 434-525-0106  
Dr. Lee Ann Calvert Principal  
Troy Doss Assistant  
Jean Marie Johnston Assistant  
Donnie Norman Assistant

### **Liberty High School**

100 Liberty Minuteman Dr., Bedford, VA 24523  
(540) 586-2541 FAX: 540-586-7720  
Dr. Kathleen S. Dills Principal  
Brian W. Wilson Assistant  
Kelly Miller Assistant

### **Staunton River High School**

1095 Golden Eagle Dry, Moneta, VA 24121.  
Ph: 540-297-7151 Fax: 540-297-4514  
Dr. Josh Cornett Principal  
David M. Forbes Assistant  
Rebecca Pierce Assistant

### **Alternative Education Center**

311 South Bridge Street, Bedford, VA 24523  
(540) 586-1045 ext. 272 FAX: 540-586-7740  
Ms. Tracy Piestrak Supervisor

## Middle Schools

### **Bedford Middle School**

503 Longwood Avenue, Bedford, VA 24523  
(540) 586-7735 FAX: 540-586-4957  
Rhetta J. Watkins Principal  
Earnie R. Sawyer Assistant

### **Forest Middle School**

100 Ashwood Drive, Forest, VA 24551  
(434) 525-6630 FAX: 434-525-1284  
Scott A. Simmons Principal  
Paul T. Nazigian Assistant  
Melissa A. Palmer Assistant

### **Staunton River Middle School**

1293 Golden Eagle Drive, Moneta, VA 24121  
(540) 297-4152 FAX: 540- 297-4076  
Dr. Karen Woodford Principal  
Justin M. Tucker Assistant

# Elementary Schools

## **Bedford Elementary School**

806 Tiger Trail Road, Bedford, VA 24523  
(540) 586-0275 (540) 586-7619 (FAX)  
Scott E. Graham Principal  
Denise M. Gerstler Assistant

## **Bedford Primary School**

807 College Street, Bedford, VA 24523  
(540) 586-8339 (540) 586-7654 (FAX)  
Lisa L. Dellis Principal

## **Big Island Elementary School**

1114 Schooldays Road, Big Island, VA 24526  
(434) 299-5863 (434) 299-6037 (FAX)  
Andy N. Bliss Principal

## **Boonsboro Elementary School**

1234 Eagle Circle, Lynchburg, VA 24503  
(434) 384-2881 (434) 384-4661 (FAX)  
Beth R. Williams Principal

## **Forest Elementary School**

1 Scholar Lane, Forest, VA 24551  
(434) 525-2681 (434) 525-7186 (FAX)  
Lorri B. Manley Principal

## **Goodview Elementary School**

1374 Rivermont Academy Rd., Goodview, VA 24095  
(540) 892-5674 (540) 892-5677 (FAX)  
Edwin L. Zimmerman Principal  
Traci B. Oakes Assistant

## **Huddleston Elementary School**

1027 Huddleston Road, Huddleston, VA 24104  
(540) 297-5144 (540) 297-8230 (FAX)  
Aprille A. Monroe Principal

## **Moneta Elementary School**

12718 Old Moneta Road, Moneta, VA 24121  
(540) 297-4411 (540) 297-3280 (FAX)  
Shawn T. Trosper Principal

## **Montvale Elementary School**

One Little Patriot Drive, Montvale, VA 24122  
(540) 947-2241 (540) 947-5300 (FAX)  
Krista L. Moore Principal

## **New London Academy**

12400 E. Lynchburg-Salem Trnpg, Forest, VA 24551  
(434) 525-2177 (434) 525-0935 (FAX)  
Tammy S. Parlier Principal

## **Otter River Elementary School**

1044 Otter River Drive, Goode, VA 24556  
(540) 586-9210 (540) 586-7635 (FAX)  
Georgia W. Hairston Principal

## **Stewartsville Elementary School**

1138 Wildcat Road, Goodview, VA 24095  
(540) 890-2174 (540) 890-0955 (FAX)  
Dr. Susan C. Mele Principal

## **Thomas Jefferson Elementary School**

1255 Patriot Place, Forest, VA 24551  
(434) 534-6159 (434) 534-6240 (FAX)  
John "Andy" Greenough Principal  
Monica B. Floyd Assistant



## **General Information**

The following headings and topics are meant as an overview of the employment policies adopted by the Bedford County Public Schools Board. The actual policies complete with full text are located on the Bedford County Public Schools website which is found at [www.bedford.k12.va.us](http://www.bedford.k12.va.us). On the home page click on “Board Docs” which is located in the “Quick Links” section, located on the lower right hand side. From the Board Docs page you will click on “Policies” and then click on “Personnel”. A drop down menu of policy topics will appear.

### **Equal Employment Opportunities**

Bedford County Public Schools shall adhere to a policy of equal employment opportunities for all employees. It is the policy of the School Board to not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, age, national origin, marital status, disability or sex in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in its programs and activities. Tim Parker, Director of Human Resources, is designated as the person responsible regarding assurances of non-discrimination and may be reached at the following address: 310 S. Bridge St, Bedford, VA 24523, and telephone number (540) 586-1045. Reference: School Board Policy – GB & GBA

### **Sexual Harassment**

It is the policy of the Bedford County School Board to maintain a working and learning environment for all its employees and students that provides for fair and equitable treatment, including freedom from sexual harassment. It is prohibited for any employee or student, male or female, to harass another employee or student by making unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors, or engaging in other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: (1) submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for employment or academic decision affecting the employee or student; (2) such conduct creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive working or learning environment; or, (3) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of the individual's employment or participation in school programs.

The Bedford County School Board does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, age, national origin, marital status, disability or sex in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in its programs and activities. Tim Parker, Director of Human Resources, is designated as the responsible person regarding assurances of non-discrimination. He may be reached at the following address: 310 S. Bridge St., Bedford, VA 24523, and telephone number 540-586-1045. Reference: School Board Policy – GB & GBA

## **Drug-Free Work Force**

The Bedford County School Board is committed to maintaining a Drug-Free Work Force.

The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of a controlled substance (including alcohol or anabolic steroids) by any employee on school property, at any school activity, or on any school-sponsored trip is prohibited. Any employee charged with any drug related crime occurring under the circumstances described above shall notify the superintendent within five (5) days after such charges are placed. Compliance with this provision is a condition of employment. Any employee charged shall be admitted to random drug testing.

Reference: School Board Policy – GBEA

## **Tobacco-Free School for Staff**

Smoking, chewing, or any other use of any tobacco products by staff is prohibited on school property. For the purposes of this policy, school property shall mean all property, including vehicles, owned, leased, rented or otherwise used by the school division. Staff found to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Reference: School Board Policy – GBEC

## **Alcohol Abuse by Staff**

It is the policy of the Commonwealth of Virginia, this locality, and the Bedford County School Board, that the abuse of alcohol shall not be tolerated. Staff and employees are expected to set an example for their students in this regard. The safety and welfare of students is of prime importance to the School Board.

Any employee, who is charged with two or more offenses of driving while intoxicated, based on events that occurred within three years of each other, shall notify the superintendent within forty-eight (48) hours of such charge.

Such convictions shall be grounds for dismissal or other disciplinary action. If such employee is not dismissed, he or she may be required to submit to regular alcohol testing as a condition to further employment. In addition, such employee may be required to participate in alcohol treatment and/or counseling.

Reference: School Board Policy – GBEBB

## **Staff Weapons in School**

The Bedford County School Board is committed to maintaining a safe and secure working and learning environment. Employees are prohibited from carrying, bringing, using or possessing any weapon, as defined below, in any school building, on school

grounds, in any school vehicle or at any school-sponsored activity without the authorization of the school or the school division.

Such weapons include, but are not limited to:

- Any pistol, shotgun, stun gun, taser, revolver, other firearm listed in section 22.1-277.01(D), of the Code of Virginia, designed or intended to propel a projectile of any kind, including a rifle,
- Toy guns and look-alike guns,
- Any dirk, knife, or razor,
- Slingshots,
- Spring sticks,
- Brass or metal knuckles, blackjacks,
- Any flailing instrument which may be known as a nunchahka, nunchuck, nunchaku, shuriken, or fighting chain,
- Any disc of whatever configuration, having at least two points or pointed blade, and which is designed to be thrown known as a throwing star or oriental dart,
- Explosives, and
- Destructive devices as defined in section 22.1-277.01(D), of the Code of Virginia, or other dangerous articles.

Reference: School Board Policy – GBEB

## **Political Activities for Staff**

The Bedford County School Board recognizes the right of its employees to engage in political activities. Such political activity must occur outside regular work hours and off school property. It is the responsibility of the employees to make it clear that their actions are made as individuals and that they do not represent the views of the school division.

Reference: School Board Policy – GBG

## **Tutoring for Pay**

Professional employees may not be paid for tutoring students enrolled in a class under their direction.

Reference: GCQAB

## **Gifts and Solicitations**

The Bedford County School Board prohibits the solicitation of gifts between students and staff.

Reference: School Board Policy - GBI

## Outside Employment

Professional employees are encouraged not to engage in outside employment. Such outside employment could distract or interfere with the employee's job performance for the school division. School principals are specifically prohibited from outside employment without prior individual approval by the School Board.

Reference: School Board Policy – GCQAB

## Sick Leave Benefits

### Sick Leave

With approval, sick leave may be used for personal illness, or for illness or death of an immediate family member requiring the attendance of an employee. Physician certification of need for leave and/or clearance for return to work may be required from the employee.

All full-time employees earn one (1) day of sick leave at the end of each month of employment, except as otherwise provided herein. Contracted employees will continue to earn additional sick leave during absences as long as they have accumulated leave to cover the absence. Once accumulated leave is depleted, an employee will only earn the one (1) day of sick leave for a month in which he/she is actually on duty for one-half or more of the available work days in that month. However, should an employee use more sick leave than he/she has accrued, the employee will be permitted to borrow sick leave days not yet earned for that contract year before having pay penalized. In the event the employee does not then earn the borrowed sick leave days, an appropriate deduction from the employee's pay shall be made to reimburse Bedford County Public Schools for the unearned time. Unused sick leave may be accumulated from year to year.

Bedford County Public Schools may accept up to ninety (90) transferred sick days earned by a certificated employee in another school division within Virginia, subject to acceptance by the Superintendent.

Reference: School Board Policy – GCBD & GCBD-R

### Sick Leave Bank

Contracted employees may choose to participate in the countywide sick leave bank. Two (2) sick leave days must be donated initially to the sick leave bank. The members will be notified if further donations are required. The superintendent will consider requests to use the sick leave bank on an individual basis. A maximum of 60 sick leave days may be drawn from the bank each school year. **In most cases** employees hired after January 1 2014 **are not eligible** for the sick leave bank. Please contact the finance department if you need additional information regarding participation eligibility.

Reference: School Board Policy – GCBDD

# **Employee Work Schedules**

## **Work Schedules**

The workday for full-time licensed and professional staff will be a minimum of seven hours and thirty minutes and will continue until professional responsibilities to the student and school are completed. Administrative meetings, curriculum development, pupil supervision, assigned duties, parent conferences, group or individual planning and extra-curricular activities may require hours beyond the stated minimum. Work schedules for other employees will be defined by the superintendent or his/her designee, consistent with the Fair Labor Standards Act and the provisions of this policy.

## **Workweek Defined**

Working hours for all employees not exempted under the Fair Labor Standards Act, including secretaries, bus drivers, cafeteria, janitorial and maintenance personnel will conform to federal and state regulations. The superintendent will ensure that job positions are classified as exempt or non-exempt and that employees are made aware of such classifications. Supervisors will make every effort to avoid circumstances, which will require non-exempt employees to work more than 40 hours each week. For purposes of compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act, the workweek for school district employees will be 12:00 a.m. Sunday until 11:59 p.m. Saturday.

## **Overtime and Compensatory Time**

The Bedford County School Board discourages overtime work by non-exempt employees. A non-exempt employee may not work overtime without the express approval of his/her supervisor. All overtime work must be expressly approved in writing by the superintendent or his/her designee. All supervisory personnel must monitor overtime on a weekly basis and report such time to the superintendent or his/her designee. Principals and supervisors will monitor employees' work, will ensure that overtime provisions of this policy and the Fair Labor Standards Act are followed and will ensure that all employees are compensated for any overtime worked. Principals or supervisors may need to adjust daily schedules to prevent non-exempt employees from working more than 40 hours in a workweek. Accurate and complete time sheets of actual hours worked during the workweek will be signed by each employee and submitted to the finance officer. The compensation clerk will review work records of employees on a regular basis to make an assessment of overtime use.

In lieu of overtime compensation, non-exempt employees may receive compensatory time off at a rate of not less than one and one-half (1.5) hours for each one hour of overtime worked, if such compensatory time

- (1) is pursuant to an agreement between the employer and employee reached before overtime work is performed, and
- (2) is authorized by the immediate supervisor.

Employees will be allowed to use compensatory time within a reasonable period after requesting such use if the requested use of the compensatory time does not unduly disrupt the operation of the school division. Employees may accrue a maximum of 240 compensatory time hours before they will be provided overtime pay at the rate earned by the employee at the time the employee receives such payment. In addition, upon leaving the school division, an employee must be paid for any unused compensatory time at the rate of not less than the higher of

- (1) the average regular rate received by the employee during his/her last three years of employment, or
- (2) the final regular rate received by the employee.

Non-exempt employees whose workweek is less than 40 hours will be paid at the regular rate of pay for time worked up to 40 hours. Such employees will be provided overtime pay or compensatory time as provided above for working more than 40 hours in a workweek.

Employees will be provided with a copy of this policy and will be required to sign this policy to acknowledge their understanding of overtime and compensatory time provisions. Such signed policy will constitute the written agreement required in this section.

### **Attendance Expectations**

All employees are expected to be present during all work hours. Absence without prior approval, chronic absences, habitual tardiness or abuses of designated working hours are all considered neglect of duty and will result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Reference: School Board Policy – GAA

# **SUPERINTENDENT’S ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The Superintendent’s Advisory Committee is a channel for improving communication between teachers and Central Office administrative staff.

Each school will have a member on this committee. The committee will meet a minimum of three times during the school year (October, January and April). Additional meetings will be held when warranted. Meetings will be held after school hours. A time limit will be set on the meeting to focus discussion.

The intent of these meetings is to search for positive, constructive solutions and improvements concerning instructional issues.

For the meeting agenda, teachers may submit their concerns on an instructional issue that goes beyond any one school using the form below. These items are to be submitted by way of their school representative and at least two weeks prior to the scheduled meeting.

-----

## **Superintendent’s Advisory Committee**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Concern: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Explanation: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please give this completed form to your faculty representative on the Superintendent’s Advisory Committee at least two weeks prior to the next scheduled meeting.

## **Grievance Procedures**

The School Board encourages communication to interchange ideas and viewpoints between employees and their school principals or immediate supervisors. The superintendent, as the chief administrative officer, is also available to communicate with employees and the School Board welcomes input from employees at its public meetings.

Employee concerns or problems should be discussed openly with the immediate supervisor to bring about resolution of the issue. When disputes of teachers or other professional staff cannot be resolved, the grievance procedures adopted by the Virginia Board of Education may be implemented, if appropriate. Inquiries for information and copies of the grievance procedures are available by contacting our office of Human Resources.

For a teacher or professional staff member, “Grievance” means, for the purpose of Part II, a complaint or a dispute by a teacher relating to his or her employment, including but not necessarily limited to disciplinary actions other than dismissal or placing on probation; the application or interpretation of personnel policies, procedures, rules, and regulations, ordinances, and statutes; acts of reprisal against a teacher for filing or processing a grievance, participating as a witness in any step, meeting or hearing relating to a grievance, or serving as a member of a fact-finding panel; and complaints of discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, political affiliation, handicap, age, national origin, or sex. “Grievance” means, for the purpose of Part III, a complaint or a dispute by a teacher relating to his or her employment involving dismissal or placing on probation. The term “grievance” shall not include a complaint or dispute by a teacher relating to the establishment and revision of wages or salaries, position classifications, or general benefits; suspension of a teacher or nonrenewal of the contract of a teacher who has not achieved continuing contract status; the establishment, decrease in enrollment or abolition of a particular subject or insufficient funding; hiring, transfer, assignment, and retention of teachers within the school division; suspension from duties in emergencies; or the methods, means, and personnel by which the school division’s operations are to be carried on. While these management rights are reserved to the school board, failure to apply, where applicable, these rules, regulations, policies, or procedures as written or established by the school board is grievable.

For unresolved disputes of support staff regarding dismissal, suspension, or other disciplinary actions, the School Board has established a procedure for adjusting grievances that is similar to the Virginia Board of Education procedures for teachers, except the procedure for a hearing before a fact-finding panel is not included.

Reference: School Board Policy – GBM, GBMA, GBMA-R



## **Professional Development for Paraprofessionals**

Paraprofessionals (aides) may elect to complete a program of professional development beyond required training to enhance their skills and functioning in a school setting. Those successfully completing the annual program of professional development will receive a stipend equal to seven percent of the annual salary for aides on Grade 5/Step A of the aide salary scale for Bedford County Public Schools. Specific requirements for the program, including qualifying activities and procedures for documentation, will be communicated to paraprofessionals by school principals in September of each school year.

The federal legislation, *No Child Left Behind*, has requirements for paraprofessionals to be highly qualified. Paraprofessionals meeting the definition of highly qualified in the legislation, by completing two years of study at an institution of higher education, obtaining an Associate's degree or higher degree, or demonstrating successful performance on the ParaPro assessment, shall receive a one-time only stipend of \$500.

## **Student Loan Forgiveness for Teachers**

With the enactment of the "Taxpayer-Teacher Protection Act of 2004", Congress established the Teacher Loan Forgiveness Program. The purpose of this program is to encourage teachers to enter and continue in the teaching profession in elementary and secondary schools that serve low-income families. Teachers who have borrowed funds through the Federal Stafford Loan or the Federal Direct Loan programs and have taught for five consecutive years at an eligible school may qualify to have a portion of their student loan balances forgiven. Loan forgiveness can be granted for up to \$5,000 for teachers meeting the criteria and for up to \$17,500 for certain highly qualified secondary math teachers, secondary science teachers, and special education teachers. The federal listing of eligible schools is updated periodically. If you think you may qualify for student loan forgiveness under this program, you may contact the Human Resources Department at the School Board Office for more information.

## **Bedford County Public Schools – Health Concerns**

All BCPS employees are required to fill out the Employee Health Data Form annually. Working in the school environment means coming in contact with a variety of childhood illnesses. When the condition indicates the school nurse will notify staff of any illnesses confirmed by a physician that might be of concern. Some of the more common occurrences are: chickenpox, influenza, erythema infectiosum (human parvovirus B19 infection, formerly called Fifth Disease), streptococcal bacterial infections, staphylococcal infections, and gastrointestinal viruses. In addition to these there are also parasites such as head lice and scabies. Some other conditions that may be of concern but that occur rarely include mumps, rubella, measles, and pertussis. Exposure to some of these conditions may require staff members that are immune compromised or pregnant to consult with their physicians and school supervisor.

Confidentiality requires that the identity of the ill person not be revealed to staff. With many of these diseases, the individuals are infectious before any signs or symptoms of illness develop, and may be noninfectious by the time a rash appears. For these reasons focusing on one individual and treating him or her as the sole source of one of these infections will likely lead to continued, unrecognized exposures.

As a staff member you may wish to share your medical condition or pregnancy with the school nurse, so that this information may be incorporated into any disease control plans or actions.

## **BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION**

The Bedford County School Board believes that all students have a right to a safe and healthy school environment free from bullying and harassment and is committed to promoting mutual respect, tolerance and acceptance. The Bedford County School Board recognizes that a positive and productive educational environment is essential for students to achieve high academic standards.

Therefore, the Bedford County School Board prohibits bullying and such conduct will result in disciplinary action. This prohibition includes the bullying of any person on school property, while participating in educational services, at school function, including bullying through the use of electronic technology. Bedford County School Board further prohibits reprisal, retaliation or false accusation against a target, witness or one with information about an act of bullying.

Reference: School Board Policy - JFD

## **Prevention of Sexual Misconduct and Abuse**

Educators and other employees can protect themselves from misunderstandings and false accusations by adhering to Bedford County Public Schools policies. School Board employees and volunteers should avoid appearances of impropriety when interacting with students. Educators, other employees, and volunteers should be aware of behaviors often associated with inappropriate conduct that can create an appearance of impropriety, including:

- Conducting ongoing private conversations with individual students that are unrelated to school activities or the well-being of the student and that take place in locations inaccessible to other;
- Inviting a student or students for home visits without informing parents;
- Visiting the homes of students without the knowledge of parents;
- Inviting students for social contact off school grounds without the permission or knowledge of parents; and
- Transporting students in personal vehicles without the knowledge of parents or supervisors.

Personal contact between adults and students must always be nonsexual, appropriate to the circumstances and unambiguous in meaning. Employees and volunteers should

respect boundaries consistent with their roles as educators, mentors and caregivers. Violations of these boundaries include:

- Physical contact with a student that could be reasonably interpreted as constituting sexual harassment;
- Showing pornography to a student;
- Unnecessarily invading a student's personal privacy;
- Singling out a particular student or group of students for personal attention and friendship beyond the bounds of appropriate educator/mentor-student relationship;
- Conversations of a sexual nature with students not related to the employee's professional responsibilities; and
- A flirtatious, romantic, or sexual relationship with a student.

### **Electronic Communication**

Digital technology and social networking provide multiple means for educators and school board employees to communicate with students. As with in-person communications, educators, other employees, and volunteers should avoid the appearance of impropriety and refrain from inappropriate electronic communications with students. Factors that may be considered in determining whether an electronic communication is inappropriate include but are not limited to:

- The subject, content, purpose, authorization, timing, and frequency of the communication;
- Whether there was an attempt to conceal the communication from supervisors and/or parents;
- Whether the communication could be reasonably interpreted as soliciting sexual contact or a romantic relationship; and
- Whether the communication was sexually explicit.

School board employees and volunteers have an obligation to report violation of the division's policies for preventing sexual misconduct to the principal or his or her designee or to the division superintendent. This obligation is in addition to the statutory responsibility to report suspected abuse and neglect.

## **Staff Dress Code – Policy GBEP**

The Bedford County School Board recognizes its employees as highly skilled professionals who have a unique role in the community as they interact with students, parents, and the community at large. Employees have a tremendous opportunity to set the tone and establish an environment which encourages learning and fosters respect for everyone. Employees are role models not only in their words and actions but also in their dress. The dress code defines consistent parameters of employee dress and provides a basis for determining appropriateness in order to maintain dignity and respect from the students and the community. Employees are expected to be in compliance with the student dress code as defined in the Bedford County *Code of Student Conduct* at all times.

The manner and dress of employees shall be business casual. Cleanliness and neatness are expected at all times. Responsibility for acceptable dress rests primarily with the employee. However, administrators and supervisors shall require acceptable dress on the part of all employees. The guidelines are applicable to all full-time and part-time employees as well as substitute employees, student teachers, college interns, and aides. Food service, school nurses, maintenance, custodial, and transportation personnel are expected to dress according to the guidelines established by their supervisors.

There may be some special circumstances that permit the relaxation of the dress code. Employees shall dress appropriately for the activity of the moment. Some examples include, but are not limited to: physical education teachers when teaching the physical education portion of the curriculum, art or other teachers when working with messy materials, teachers when working in laboratory classes or shops with dangerous equipment or materials, and staff when participating in special events (e.g., field days and field trips).

The following are examples of appropriate business casual attire from which the employee may choose:

### **For female employees:**

Dresses / shirts  
Blouses  
Sweater / turtleneck  
Suits  
Capris – below the knee  
Shoes / walking shoes

### **For male employees:**

Suits / dress slacks  
Sport coat or blazer  
Sweater / turtleneck  
Collared shirts/ polo shirt  
Shoes and socks / walking shoes

The following are examples of inappropriate attire:

Shorts, mini-skirts, mini-skorts, tops with thin straps unless covered by another top, tight fitting clothing, see-through or revealing clothing, unkempt or torn clothing, jeans, overalls, tee shirts, leggings, sweat pants and athletic clothing, rubber/plastic beach shoes/flip flops, and visible body piercing decorations other than the ears.

# BEDFORD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS EMPLOYEE SAFETY HANDBOOK

## **Risk Manager/Safety Coordinator: Tim Parker**

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**Revised: August 2007**

Bedford County Public Schools is dedicated to having a safety/loss control program, which in turn provides a safe work environment for employees in all departments. There are many responsibilities both for administration and you, the staff of Bedford County Public Schools. This program has multiple components which are important to the success of the program.

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## 1.0 EMPLOYEE SAFETY PROGRAM PURPOSE

Bedford County Public Schools is dedicated to providing a safe workplace for all its employees. Bedford County Public Schools recognizes that, through an effective safety/loss control program, our school system can reduce the frequency of workplace injuries, resulting in decreased lost time by employees.

This manual provides important information about procedures and programs that are relevant to job safety. For more detailed information about our Safety and Health Program, there is a hard copy on file at Bedford County Public Schools Human Resource Department.

## 2.0 HEALTH AND SAFETY COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

If an employee feels that he is assigned to work where conditions could affect his health, safety, or general welfare, he should report this to the Risk Manager/Safety Coordinator. The complaint must be in the form of a letter and give details of the condition(s) and how the employee believes it affects or will affect his health, safety, or general welfare. The employee should sign the letter; however, if he wishes to remain anonymous, a signature is not required.

Upon receipt of the complaint letter, the Risk Manager/Safety Coordinator will evaluate the condition(s) and institute any corrective action warranted. Within ten (10) working days following the receipt of the complaint, he will answer the complaint in writing stating whether or not the complaint is deemed to be valid and if not, why; what action has been or will be taken to correct or abate the condition(s); and a designated time period for correction or abatement. Answers to anonymous complaints will be posted for a period of three (3) working days on bulletin boards or in other places of common passage where the anonymous complaint may be reasonably expected to be seen by the complainant.

The Risk Manager/Safety Coordinator or a representative of the governing body will evaluate the complaint and begin action to correct or abate the condition(s) through arbitration or administrative sanctions or they may also find the complaint to be invalid. An answer will be sent to the complainant within ten (10) working days following receipt of the complaint, or the next regularly scheduled meeting of the governing body following receipt of the complaint, explaining decisions made and action taken or planned.

After the above steps are taken, if the complainant is still not satisfied with the results, he may file a complaint with the Commissioner of Labor. Complaints filed with the Commissioner of Labor shall include copies of all related correspondence with Bedford County Public Schools concerning the issue.

Copies of all complaints and answers thereto will be filed by the Risk Manager/Safety Coordinator who shall make them available to the Commissioner of Labor or his designated representative upon request.

## 3.0 EMPLOYEE'S RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Rights and responsibilities of employees shall include, but are not limited to, the following provisions:

- Each employee shall comply with Occupational Safety and Health Act standards and all rules, regulations, and orders issued pursuant to this program and the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, which are applicable to his or her own actions and conduct.
- Each employee shall be notified, by the placing of a notice on bulletin boards or other places of common passage, of any application for a permanent or temporary order granting the employer a variance from any provision of the OSHA Act or any standard or regulation promulgated under the Act.
- Employees shall be given the opportunity to participate in any hearing, which concerns an application, by the employer for a variance from a standard or regulation promulgated under the Act.

- Employees who may be adversely affected by a standard or variance issued pursuant to the Act or this program may file a petition with the Commissioner of Labor or whoever is responsible for the promulgation of the standard or the granting of the variance.
- Employees who have been exposed or are being exposed to toxic materials or harmful physical agents in concentrations or at levels in excess of that provided for by any applicable standard shall be provided with information on significant hazards to which they are or have been exposed, relevant symptoms, and proper conditions for safe use or exposure. Employees shall also be informed of corrective action being taken.
- Subject to regulations issued pursuant to this program, employees or an authorized representative of employees shall be given the right to request an inspection and to consult with the Risk Manager/Safety Coordinator at the time of the physical inspection of the worksite.
- Employees may bring to the attention of the Risk Manager/Safety Coordinator any violation or suspected violation of the standards or any other health or safety hazards.
- No employee shall be discharged or discriminated against because he has filed any complaint or instituted or caused to be instituted any proceeding or inspection under or relating to this program unless, the employee violates any rules, laws, etc.
- Any employee who believes he has been discriminated against or discharged in violation of subsection (h) of this section may file a complaint with the Risk Manager/Safety Coordinator alleging such discrimination. Such employee may also, within thirty (30) days after violation occurs, file a complaint with the Commissioner of Labor alleging such discrimination.
- Nothing in this or any other provision of this program shall be deemed to authorize or require any employee to undergo medical examination, immunization, or treatment for those who object thereto on religious grounds, except where it is necessary for the protection of the health or safety of others or when a medical examination may be reasonably required for performance of a specific job.
- Employees shall report any accident, injury, or illness resulting from their job, however minor it may appear, to Human Resources within 24 hours of the occurrence.

## 4.0 SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

All Bedford County Public Schools Supervisors shall be responsible for safe, properly planned work and safe work performances and proper training.

Supervisors shall maintain safe work conditions, reinforce for each employee to use personal protective equipment, oversee the responsibility for maintaining tools and equipment in good working order, and enforce safety regulations.

Supervisors shall assign jobs only to individuals who have been properly trained for the prospective job and maintain that proper safety equipment is being used.

Supervisors shall investigate all incidents immediately upon report from the employee.

Supervisors shall have formal training annually.

Supervisors shall report through the appropriate chain of command any instance where an employee under his/her supervision is not physically able to perform his/her duties.



## 5.0 DISCIPLINE FOR FAILURE TO FOLLOW SAFETY REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES

Any employee, regardless of status, who willfully and/or repeatedly violates, or causes to be violated, any safety and health standard or Bedford County Public Schools safety policy, program or procedure shall be subject to disciplinary action up to termination.

## 6.0 BEDFORD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS SAFETY PROGRAM SUMMARIES

### A. Bloodborne Pathogens Program

Employees who have initial contact with injured employees, students, or visitors to the site must adhere to the requirements of the Bedford County Public Schools Bloodborne Pathogens Program. These employees include maintenance, custodial, food service, some office staff, and any others who may provide emergency care to ill individuals.

Under this plan:

- Each covered employee is required to have refresher training on Bloodborne Pathogens each year.
- Kits will be provided to clean up potentially infectious materials. These kits include instructions.
- If an employee has a Bloodborne exposure, a Bloodborne pathogens exposure report can be obtained. This form is included with the Bloodborne Pathogens Program. The incident must be reported immediately to the Human Resources Department. The Risk Manager/Safety Coordinator will meet with you to discuss your options as stated in the complete Bloodborne Pathogens Program.

### B. Hazard Communications Program

The primary objective of the Hazardous Chemical Right-To-Know Law is to train employees about the hazardous chemicals that they work with or may be exposed to in a foreseeable emergency. In order to comply with this law, Bedford County Public Schools established its own Hazard Communication Program.

Chemicals and chemical processes are used to do a variety of functions in the school system. Many of the chemicals you work with every day can be hazardous, causing injuries, illness or even death.

Currently, all employees will be trained on Hazard Communications each year. It is very important that employees understand Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS). These are kept at each worksite and contain information on chemicals that individuals may come in contact with. The information contained on an MSDS includes emergency procedures, such as what to do if someone ingests a specific chemical or gets it in their eyes. These MSDS sheets are kept by each Department Supervisor.

You can protect yourself from chemical hazards by knowing proper chemical safety procedures such as:

- Identification
- Storage and Handling
- Personal Protection
- Emergency Response

### **C. Lockout/Tagout**

This program establishes requirements for the Lockout/Tagout/ Verification of energy isolation. It must be used to ensure that the machine or equipment is isolated from all potentially hazardous energy sources. Before employees perform any servicing or maintenance activities where unexpected energization, start-up or release of energy could cause injury, the equipment must be locked out, tagged out, and verified.

Lockout/Tagout/Verification Procedures must be considered as being among the most important safety control measures at Bedford County Public Schools. Failure of any employees to follow these procedures shall be considered a major and serious infraction of safety policy and may result in disciplinary action.

Lockout/Tagout/Verification Procedures apply to all contractors and contracted employees.

Each department shall provide training to ensure that the purpose and function of the energy control program are understood by employees and that the knowledge and skills required for the safe application, usage, and removal of the energy controls are acquired by employees.

The Risk Manager is responsible for the implementation of a review and revision process for this program. This entire program must be reviewed, at least annually, to ensure continuous and effective compliance with all applicable codes and regulations.

### **D. Electrical Safety**

The intent of the Electrical Safety and Related Work Practices Program (ESRWP) is to prevent electrical related injuries and property damage. The United States Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), promulgated the Electrical Safety Related Work Practice Regulations, 29 CFR 1910.331 to 1910.339 with regards to Subpart O (Machinery and Machine Guarding) and Subpart S (Electrical). The regulations became effective in December, 1990, except for training provisions, which became effective August 6, 1991.

Bedford County Public Schools relies on many different types of energy to power the equipment. Electricity is one of the most valuable and versatile forms of energy. Most of the equipment receives power from multiple energy sources, which interact with each other. Failure to respect its potential, or take proper safeguards in its use, creates conditions, which may result in bodily injury or property damage.

The Electrical Safety Program covers the following:

- Responsibilities
- Definition of terms
- Use of work practices and safety rules
- Use of power equipment
- Personal protection
- General protective equipment and tools
- Hazard warning and barricades
- Training

### **E. Ladder Safety**

**NEVER** use a ladder if it is damaged or bent. Check the steps of the ladder to make sure each step is safe, dry, and grease free. Don't trust temporary repairs of ladders. If the ladder is broken simply don't use it; instead, choose an appropriate ladder for the job. Above all, do not use chairs and tables in the place of ladders.

Check your surroundings before you place a ladder against a wall. Make sure electrical wires, tree branches, awnings, and other possible impediments are out of the way. The feet of the ladder must be on stable ground.

The bottom of the ladder should be one foot away from the wall for every four feet of ladder length. For example, if the ladder is to extend sixteen feet, the bottom of the ladder should be four feet from the wall.

- Using a ladder that is too short or too tall for the job is dangerous.
- Never place ladders on boxes or counter tops for extra reach.
- Do not lean over the side of the ladder or overreach.
- Always face the ladder when working.
- Do not use a ladder if you are tired, dizzy, or fatigued.
- Do not have more than one person on a ladder at a time.

All ladders in use throughout our school system are required to be identified with a maximum load capacity rating. In the interest of employee safety, we cannot permit this maximum to be exceeded. Therefore, any employee who is required in the performance of their duties to use a ladder not be at a “Working Weight” (\*see definition) that exceeds the posted maximum. Employees are expected to voluntarily observe and honor this requirement and to alert supervisors anytime they feel a potential hazard exists.

\*Working Weight is considered to be the individual’s personal weight plus the weight of any tools and equipment involved.

## **F. Compressed Gas**

It is the policy of Bedford County Public Schools that employees handling compressed gases are adequately trained in the inherent hazards of the cylinders and their contents, as well as proper handling, storage, and use according to OSHA and local requirements. Compressed gas cylinders can present a variety of hazards due to their pressure and /or contents. In addition to the standard required work practices for inert gases, hazardous gases may require additional controls and work practices including, but not limited to, the use of gas cabinets, gas monitors, emergency shutoffs, proper equipment design, leak testing procedures, and the use of air supplying respirators for certain highly toxic gases.

In addition, all compressed gases must be handled, stored, received and used in a safe manner consistent with this program. Compressed air shall not be used for cleaning or blow down activities unless air pressure is regulated to below 30 psig and areas have been isolated from pedestrian traffic.

Numerous potential physical and health hazards are associated with compressed gases, including explosion, poisoning, and impact by containers, fire, asphyxiation and exposure related illnesses.

## **G. Hand Tools Safety**

This policy provides basic safety guidelines for those employees who are required to work with powered and non-powered hand tools.

The department Supervisors will have the responsibility for ensuring that all powered and non-powered hand tools are operated in a safe manner.

## **H. Machine Guarding**

The purpose of the Machine Guarding Program is to establish and maintain practices that will protect Bedford County Public Schools employees from injuries as a result of rotating, moving or other actions of machinery.

This procedure establishes mandatory requirements for the assessment, design, implementation, operation, and maintenance of machine guarding and for training of personnel to properly use machine guarding.

As used in this procedure, machine guarding shall mean any device which effectively prevents personnel, contractors, subcontractors, contracted services or visitor from physical harm due to contact with any hazard present at any machine. Hazards shall include any machine, any part of a machine or any projectile from a machine, capable of crushing, puncturing, severing, breaking or otherwise injuring any body part.

## **I. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

The Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) program is directed at providing a standard guideline relative to the training, use, selection, storage and disposal of PPE. In conjunction with effective engineering and work practice controls, PPE will minimize risk of injury or acute/chronic health effects from exposure to chemical, physical, thermal or biological agents.

Employees involved in Bedford County Public Schools operations often perform a wide range of jobs, which, depending on the job, may require different personal protective equipment. To assess potential hazards and determine the appropriate protective equipment, department supervisors will conduct assessments of potential workplace hazards and the corresponding personal protective equipment.

Due to the variety of operations performed by personnel, supervisors are responsible for evaluating field sites and ensuring that the appropriate personal protective equipment is worn. However, it is the ultimate responsibility of the individual to ensure they attain the appropriate PPE. They should make requests for PPE to the department supervisor immediately.

## **J. Hearing Conservation**

Bedford County Public Schools Hearing Conservation Program establishes hearing conservation practices if an employee group is identified to have noise exposures equal or exceeding an 8-hour time-weighted average sound level (TWA) of 85 decibels (dBA).

## **K. Fall Prevention/Fall Protection Program**

The purpose of the Fall Prevention/Fall Protection Program is to address fall hazards through their elimination and control. The majority of this document contains interpretation and requirements of the OSHA 1910 and 1926 standards.

## **L. Fire Prevention/Hotwork**

This program is directed at ensuring proper handling, storage and use of flammable and combustible materials. It is also shall serve to provide the guidelines and requirements for fire prevention and protection including the safe and proper use of portable fire extinguishers, hoses and other fire protection equipment. In addition, it establishes the criteria and operating procedure for activities involving Hot Work.

The program applies to all Bedford County Public Schools employees and contractors handling, storing and using flammable and combustible materials. This program also applies to employees and contractors performing hot work activities and individuals potentially using portable fire extinguishers, hoses and other fire protection equipment.

## 7.0 EMPLOYEE SAFETY TRAINING POLICY

Bedford County Public Schools strives to provide a safe working environment. Required training will be performed for all Bedford County Public Schools employees annually. Not all elements are applicable to all job types. The elements of the training program will be as follows:

- Housekeeping
- Safety Committee Meetings
- Emergency Evacuation
- Personal Protective Equipment
- Respiratory Protection
- Hand Tools
- Ladder Safety
- Lockout/Tag out
- Mobile Equipment
- Electrical Safety
- Hazard Communication
- Compressed Gas Safety
- Machine Guarding
- Fall Prevention/Protection
- Slip and Fall Prevention
- Fire Prevention/Hot Work
- Bloodborne Pathogens/Exposure Control
- Hearing Conservation

The elements of each training session will depend on the job functions of the specific department for which the training is being conducted. All new employees will have had the Bedford County Public Schools New Employee Safety Training prior to performing any safety sensitive functions of their assigned duties.

## 8.0 DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING PROGRAM

### **Introduction**

The use of controlled substances is illegal on and off the job. If you are found under the influence of controlled substances, you will not be allowed to perform safety-sensitive functions on the job and you will be considered for dismissal as stated in Bedford County Public Schools policy.

Although the use of alcohol is legal, you may not report to work if any of the following apply:

1. When you have any detectable breath alcohol concentration, and/or
2. You refuse to take an alcohol test.

If you refuse to take a breath alcohol test or have any breath alcohol concentration, you will be considered for dismissal according to Bedford County Public Schools policy.

### **Conditions for Testing**

It is the policy of Bedford County Public Schools to adhere to the provisions of the Federal Drug Free Workplace Act in relation to drug and alcohol testing for all employee groups and to adhere to applicable Federal regulations.

### **Alcohol and Drug Testing**

Post-accident: Drug and Alcohol Tests are conducted after all commercial vehicle accidents in which the occurrence is definable as a preventable accident per Bedford County Public Schools Policy. In non-

vehicular employee injury cases, post injury drug and/or alcohol screens may be conducted per the treating physician's determination of reasonable suspicion.

Reasonable Suspicion: Drug and Alcohol Tests are conducted when the behavior or appearance of an employee that is characteristic of alcohol or drug misuse is observed. All reasonable suspicion reports will be verified by a trained individual before any testing of the individual in question will occur. If the trained individual determines that there is no basis for the reasonable suspicion, then no test will be performed.

Refusing to submit to a drug or alcohol test is prohibited by law. Refusing to be tested includes:

1. Failing to provide adequate urine, hair, or breath without a valid medical explanation.
2. Clearly obstructing the testing process, such as adulterating a specimen.
3. Outright refusal to participate.

## 9.0 Departmental Safety Rules

If any employee performs any task, which is a duty of another department, he/she is responsible for following the safety rules of that department.

NOTICE: All required personal protective equipment can be acquired through your Supervisor or Safety Committee.

1. An employee should never attempt to perform a task that he has not been instructed how to perform safely.
2. All accidents, no matter how minor, must be immediately reported to your supervisor. The supervisor should then immediately report the accident to the Risk Management Department.
3. Never attempt to lift objects that are too heavy for you; always ask for help. When lifting items, always wear a back support belt.
4. Always keep your work area clean and orderly; good housekeeping keeps workplace hazards to a minimum.
5. When performing maintenance on electrical equipment, always cut off the power source before performing these tasks. Do not perform any work in which you are not trained and licensed to do.
6. When dealing with sharp objects such as wire, metal, glass, etc., gloves must be worn. Many injuries occur each year to employees that can be prevented by wearing safety gloves.
7. Before using any chemical or other materials, closely read instructions and warnings.
8. All horseplay and practical jokes are prohibited.
9. Anytime there is a potential for flying debris, safety glasses must be worn. This includes sawing, drilling, mowing, weed eating, using chemicals or other materials including paints, and many other maintenance tasks.
10. Always flag off work areas to keep unauthorized persons from entering a potentially dangerous area.
11. All written regulations, training, instruction, and written safety programs must be adhered to.
12. Floors should be kept clean and free of spills. (Employees should immediately clean up spilled items.)

13. All guards and other protective devices must be left in place and used at all times when operating equipment.
14. Machines not working properly shall be tagged and put out of service.
15. Before starting any machine, be sure that all guards are in place and the machine is properly set to operate
16. Make sure that the immediate area around the piece of equipment is clear from any obstruction which may come in contact with the machine's moving parts.
17. If a machine jams, shut off power and unplug if possible; then try to free up the machine from whatever is causing the jam.
18. Never attempt to clean machinery unless you are positive that the machine is turned off and disconnected from its power source.
19. If a machine is not functioning properly, stop operation and notify your supervisor immediately.
20. Pay close attention when operating machinery; any distraction could cause an accident.
21. Never leave a machine running unattended. Shut off power even if you must leave for only a moment.

# **EMPLOYEE RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER THE FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT**

## **Basic Leave Entitlement**

FMLA requires covered employers to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to eligible employees for the following reasons:

- For incapacity due to pregnancy, prenatal medical care or child birth;
- To care for the employee's child after birth, or placement for adoption or foster care;
- To care for the employee's spouse, son or daughter, or parent, who has a serious health condition; or
- For a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee's job.

## **Military Family Leave Entitlements**

Eligible employees with a spouse, son, daughter, or parent on active duty or call to active duty status in the National Guard or Reserves in support of a contingency operation may use their 12-week leave entitlement to address certain qualifying exigencies. Qualifying exigencies may include attending certain military events, arranging for alternative childcare, addressing certain financial and legal arrangements, attending certain counseling sessions, and attending post-deployment reintegration briefings.

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. A covered service member is a current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who has a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty on active duty that may render the service member medically unfit to perform his or her duties for which the service member is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy; or is in outpatient status; or is on the temporary disability retired list.

## **Benefits and Protections**

During FMLA leave, the employer must maintain the employee's health coverage under any "group health plan" on the same terms as if the employee had continued to work. Upon return from FMLA leave, most employees must be restored to their original or equivalent positions with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms.

Use of FMLA leave cannot result in the loss of any employment benefit that accrued prior to the start of an employee's leave.



### **Eligibility Requirements**

Employees are eligible if they have worked for a covered employer for at least one year, for 1,250 hours over the previous 12 months, and if at least 50 employees are employed by the employer within 75 miles.

### **Definition of Serious Health Condition**

A serious health condition is an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves either an overnight stay in a medical care facility, or continuing treatment by a health care provider for a condition that either prevents the employee from performing the functions of the employee's job, or prevents the qualified family member from participating in school or other daily activities.

Subject to certain conditions, the continuing treatment requirement may be met by a period of incapacity of more than 3 consecutive calendar days combined with at least two visits to a health care provider or one visit and a regimen of continuing treatment, or incapacity due to pregnancy, or incapacity due to a chronic condition. Other conditions may meet the definition of continuing treatment.

### **Use of Leave**

An employee does not need to use this leave entitlement in one block. Leave can be taken intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule when medically necessary. Employees must make reasonable efforts to schedule leave for planned medical treatment so as not to unduly disrupt the employer's operations. Leave due to qualifying exigencies may also be taken on an intermittent basis.

### **Substitution of Paid Leave for Unpaid Leave**

Employees may choose or employers may require use of accrued paid leave while taking FMLA leave. In order to use paid leave for FMLA leave, employees must comply with the employer's normal paid leave policies.

### **Employee Responsibilities**

Employees must provide 30 days advance notice of the need to take FMLA leave when the need is foreseeable. When 30 days notice is not possible, the employee must provide notice as soon as practicable and generally must comply with an employer's normal call-in procedures.

Employees must provide sufficient information for the employer to determine if the leave may qualify for FMLA protection and the anticipated timing and duration of the leave. Sufficient information may include that the employee is unable to perform job functions, the family member is unable to perform daily activities, the need for hospitalization or continuing treatment by a health care provider, or circumstances supporting the need for military family leave. Employees also must inform the employer if the requested leave is for a reason for which FMLA leave was previously taken or certified. Employees also

may be required to provide a certification and periodic recertification supporting the need for leave.

### **Employer Responsibilities**

Covered employers must inform employees requesting leave whether they are eligible under FMLA. If they are, the notice must specify any additional information required as well as the employees' rights and responsibilities. If they are not eligible, the employer must provide a reason for the ineligibility.

Covered employers must inform employees if leave will be designated as FMLA-protected and the amount of leave counted against the employee's leave entitlement. If the employer determines that the leave is not FMLA-protected, the employer must notify the employee.

### **Unlawful Acts by Employers**

FMLA makes it unlawful for any employer to:

- Interfere with, restrain, or deny the exercise of any right provided under FMLA;
- Discharge or discriminate against any person for opposing any practice made unlawful by FMLA or for involvement in any proceeding under or relating to FMLA.

### **Enforcement**

An employee may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Labor or may bring a private lawsuit against an employer. FMLA does not affect any Federal or State law prohibiting discrimination, or supersede any State or local law or collective bargaining agreement which provides greater family or medical leave rights.

FMLA section 109 (29 U.S.C. § 2619) requires FMLA covered employers to post the text of this notice. Regulations 29 C.F.R. § 825.300(a) may require additional disclosures.

## **POLICY IIBEA/GAB ACCEPTABLE COMPUTER SYSTEM USE**

### **Purpose of the Acceptable Use of the Computer System Policy**

To establish clear guidelines for all employees, staff members, and guests who may have or are granted access to the Bedford County Public Schools' ("BCPS") computer system.

### **Definitions**

For purposes of this Policy –

"Computer system" includes, but is not limited to hardware, software, data, communication lines and devices; printers; laptop and desktop computers; tablets; smartphones; optical disks; tape drives; servers; mainframe; personal electronic devices brought as part of the bring your own device program; all peripherals, digital camera, document cameras, interactive whiteboards, and projectors; internal and external network connection; e-mail system; social media accounts; cloud or other online services offered through or operated by BCPS; and any other internal or external networks and/or services that BCPS utilizes.

"Division personnel," "employee," or "staff" means any person employed by the Bedford County School Board.

"Guest" means any member of the Bedford County community or other individual who is granted access to BCPS' computer system.

"Parent" means biological parent, relative, guardian, or other adult who has physical and/or legal control and responsibility for a minor (child) under the age of eighteen years.

"Student" means any person currently enrolled in Bedford County Public Schools.

"User" means any person who has access to or has permission to use BCPS' computer system. User includes all guests, division personnel, employees, staff, parents, and students.

### **Statement of Expectations**

All uses of BCPS' computer system shall be consistent with the School Board's goal to prepare our students to be productive and responsible citizens in our community and the world. BCPS' computer system promotes instruction in 21st Century skills, research, and communication, and it also supports opportunities for collaborative work. BCPS' computer system is maintained for the mutual benefit of all users, and adherence to this Acceptable Use Policy ("AUP") is necessary for continued access to the computer system.

The use of BCPS' computer system is a privilege, not a right, and this policy is designed to establish clear guidelines for all users who have been granted access to the computer system. All uses of BCPS' computer system shall be in furtherance of BCPS educational objectives and shall be in accordance with this AUP, the Code of Student Conduct, and any other policy and/or procedure referenced below.

## **Rights and Responsibilities**

Division Personnel: All division personnel shall abide by this AUP and shall not share his/her passwords or specific account information with any student.

Additional guidelines for acceptable electronics use are located in the School Faculty Handbooks, which shall be followed by all division personnel. It is the responsibility of every user who identifies a security issue or problem to notify immediately the building administration, the Technology Staff, the Systems Engineer, or the Director of Technology.

Instructional personnel are further responsible for the following:

- To monitor and manage the student use of the computer system in order to protect their safety and security;
- To monitor and supervise learning activities that include the integration of technology;
- To educate and support students in Internet safety, the Fair Use Act, and copyright law;
- To ensure that all guests receive a copy of this Policy before they may access the computer system;
- To participate in professional development opportunities designed to further the understanding of technological integration in the classroom and/or to further the understanding of 21st Century Skills in the classroom;
- To participate in community outreach programs designed to educate and instruct students, parents, and community members about the dangers and pitfalls associated with improper Internet use;
- To ensure that all security measures are adhered to for the protection of all students and the BCPS computer system;
- To ensure bandwidth resources are not used in an exorbitant manner for long periods of time (e.g., visiting data intensive websites such as Netflix and Hulu), especially during test administration windows;
- To log off the BCPS network when equipment will be left unattended for extended periods of time; and
- To back up his or her individual files and documents each week.

Parents: All parents are responsible for reading this AUP in its entirety prior to signing it. Parents shall be responsible for explaining the contents of this policy to their child(ren). Any parent granted user status to BCPS' computer system is responsible for:

- Following this AUP;
- Using BCPS' computer system for purposes consistent with the educational objectives of BCPS; and
- Notifying the building administration, the Technology Staff, the Systems Engineer, or the Director of Technology immediately upon identifying a security issue or problem with the computer system.

Guests: All guests who are granted user status to BCPS' computer system shall:

- Read and sign this AUP prior to the initial use of the computer system;
- Follow this AUP;
- Use the BCPS computer system for purposes consistent with the educational objectives of BCPS; and
- Notify the building administration, the Technology Staff, the Systems Engineer, or

the Director of Technology immediately upon identifying a security issue or problem with the computer system.

### **Internet Safety Instruction and Community Outreach**

As set forth in Va. Code § 22.1-70.2, BCPS shall provide to all students (K-12) Internet safety training. All students are expected to actively practice proper network etiquette. Internet safety instruction and community outreach shall be conducted annually to educate and instruct students and parents about the dangers and pitfalls associated with improper Internet use. This includes, but is not limited to, intellectual property rights, online predators, illegal downloading from the Internet, and “sexting.” Internet safety instruction and community outreach programs may call on School Resource Officers to assist in the explanation of the following: legal definitions, charges that may be filed against an individual in specific situations, and lasting legal consequences.

The need for Internet safety instruction and community outreach programs is assessed by building administrators, teachers, and AUP and Internet Safety Committee, all working together toward educating all stakeholders within our community.

### **Safety Measures and Limitations**

Software is installed on the BCPS network to filter or block any content deemed inappropriate or harmful by BCPS, which includes but is not limited to child pornography as set out in Va. Code § 18.2-374.1:1; obscenity as defined in Va. Code § 18.2-372; and social networking spaces. Software filters are limited to blocking content accessed through the BCPS’ network, and will not prevent access to content when non-BCPS networks are utilized. Cell phones are one examples of technology that do not utilize the BCPS network and will not benefit from the software filter. Users shall not rely on software filters to prevent inappropriate website access.

As new technologies emerge, the educational value and ease of classroom integration will be evaluated concurrently by the BCPS Technology Staff, the BCPS Instructional Department, the BCPS Special Services Department, building technology committees, and the AUP and Internet Safety Committee. Recommendations for amendment to policy will be made by the AUP and Internet Safety Committee to the School Board.

### **Data Backup and Network Security**

BCPS makes every effort to provide reliable storage for all users’ documents and files on BCPS’ servers. However, because no server can ever be 100% reliable, each user is responsible for backing up his/her individual files. BCPS recommends the regular backup of individual files to a portable medium, such as a Flash drive or an external hard drive, at least once a week.

Users shall not expect any data stored on the BCPS’ computer system to be private. Digital communication and files stored on BCPS’ computer system are regarded as property of BCPS. Authorized administrators may, without reason or prior notice, review files and documents including, but not limited to, email, documents, and logs, to ensure users are acting in accordance with this AUP, and to maintain system integrity.

Current security measures include firewalls, Internet filters, virus protection, and virus monitoring devices. The BCPS Technology Staff and Systems Engineer evaluate the security of the BCPS' computer system to identify security threats daily. Data security and network security are constantly reviewed and, when necessary, adjustments and modifications are made to the system as issues arise.

Any user who identifies a security issue or problem shall immediately notify the building administration, the Technology Staff, Systems Engineer, or the Director of Technology. The intentional destruction or vandalism of BCPS' computer system by any means or the intentional breach of BCPS' LAN or WAN is prohibited. Any violation of this AUP shall result in loss of computer system privileges and may also result in appropriate disciplinary action, as determined by the School Board, or legal action.

### **Reliability of the Computer System:**

Technology, while extremely valuable, is sometimes unreliable. The School Board makes no warranties for the computer system it provides. The School Board shall not be liable for any damages to the user from use of BCPS' computer system, including loss of data, non-delivery or missed delivery of information, or service interruptions. The School Board denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through BCPS' computer system. Users are cautioned to prepare for and guard against instances of technology unreliability. Users agree to indemnify the School Board for any losses, costs, or damages incurred by the School Board relating to or arising out of any violation of this AUP.

### **Electronic Mail (Email)**

BCPS may provide email to aid students and staff in fulfilling their duties and as an educational tool. Email is not private and may be monitored and accessed by BCPS staff. Personal email accounts shall not be utilized by any BCPS staff when communicating with students. Unauthorized access to an email account by any user is prohibited. Users shall be held personally liable for the content of any email they create. Downloading any file attached to an email is prohibited unless the user is certain of its authenticity and the nature of the file. Prohibited uses of BCPS provided email accounts included but are not limited to:

- Sending personal and confidential student information (staff shall not include confidential student information);
- Swearing, using vulgarities, or using any other inappropriate language in any email transmission (Be advised that doing so in school-sponsored email will result in your email being automatically redirected from the intended recipient to the Director of Technology for review. Disciplinary action, as outlined in this policy, may be imposed);
- Failing to check email inbox on a regular basis;
- Sending or forwarding chain letters;
- Spamming (sending unwanted, unsolicited emails to large groups of people, or everyone in your address book);
- Subscribing to mail or notification lists (e.g. signing up or creating accounts for anything not school related);
- Sending emails with false or defamatory information; and
- Sending emails that are intended to harass, insult, or are personal or discriminatory attacks on another user.

### **Electronic & Digital Published Media**

BCPS may provide digital tools to aide students and staff in fulfilling their educational and workplace responsibilities. When authoring these digital works, users shall keep in mind that the end product shall support the educational objectives of BCPS. Every member of BCPS community has the responsibility to

maintain and enhance the BCPS' public image and to use all digital tools in a productive manner. Unacceptable use includes but is not limited to:

- Posting personal and/or confidential information;
- Swearing, using vulgarities, or using any language inappropriate for a school setting;
- Transmitting false or defamatory information;
- Creating any end product intended to harass, insult, or launch a personal or discriminatory attack on an individual or group; and
- Posting electronic media for any other purpose that is illegal, against School Board Policies, or contrary to the best interest of BCPS.

## **Social Media**

Social media includes Internet-based applications and mobile technologies that allow the creation and exchange of user generated content. Examples of commonly used social media tools include, but are not limited to blogs, message boards, chat groups, instant messaging, personal news updates, and music and video sharing (e.g., Facebook, Google+, REMIND 101, YouTube, and Twitter). Utilization of social media on BCPS's computer system is permitted only by division personnel for professional development purposes; as a tool to foster closer community/school relations (e.g. the creation of a school Facebook Page); and as an educational tool with students over the age of 13 years, provided it is on the pre-approved list maintained by the Director of Technology or designee.

Any use of social media must be in conformance with this AUP. Staff and students are cautioned that even non-school division computer system use of social media that violates this AUP, any School Board policies or procedures, the Code of Student Conduct, or creates a foreseeable risk of causing a substantial disruption to the work and discipline of the school may result in disciplinary action. Staff should only interact with students through social media sites created for educational purposes. Staff should not engage students through personal social media sites.

Social media in the classroom shall be used with students under the age of 13 years only where allowed by law (e.g., falls within the parameters of COPPA, CIPA, and PPRA) or when BCPS has approved usage division-wide (e.g., the BCPS Google Domain, a private BCPS learning management system).

## **Examples of Acceptable Computer System Use**

1. Professional Development Activities
2. Comply with fair-use laws and copyright regulations while accessing the Internet
  - Understand, recognize, and respect the intellectual property of others;
  - Present accurate information when collaboratively gathering or sharing information (e.g. avoid Wiki vandalism);
  - Ethical gathering and/or presentation of information (e.g. avoid plagiarism, provide correct attribution, follow Creative Commons Law); and
  - Cite all sources.
3. School-sponsored emails
  - Used for legitimate BCPS academic and curricular activities communications;
  - Keep passwords and logins confidential;
  - Only access your own account;
  - Send messages that contain content in accordance with this policy;
  - Immediately report messages that violate this policy or the Code of Student Conduct to administration; and
  - Download attachments only when user is certain the attachment is safe for the Computer

System.

#### 4. The Principles of the Computer System Community

- Exercise polite and proper network etiquette (the acceptable behavior the Internet community expects its citizens to follow);
- Use the BCPS network for educational activities – information posted to BCPS sponsored sites must be limited to curriculum related material;
- Respect both your own privacy and the privacy of others; and
- Respect the rights of others by not wasting network resources.

#### **Examples of Unacceptable Use**

Users MAY NOT engage in any conduct that violates this policy. For example:

1. Circumventing or attempting to circumvent the BCPS' filtering software.
2. Swearing, using vulgarities, or any other use of inappropriate language in any electronic communication.
3. Accessing web pages or Internet content that is inconsistent with the educational objectives of BCPS.
4. Participating in cyberbullying which is defined as the use of electronic media to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behavior by an individual or group with the intention of physically or psychologically intimidate others.
5. Using the network/Internet for any illegal activity, including violation of copyright law, violation of contracts, or transmitting any material in violation of any federal, state or local law.
6. Sending, receiving, viewing, or downloading illegal or otherwise prohibited material via BCPS' computer system.
7. Installing or downloading media, without authorization, to any BCPS or non-BCPS electronic devices while connected to the BCPS network
8. Using BPCS' computer system for private financial or commercial gain or advertising.
9. Using resources wastefully (e.g. bandwidth, file space, paper, and ink/toner) or failing to respect the BCPS resource limits.
10. Gaining unauthorized access to resources or entities.
11. Using BCPS' computer system after access privileges have been suspended or revoked.
12. Vandalizing BCPS' computer system, including, but not limited to, modifying or rearranging keyboards, individual key caps, any other peripheral equipment, or destroying data by creating or spreading viruses and/or by any other means.
13. Forging, intercepting, or interfering with emails messages.
14. Using BCPS' computer system to disrupt others.
15. Violate any School Board policy or regulation while using BCPS' computer system.

#### **Possible Consequences for Violating this AUP**

Any division personnel who violate this policy shall be subjected to disciplinary action up to and including termination. Examples of possible dispositions (in no particular order):

- Restriction or cancellation of technology privileges
- Confiscation
- Law enforcement agency involvement
- Restitution
- Letter of reprimand
- Supervisory conference
- Plan of improvement
- Administrative leave pending a hearing
- Termination of employment



### **AUP Review and Revision**

At a minimum, this AUP will be reviewed on an annual basis by the AUP and Internet Safety Committee. Additional review may be conducted if warranted under the circumstances. The AUP and Internet Safety Committee shall be responsible for making any recommended changes to this AUP to the School Board.

**ACCEPTABLE COMPUTER SYSTEM USE AGREEMENT**

Users are required to sign this Agreement before they will be granted permission to use the Bedford County Public Schools’ computer system. If you have any questions about the AUP, please contact your supervisor or the building principal. By signing this agreement, you certify that you have read Policy IIBEA/GAB, Acceptable Computer System Use and agree to abide by its terms.

I have read this Agreement and School Board Policy and Regulation GAB. I understand that access to BCPS’ computer system is intended for educational purposes only. I understand that BCPS may access and monitor my use of the computer system, including my use of the Internet, emails, and downloaded material, without prior notice to me. I understand that it is impossible for BCPS to restrict access to all inappropriate material, and I will not hold BCPS responsible for information acquired on the computer system. I further understand that should I violate this AUP, my computer system privileges may be revoked and disciplinary action and/or legal action may be taken against me.

**Agree to Not Disclose Confidential Employee or Student Information**

Further, my signature indicates that all employee and student information to which I have access to in written, verbal, or electronic form is confidential. I agree to not discuss or otherwise disseminate such confidential employee or student information without specific authorization. I understand this requirement for confidentiality must be maintained even after my termination of employment with Bedford County Public Schools. I understand that any breach of my confidentiality of employee or student information may result in disciplinary action, including possible termination of my employment with Bedford County Public Schools, and in some cases, that I may be subject to civil liability.

**Employee Handbook Verification**

I acknowledge that I have been informed that the most current Employee Handbook is available online at [www.bedford.k12.va.us](http://www.bedford.k12.va.us). I will read and review the contents of the Employee Handbook. The menu path for the Employee Handbook is [www.bedford.k12.va.us](http://www.bedford.k12.va.us), then click on Human Resources, then click on Employee Handbook near the bottom of the page. I acknowledge that I am responsible to abide by the rules, policies, safety rules, and other requirements as part of my employment with Bedford County Public Schools as outlined and enumerated in the Employee Handbook for Bedford County Public Schools.

My signature indicates that I have read and understand the **Acceptable Computer System Use Agreement**. My signature also indicates I have read and I will abide by the **Agree to Not Disclose Confidential Employee or Student Information**, and I have been informed that the most current **Employee Handbook** is available on the Bedford County Public Schools web site at [www.bedford.k12.va.us](http://www.bedford.k12.va.us).

Employee Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_