TO: Principals

FROM: Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr., Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

TOPIC: Policies/Procedures – To be discussed at first staff meeting

PURPOSES:

1. To provide fundamental information to be shared with all school-based staff members.

2. To ensure a uniform distribution of important information.

3. To provide a means of documenting discussion topics.

BACKGROUND:

Best practices and, in some cases, state or federal law require that basic information be reviewed with all school-based staff members on an annual basis to ensure that fundamental policies and practices are followed and that ACPS complies with the expectations of the Alexandria community and the laws that govern school operations.

This directive has been created to facilitate a uniform means of ensuring that all school-based staff members have important information that they can apply during the course of the school year.

PROCEDURES:

You are asked to discuss the topics on page two with all staff members annually (at the beginning of each school year). You can use the talking points on pages 3-21 to facilitate the discussion. For your convenience, page two has been formatted as an agenda that you may share with your staff.

When reviewing this information with staff members, please provide a roster for the meeting and ask members of your staff to initial by their names indicating that they received this information. Please keep your roster on file.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Lisa Piehota, Executive Director of Elementary Instruction
Dr. Gerald Mann, Executive Director of Secondary Instruction
703-619-8305
Below is a list of some topics being shared at our staff meeting today. The purpose is to refresh our understanding of some of the policies that affect our work and responsibilities.

Please initial by your name on the staff roster indicating that you were present to hear a discussion on this information. If you have questions about the topics, please raise them with your supervisor.

- Non-Discrimination
- Harassment
- Sexual Misconduct and Abuse
- Mission, Vision, and Goals of ACPS
- Syllabus
- Assessment
- Supplementary Text Materials Selection
- Guidelines for Course Assignments (secondary)
- Teaching About Controversial Issues
- Religion in the Schools
- Contacts with Parents/Guardians
- Parental Involvement with Instruction
- Retention: Notice to Parents
- Research / Informed Parental Consent
- Moment of Silence
- Pledge of Allegiance
- Instruction in Writing
- Board-Staff Communications
- Tobacco-Free Environment
- Drug-Free Work Place
- Teaching About Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco
- Staff Participation in Political Activities
- Staff Gifts and Solicitations
- Solicitation – By Employees
- Licensed Staff Research and Publishing
- Travel Authorization
- Cash in School Buildings
- Authorized Use of ACPS-Owned Materials
- Use of ACPS-Owned Vehicles
- Reproduction of Copyrighted Materials
- Safe and Secure Working and Learning Environment
- Hazard Reporting
- Possible Exposure to Viral Infections
- Emergency Operations & Procedures Plan
- Work Schedules
- School Closings

- Tutoring for Pay
- Effect of Criminal Conviction
- Outside Employment
- Professional Use of Social Media
- Student Use of Social Media
- Internet Filtering, Social Networking Sites, Computer and Cell Phone Use
- Incidental Computer Use
- Child Abuse Neglect and Reporting
- Suicide Prevention
- Student Bullying and Harassment
- EpiPens® in Schools
- Emergency First Aid, CPR and AED Training
- Healthy Snacks
- Threat Assessment Teams
- Retention of Records
- Confidentiality
- FERPA and Virginia Student RECORDS Act (student records and confidentiality)
- HIPAA (confidentiality of medical records)
- Advertising and Soliciting – Vendors
- Requests to Post or Distribute Printed Materials in Schools
- Virginia Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Requests
- 403(b) and 457(b) Plans
- Lactation Support
- Conflicts of Interest
- Family and Medical Leave (FML)
- Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) - Overtime
- Change in Name or Marital Status
- Sick-Leave Donation Program
- School Attendance Regulations
**Non-Discrimination**
The Alexandria City School Board is committed to nondiscrimination with regard to age, national origin, ancestry, disability, religion, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sex, sexual orientation, genetic information, pregnancy, marital status, status as a parent, or political affiliation (Policy AC). The Alexandria City School Board shall provide facilities, programs and activities that are accessible, usable, and available to qualified disabled persons. Further, the Alexandria City School Board shall not discriminate against qualified disabled persons in the provision of health, welfare, and other social services (Policy GB).

**Harassment**
The Alexandria City School Board is committed to maintaining a learning/working environment free from sexual harassment and harassment based on race, national origin, disability, religion, gender, gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation. Therefore, the Alexandria City School Board prohibits sexual harassment and harassment based on race, national origin, disability, religion, gender, gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation of any student or school personnel at school or any school-sponsored activity. Further, it shall be a violation of this policy for any school personnel to tolerate sexual harassment or harassment based on a student’s or employee’s race, national origin, disability, religion, gender, gender identity, gender expression or sexual orientation by students, school personnel, or third parties participating in, observing, or otherwise engaged in school-sponsored activities (Policy GBA).

**Sexual Misconduct and Abuse**
One of the most fundamental responsibilities of a school system is to provide a safe and healthy environment for teaching and learning, and to provide mechanisms and guidelines that mitigate opportunities for misconduct, especially sexual misconduct, that can harm that environment. Teachers, support employees, and volunteers should avoid appearances of impropriety when interacting with students. The Virginia Board of Education has provided a list of behaviors that can create such an appearance, and they include:

- 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 others;
- 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. As with in-person communications, educators and volunteers should avoid appearances of impropriety and refrain from inappropriate electronic communications with students. Online communications between employees, volunteers, and individual students are transparent, accessible to supervisors and parents, and professional in content and tone. [www.doe.virginia.gov/boe/guidance/safety/prevent_sexual_misconductabuse.pdf](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/boe/guidance/safety/prevent_sexual_misconductabuse.pdf)

**Mission, Vision, and Goals of ACPS**
Please take a minute to review the school division’s Mission, Vision, and Strategic Plan Goals ([ACPS Mission](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/boe/guidance/safety/prevent_sexual_misconductabuse.pdf)).

**Syllabus**
At the beginning of each course taught at the secondary level, students and parents/guardians shall be given in writing a syllabus that includes: (a) A list of standards and benchmarks to be met or exceeded; (b) An explanation of the various ways in which student learning will be evaluated; (c) Student expectations in terms of assignments, skills to be demonstrated, required resources; and (d) The teacher’s grading system ([Policy Regulations IFA-R](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/boe/guidance/safety/prevent_sexual_misconductabuse.pdf)).
Similar information, as is age-appropriate, shall be provided at the elementary level.

**Assessment**

Assessment must involve a combination of measures designed to:

- Diagnose/pre-assess students’ varying readiness levels, background knowledge, interests, and learner profiles.
- Provide criterion-based formative assessment feedback to students to allow them to adjust their learning to move toward achieving or surpassing designated lesson and unit standards.
- Engage students in a range of summative assessment tasks (including culminating performance tasks, projects, and tests) to serve as a basis for judgment and evaluation of cumulative performance at key juncture points during the grading period.
- Teachers will use multiple assessment practices to evaluate student mastery of the skills and content taught in their courses. Examples of acceptable assessment tools include but are not limited to the following:
  - Culminating projects
  - Performance assessment tasks (e.g., academic prompts)
  - Constructed-response test and quiz items
  - Selected-response test and quiz items
  - Student self-assessments (e.g., using rubrics for self-monitoring in relationship to standards mastery, self-reflections, journal entries)
  - Peer response group feedback
  - Daily criterion-based assessment feedback (teacher-to-student)

Formative assessment feedback must be provided daily to ensure that students understand what they are learning and why they are learning it. It should provide criterion-based feedback designed to help students adjust their learning to achieve lesson mastery objectives. Additionally, formative assessment feedback should allow students to revisit, revise, and enhance their knowledge, skills, and understandings to ensure that they are progressing toward successful completion of required summative assessments (to be used as a basis for grading).

Teachers will create and provide students with scoring rubrics and exemplars of acceptable student work in advance of major projects and related performance-based assessment tasks. In collaboration with colleagues, teachers are encouraged to review and evaluate work to build consistency and inter-rater reliability.

Students shall be expected and permitted to revisit and review their work (e.g., performance assessment tasks, tests, quizzes, essays, research reports, etc.) in all instances where it is clear that additional study, effort, and time will produce improved performance and achievement.

The teacher and student shall revisit the learner’s work if, in the teacher’s professional judgment, progress and effort are being made to meet or exceed standards as delineated by the course syllabus. Typically, this can be accomplished through multiple formative assessments and reassessments that lead to the student’s successful completion of a summative assessment task or work product.

The final grade awarded for reassessment performance shall reflect the student’s mastery of identified course standards and task-specific performance indicators.

Reassessment for final exams and other end-of-year assessments shall occur only in extraordinary circumstances.
**Supplementary Text Materials Selection**
Teachers must carefully review materials prior to use and exercise a high degree of professional judgment in their selection and use of supplemental materials, to ensure that the use of such materials serves to both support and complement the basic educational objectives within the specific subject areas and classrooms (Policy IIAB).

**Guidelines for Course Assignments at the Secondary-School Level**
1. Teachers shall provide assignments after introduction and thorough explanation of the skills necessary to successfully complete the assignment.
2. Teachers shall construct assignments in such a manner that both the expectations and the purpose of the assignment will be clearly understood by all students.
3. Assignments, including reading assignments, shall serve a valid purpose and be clearly aligned to course skills and content standards. Specifically, course assignments should function as assessments of students’ progress towards standards mastery in accordance with Policy IFA [Assessment and Evaluation] and its regulations.
4. Teachers shall consider a student’s access to resource materials and instructional objectives when making assignments.
5. Teachers shall evaluate student work products promptly and provide constructive feedback to the student. Teachers shall recognize effort and competency.
6. Teachers should seek to determine the cause if a student regularly fails to complete assigned work. Teachers should not avoid giving assignments because they believe students will not do the work.
7. Teachers should avoid excessive course assignments.
8. Teachers shall not require completion of assignments for disciplinary purposes.
9. Teachers and administrators shall take appropriate steps to communicate with parents regarding the division’s course assignment policy and to solicit their support. 
   [Policy IKB]


**Teaching About Controversial Issues**
The role of the teacher in the presentation of assigned issues is vitally important. All sides of the issue should be given to students in a dispassionate manner. The goal is for the students to be taught to think clearly on all matters of importance and to make decisions in the light of all the material that has been presented or can be researched on the issues. Indoctrination is not the intent or purpose of the school division. When appropriate to give his/her opinion, or when asked, the teacher may give his/her opinion but must be sure that the student recognizes the given opinion as the teacher’s personal opinion. Although the instructional program of the school division includes many facets of the political party system in the United States, the School Board does not approve as a part of the school program the involvement of students in activities that imply school endorsement of an individual political party or candidate (Policy INB).

**Religion in the Schools**
ACPS shall be neutral in matters of religion. This means that ACPS assumes no role or responsibility for the religious training of any student; and does not become involved in the religious belief, disbelief, or doubt of any student.

This neutrality does not preclude or hinder ACPS in fulfilling its responsibility to educate students to be tolerant and respectful of religious diversity. ACPS also recognizes that one of its educational responsibilities is to advance the students’ knowledge and appreciation of the role that religion has played in the social, cultural, and historical development of civilization.
Therefore, ACPS approaches religion from an objective, curriculum-related perspective, encouraging all students and staff members to be aware of the diversity of beliefs and respectful of each other’s religious and/or non-religious views.

In that spirit of respect, students and staff members may be excused from participating in activities that are contrary to their religious beliefs (Policy INDC).

**Contacts with Parents/Guardians**
The School Board encourages contacts between parent/guardian and teacher. All forms and methods of communication shall be encouraged: parent/guardian-teacher conferences, guidance counseling sessions, telephone, other electronic communication devices, mail, home visits, and school visits by parents/guardians (Policy IKCA).

**Parental Involvement with Instruction**
ACPS encourages parents to provide instructional assistance to their children in the home (Policy IKA).

**Retention: Notice to Parents/Guardians**
ACPS shall notify parents/guardians that a student is at risk of retention by the end of the first semester or as soon as it is determined that a student is at risk of retention. Such notice must specify the areas that need improvement in order for the student to be promoted and must offer the parents/guardians the opportunity for a conference. After a thorough assessment of the student’s performance with input from parents/guardians, the school staff shall develop an intervention plan outlining strategies, including parental assistance, to avert retention. A student who has been conditionally promoted must have an intervention plan in the beginning of the school year (Policy IKE).

**Research/Informed Parental Consent**
ACPS shall not conduct or authorize research unless the student’s parents or legally authorized representative or emancipated student signs a consent form and has it witnessing. The form shall comply with Va. Code § 32.1-162.18. Any research involving students shall be approved and conducted under the review of the [Department of Accountability]. If the subjects cannot be identified and the research falls within the exemptions of the Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, the research is exempted from these requirements (Policy IFB).

**Moment of Silence**
The Alexandria City Public Schools has established a daily classroom observance of one minute of silence. During such minute of silence teachers shall take care that pupils remain seated and silent and make no distracting display. Each pupil may engage in any silent activity that does not interfere with, distract, or impede others. The teacher of each classroom shall not influence the students’ use of the minute of silence (Policy IE).

**Pledge of Allegiance**
The Pledge of Allegiance shall be recited daily prior to or following the Moment of Silence in each classroom of the Alexandria City Public Schools. During the recitation of the Pledge, students shall stand and recite the Pledge while facing the flag with their right hands over their hearts or in an appropriate salute if in uniform. No school official shall compel a student to recite the Pledge if he/she [or] his/her parents or legal guardian objects on religious, philosophical, or other grounds to his/her participating in this exercise. Students who are exempt from reciting the Pledge shall quietly stand or sit at their desks while others recite the Pledge and shall make no display that disrupts or distracts those who are reciting the Pledge. School officials shall make appropriate accommodations for students who are unable to comply due to a disability (Policy IEA).

**Instruction in Writing**
Daily student writing shall be an integral part of instruction at all grade levels and in all core content areas. Teachers shall provide meaningful opportunities for students to develop their writing skills through handwritten and word-processed, formal and informal writing (Policy IGAA).

**Board-Staff Communications**
The Alexandria City School Board supports and encourages the concept of two-way communication between the Board and employees. The Superintendent is the official representative of the School Board as its chief administrative officer in its relations and communications with its employees. The School Board desires to develop the best possible working relationship with the employees of the school division. The Board welcomes the viewpoints of employees, and it allows time at its meetings for employees to be heard (Policy GBD).

**Tobacco-Free Environment**
Smoking, chewing, or any other use of any tobacco products by staff and students shall be prohibited on school property (Policy GBEC).

**Drug-Free Workplace**
Employees may not unlawfully manufacture, distribute, dispense, or possess a controlled substance (including alcohol or anabolic steroids) on school property, at any school activity, or on any school-sponsored trip. It is a condition of employment that each employee of the Alexandria City School Board will not engage in such prohibited conduct and will notify the Alexandria City School Board of any drug conviction for a violation occurring on school property, at any school activity, or on any school-sponsored trip no later than five (5) days after such conviction. An employee who is convicted of criminal drug activity for a violation occurring on school property, at any school activity, or on any school-sponsored trip will be subject to appropriate discipline, up to and including termination, or required to satisfactorily participate in a drug-abuse assistance or rehabilitation program (Policy GBEA).

**Teaching About Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco**
ACPS shall provide each student with instruction concerning the public safety hazards and dangers of tobacco use, alcohol abuse, underage drinking, and drunk driving (Policy IGAG).

**Staff Participation in Political Activities**
The Alexandria City School Board acknowledges the right of its employees to engage in political activity not in violation of local, state, or federal law. Employees shall not participate in campaign activities during hours of employment. No employee shall be elected or required to participate in any campaign or to support any candidate as a condition of employment. Campaign materials may not be distributed by employees to any student during school hours, unless such distribution is in furtherance of objectives of the curriculum (Policy GBG).

**Staff Gifts and Solicitations**
Exchange of gifts between students and staff shall be discouraged. No school division employee shall solicit goods or services for personal use or for student use during school hours on school property without prior approval from the Superintendent or designee. No school employee shall solicit or accept any gift, money loan, gratuity, favor, or service that might reasonably tend to influence him/her in the discharge of official duties (Policy GBI).

**Licensed Staff Research and Publishing**
The School Board follows the "work for hire doctrine." Under this doctrine, the Board is considered the author of work prepared for the Board by its employees, and, unless the parties have expressly agreed otherwise in a written instrument signed by them, owns all the rights comprised in the copyright. Works authored by employees on their own time, without expense to the Board, and without instruction, direction, or control of the employees’ superiors are the copyright of the employees (Policy GCQB).
**Travel Authorization**
All non-local travel requires prior approval from the employee’s approving authority. Principals, directors, executive directors or similarly-related positions, Chief Academic Officer, and the Superintendent, or their respective delegates, serve as approving authorities for travel (Policy Regulations DLC-R).

**Cash in School Buildings**
Teachers and other school personnel who come into possession of cash in connection with school activities will not leave the money unattended. As soon as is possible, and no later than the end of the school day, personnel in possession of cash shall turn it over to the principal’s office for safe-keeping and proper accounting (Policy DM).

**Authorized Use of ACPS-Owned Materials**
Employees are prohibited from utilizing school property for personal use or gain (Policy EDC).

**Use of ACPS-Owned Vehicles**
School system vehicles shall be used only for bona fide school and local governmental activities, unless daily commuting to and from residences of specific personnel assigned the vehicles is authorized (Policy EEBA).

**Reproduction of Copyrighted Materials**
Copyrighted materials may be duplicated with the prior written permission of the copyright holder. Teachers shall get permission to use materials of the copyright owner whenever possible and feasible, unless the use of materials falls within a “fair use” as defined by law. Permission to duplicate copyrighted material shall be placed on file in the Finance Department of the school division. Teachers shall have access to resources which detail the specific “fair use” safe harbors for copying. The school division assumes no liability for infringement of copyright by individual employees. It is inappropriate to use “pirated” or otherwise illegally obtained software on division equipment, whether for instruction, administrative, or any other purpose. Furthermore, use of division equipment to make unauthorized copies of division owned, or illegally obtained software is prohibited (Policy EGAA).

**Safe and Secure Working and Learning Environment**
The Alexandria City Public Schools is committed to maintaining a safe and secure working and learning environment. Staff members are prohibited from carrying, bringing, using, or possessing any weapon, as defined in Policy JFCD, in any building, on school grounds, in any school vehicle or at any school-sponsored activity without the authorization of the school of the school or the school division. The Superintendent and School Board will take appropriate personnel action up to and including dismissal of any employee found in violation of this provision (Policy GBEB).

**Hazard Reporting**
Any employee who discovers a dangerous condition should report the condition immediately to his or her supervisor, the Superintendent, or his/her designee (Policy EBAA).

**Possible Exposure to Viral Infections**
A school employee who believes he/she has been involved in an incident that may have exposed the employee to the blood or body fluids of a student shall notify the Superintendent or his/her designee, who shall contact the local designated health provider. The Superintendent and the school employee shall not divulge any information provided by the local health director regarding the student involved except as described in Policy EBAB.

**Emergency Operations & Procedures Plan**
An emergency operations and procedures plan shall be developed for each school system building. Each teacher must be acquainted with the emergency safety plan that has been developed as it applies to each room in which he/she teaches. Placards describing nearest exits and important instructions shall be posted prominently in each room (Policy EB).

**Work Schedules**
Except where other time schedules have been agreed upon between the supervisor and the employee, the scheduled workday for full-time licensed teacher-scale personnel will be seven and one-quarter hours 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 (Policy GAA).

**School Closings**
Unless employees are notified that their work schedule is changed because of adverse weather or emergency conditions, it is expected that all employees will work according to the terms of their contract and division policy (Policy EBCD).

**Tutoring for Pay**
Licensed staff members may not be paid for tutoring students enrolled in a class under their direction without prior written approval of the principal (Policy GCQAB).

**Effect of Criminal Conviction**
The School Board will not hire or continue the employment of any part-time, full-time, temporary, or permanent personnel who is deemed unsuited for service by reason of criminal conviction or information appearing in the registry of founded complaints of child abuse and neglect maintained by the Department of Social Services. An employee who is charged by summons, warrant, indictment, or information with the commission of a felony or misdemeanor specified in Va. Code § 22.1-315 may be suspended in accordance with ACPS policies (Policy GCDA).

**Outside Employment**
Licensed employees are encouraged not to engage in outside employment. When outside activities are undertaken, such activities should not impair the employee’s ability to perform his/her assignment effectively, conflict with duties or reflect discredit upon the individual as an employee of the Alexandria City Public Schools (Policy GCQA).

**Professional Use of Social Media**
Online social media, outside of those pre-approved by the division, may not be used for classroom instruction or school-sponsored activities without the prior authorization of the Superintendent, or designee, and parental consent for student participation on social networks. When employees, coaches, or club advisors choose to join or engage in social networks created for school-sponsored groups, they must observe professional standards and appropriate interactions as member of these online communities. They must identify themselves as employees of ACPS and they must ensure that their supervisors have access to the site passwords and content of these interactions.

Employees have the responsibility for maintaining appropriate employee-student relationships at all times, including during any online or social media interactions, whether utilizing ACPS resources or private social media. Employees who choose to engage in social media with ACPS students have the responsibility for addressing inappropriate behavior or activity on these networks by students or other participants on these networks, in accordance with ACPS policies and regulations. Additionally, ACPS employees who have reason to suspect, based on information learned through social media, that a student is engaging in or the victim of illegal conduct online should report this conduct to the student’s principal, and must make any reports required by law.
In order to ensure accuracy and currency of content, employees who create or utilize social media with their students or in any manner in the fulfillment of their ACPS responsibilities shall annually disclose to ACPS the existence of and their participation in such social media sites/accounts in accordance with the procedures provided in the regulations developed by the Superintendent.

In their personal use of social media, ACPS requires employees to observe professional standards when referring to the division, its schools, students, programs, activities, employees, volunteers, and communities on any social media networks. An employee who maintains personal social media accounts that are accessible to students (either by lack of security or granted access) shall avoid posting any content that is inappropriate for minors. An employee who is responsible for a social media network or posting that fails to comply with this policy and its regulations may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination. Employees will be held responsible for the disclosure, whether purposeful or inadvertent, of confidential or private information, information that violates the privacy rights or other rights of a third party, or the content of anything they post on any social media network (Policy GAC).

**Student Use of Social Media**
ACPS recognizes and supports the use of approved online social media to enhance instruction and research, support the learning environment, and improve communication. ACPS also strives to teach its students about the responsible and safe use of these technologies. ACPS students may use these tools and other communication technologies in fulfilling their responsibility for communicating appropriately and effectively with other students, staff members, and the community.

Online social media, outside of those pre-approved by the division, may not be used for educational or school-sponsored activities without the prior approval of a supervising staff member or sponsor. Furthermore, if approval is granted, the supervising staff member or sponsor must be provided with administrative access to the accounts (Policy IIBEB).

**Internet Filtering, Social Networking Sites, Computer and Cell Phone Use**
ACPS has acceptable use policies and e-mail etiquette policies with which all employees should become familiar. Virginia law requires that ACPS filter its Internet services. ACPS has an informed process to evaluate sites and determine those sites to which access is permitted. It is not appropriate for employees to circumvent those filters without prior approval or to use personal computing devices, personal laptops, or cell phones on school grounds to access sites, such as Facebook, that are not available through the ACPS network.

We expect that all employee Internet and computer use is undertaken to further the instructional process and that personal use is irregular and negligible. As part of school/office-related duties, employees must use their official school-provided e-mail address when contacting students or parents via the Internet. When using an ACPS e-mail account, the content of the e-mail message should be related to school matters and/or instructional issues. Sensitive or confidential information should not be exchanged via e-mail. Cell phone use and texting in the classroom, during instructional time, or when students are present is not appropriate except in the case of an emergency. If family and friends need to contact you during work hours, please ask them to contact you through the school office.

**Incidental Computer Use**
ACPS permits incidental personal use of technology resources. At ACPS this means: incidental personal use of electronic accounts, Internet access, printers, and copiers is restricted to ACPS staff members and students and does not include family members or others not affiliated with the division; incidental use must not result in direct costs to ACPS, cause legal action against, or cause embarrassment to ACPS; incidental use must not interfere with the normal performance of an employee’s work duties; and incidental use of ACPS
technology resources (including personal pictures, music, email messages, voice messages, and documents) should be nominal (Policy IIBEA).

**Child Abuse Neglect and Reporting**

Every employee of Alexandria City Public Schools who in his/her professional or official capacity has reason to suspect that a child is an abused or neglected child, in compliance with the Code of Virginia § 63.2-1509 et seq., shall immediately report the matter to: (1) the local department of social services where the child resides or where the abuse or neglect is believed to have occurred; (2) to the Virginia Department of Social Services toll-free child abuse and neglect hotline; or (3) to the person in charge of the school or department, or his/her designee, who shall make the report forthwith. All persons required to report cases of suspected child abuse or neglect are immune from civil or criminal liability or administrative penalty or sanction on account of such reports unless such person has acted in bad faith or with malicious purpose (Policy JHG).

**Virginia Code § 63.2-1509** states, “Any person required to file a report pursuant to this section who fails to do so as soon as possible, but no longer than 24 hours after having reason to suspect a reportable offense of child abuse or neglect, shall be fined not more than $500 for the first failure and for any subsequent failure not less than $1,000.”

**Suicide Prevention**

All ACPS employees will follow the guidelines as outlined in Policy and Regulations. Any person licensed as administrative or instructional personnel by the Virginia Board of Education and employed by the Alexandria City School Board who, in the scope of his/her employment, has reason to believe, as a result of direct communication from a student, that such student is at imminent risk of suicide, shall as soon as practicable contact at least one of such student’s parents to ask whether such parent is aware of the student’s mental state and whether the parent wishes to obtain or has already obtained counseling for such student. Non-licensed school personnel shall immediately contact their supervisor/administrator to facilitate communication with parents. All contact shall be made in accordance with the provisions of the guidelines established by the Superintendent (Policy JHH).

**Student Bullying and Harassment**

As stated in the Standards of Student Conduct, a student, either individually or as part of a group, shall not harass or bully others either in person or by use of any communication technology including computer systems, telephones, pagers, or instant messaging systems. Prohibited conduct includes, but is not limited to, physical, verbal, or written intimidation, taunting, name-calling, and insults and any combination of prohibited activities. Prohibited conduct includes verbal conduct consisting of comments regarding the race, gender, religion, physical abilities, sexual orientation, or characteristics or associates of the targeted person.

The school district’s anti-bullying policy applies to school buildings; school grounds; school-sponsored social events, trips and sporting events; and to buses and bus stops. Bullying which occurs off of school premises, including misuse or inappropriate use of technology (cyberbullying), is also prohibited and subject to school discipline when the order, safety, or welfare of the school or its students is affected as a result of such out-of-school actions.

**Procedures for Reporting**

- Staff members should view bullying and sexual harassment seriously and intervene promptly when they see a student harassing another student.
- Ensure students know that inappropriate behaviors such as teasing, threatening, spreading rumors, gossipping, unwanted touching, name-calling, pushing, tripping, and hitting will not be tolerated. Staff members who fail to intervene and report instances of bullying may be legally liable for failure to protect a student.
- The Office of Civil Rights requires that we document bullying incidents in three categories - by offender, victim, and allegations. You will be required to make these reports:
Parents/guardians should be contacted within two days of the alleged incident with details of the allegation and how the school will resolve the issue. This should be done without violating the confidentiality of involved parties to the extent possible.

Students who are victims of bullying should be referred to the school counselor for support.

Students who bully are subject to disciplinary actions in accordance with ACPS policies and procedures related to bullying behaviors.

**EpiPens® in Schools**
The Code of Virginia requires all local school boards to “adopt and implement policies for the possession and administration of epinephrine in every school, to be administered by a school nurse, an employee of the school board, or a volunteer who is authorized and trained in the administration of epinephrine to any student believed to be having an anaphylactic reaction.” EpiPens® are being provided to each school and program location for this purpose. Annually, designees at each school and a minimum of two staff members are to be selected for training on Insulin, Glucagon and EpiPen® administration. Staff members should ask administrators who at their locations has received the appropriate training.

**Emergency First Aid, CPR and AED Training**
Every person seeking initial licensure or renewal of a license shall provide evidence of completion of certification or training in emergency first aid (EFA), cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), and the use of automated external defibrillators (AED). The certification or training program shall be based on the current national evidence-based emergency cardiovascular care guidelines for cardiopulmonary resuscitation and the use of an automated external defibrillator, such as a program developed by the American Heart Association or the American Red Cross. This is a one-time requirement for initial or renewal licenses.

In school buildings with an instructional and administrative staff of ten or more, there shall be at least three employees who have current certification or training in emergency first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and the use of an automated external defibrillator (Policy EBBA).

**Healthy Snacks**
The fifth goal of ACPS 2020, commits the school division to healthy meals and nutrition. As part of this commitment, ACPS promotes wellness guidelines that discourage the consumption of food in the classroom due to allergy and sanitation concerns. Celebrations with food are to be limited and discouraged pursuant to the ACPS Food Allergy Guidelines. All school-sponsored fund-raising groups are to be encouraged to choose non-food items to sell. If fundraising activities include the sale of food for consumption on school property, the purchase of healthy food options must also be available. A list of nonfood celebration ideas is available in the wellness guidelines.

**Threat Assessment Teams**
A Threat Assessment Team, known as Safety Team, has been established for each ACPS school. The team will assess and intervene with students whose behavior may pose a threat to the safety of school staff or students and will provide guidance to students, faculty members, and staff members regarding recognition of threatening or aberrant behavior that may represent a threat to the community, school, or self (Policy EBB).

**Retention of Records**
The Virginia Public Records Act mandates that all documents created on our computer systems be retained for a specified period of time. The length of time depends on the type of document. It is the obligation of each employee to keep the documents, records, and e-mail messages that he or she generates.
**Confidentiality**
Staff members are required to treat all school and student information with the utmost confidentiality. Staff members with access to confidential, private or sensitive school and student information are not to divulge this information unless authorized to do so. For specific policies on student records, see **Policy JO**.

**FERPA and Virginia Student RECORDS Act (student records and confidentiality)**
The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The following rights are covered under **Policy JO, Student Records**.

**Rights and Procedures**
- School officials shall have access to student records only for legitimate educational purposes and to carry out their responsibilities to each student.
- The release of student record information to others depends upon a written release from the parent/guardian, student 18 years old or over, or legally emancipated minor. Under certain circumstances and applicable laws, information may be released to other agencies, such as Child Protective Services, without parent permission.
- Parents/guardians have the right to inspect, review, and confirm the accuracy of the student’s educational record. They may seek to amend their child’s records believed to be inaccurate or misleading.
- Parents/guardians have a right to file a complaint regarding records violations with the U.S. Department of Education.
- Parents/guardians have a right to obtain a copy of the student record policy of the school district. This information is summarized annually in the ACPS Code of Student Conduct.
- Parents/guardians have a right to request complete copies of all educational information in their child’s file. ACPS typically does not charge for copies requested within reasonable time frames. Repeated requests for copies of the same record may result in a charge.
- Federal law requires that the school division comply with parent requests for access to records within 45 days or less. The division includes requests for copying records within this timeline as well. It is in rare instances that it should take this length of time.

**HIPAA (confidentiality of medical records)**
The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPPA) Privacy Rule protects the privacy of individually identifiable health records. Any questions related to the sharing or maintenance of information related to student medical information should be directed to the Chief Student Services Officer.

**Advertising and Soliciting - Vendors**
No vendor, agent, or sales representative may enter the schools to advertise or sell goods or services to employees or students unless otherwise provided herein. Anyone found soliciting goods or services to students or employees in the schools or on school property during school hours shall be subject to legal action.

Vendors are not permitted to make appointments with individual employees without the permission of the principal or the Superintendent or his/her designee. No vendor is permitted to sell, arrange demonstrations of products or services, or take orders for goods or services without prior authorization from the Superintendent or his/her designee.

This does not prevent authorized representatives of firms regularly supplying goods and services to the school division from having access to the schools in the course of their routine business duties (Policy DJG).

**Requests to Post or Distribute Printed Materials in Schools**
ACPS seeks to minimize intrusions on the time of students and employees by communications from sources other than the school division. The Superintendent, or his/her designee, must approve, in advance, any ma-
materials sought to be distributed or made available by non-school organizations, including parent-teacher organizations and booster clubs. Approval will be granted only for materials regarding activities related to the educational mission of the Alexandria City school division.

Any distribution of materials will be provided on a nondiscriminatory basis and will not be based on the viewpoint of the eligible organization. Distribution will only be permitted for materials that relate to the schools’ primary function of educating students. These guidelines apply to all distribution of materials or information, regardless of form, either paper or electronic or otherwise. This policy applies only to distribution of materials and information by non-school organizations. It does not apply to students, recognized student clubs, class materials, or official ACPS information or materials.

Any materials must be submitted to the Director of Communications and Public Relations at the central office for approval prior to distributing or making the information available in schools. Materials should be submitted at least seven days in advance of desired date of distribution and should clearly identify the submitting organization and the contact information for at least one organization individual who is responsible for responding to questions regarding the information contained in the materials. Distribution or posting is not permitted prior to approval of the Office of Communications (Policy Regulations KF-R).

**Virginia Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Requests**

The Virginia Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) is a state law that ensures that citizens of the Commonwealth of Virginia have “ready access to records in the custody of public officials and free entry to meetings of public bodies wherein the business of the people being transacted.”

“Records” include all printed documents, emails, videos and electronic files created by staff or documents that reflect the work of the school division. This means minutes and documents from most meetings as well as all ACPS official records are subject to public scrutiny with the exception of:

- Scholastic records and personnel records containing information concerning identifiable individuals;
- Writings protected by the attorney-client privilege or the attorney work product doctrine;
- Tests and examinations (subject to certain qualifications); and
- Vendor proprietary information software.

There are many other exceptions listed in the State Code.

The Freedom of Information Act covers only documents (in any form) that exist. This includes documents that are in a computer (either home or APS) if it deals with the business of the school division. FOIA does not require ACPS to create a document, nor does it require ACPS to provide information that is not in any document.

Requests must be responded to within five working days, so please forward any requests and/or responsive materials immediately. Unless otherwise specified by the Superintendent, inspection of records shall take place at the central office of the Alexandria City Public Schools, and shall not be removed from that site. Copies may be requested in lieu of or at the time of inspection. The law authorizes ACPS to charge the costs of total staff time for searching and copying (Policy Regulations KBA-R).
403(b) and 457(b) Plans
ACPS offers 403(b) tax-sheltered annuity and 457(b) deferred compensation retirement accounts. If you are interested in participating, you can contact the Benefits Administrator in the Human Resources Department. [https://www.acps.k12.va.us/Page/529](https://www.acps.k12.va.us/Page/529)

Lactation Support
Each school will designate a non-restroom location as an area in which any mother who is employed by the Alexandria City Public Schools or enrolled as a student in the division may take breaks of reasonable length during the school day to express milk to feed her child. The area must be shielded from public view (Policy GBEF).

Conflicts of Interest
Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) is committed to maintaining a high standard of professional integrity while fostering academic excellence through the avoidance of any conflicts of interests. It is essential that both employees and the general public recognize, honor, and have confidence in this commitment. A conflict of interest exists when an employee has personal, financial, or professional ties to any activity, person, or entity that could inappropriately influence his or her judgment when making decisions on behalf or in support of ACPS. Thus, even the appearance of a conflict of interest should be avoided. In order to maintain the confidence of the public and its employees, the School Board has adopted Policy BBFA regarding conflicts of interest and the requirements to disclose such conflicts.

Family and Medical Leave (FML)
ACPS recognizes its obligation to provide its eligible employees with unpaid leave pursuant to the Family and Medical Leave Act. To be eligible for leave under this policy, the employee must have at least twelve (12) months of service with the Alexandria City school division and have worked at least 1250 hours according to the Fair Labor Standards Act in the twelve (12) months preceding the commencement of leave. Full-time teachers are deemed to meet the 1250 hour test.

Any eligible employee is entitled, leave for a combined total of twelve (12) weeks per year for the following situations:
- The birth and care of a newborn child;
- The adoption or foster placement of a child;
- To care for an employee’s spouse, parent, or child with a serious health condition; and
- Because of a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the essential functions of the employee’s job.

To the extent that an employee is entitled to compensated leave under other Alexandria City school division policies, such paid leave shall be used concurrently with the family and medical leave entitlement. Otherwise, family and medical leave is unpaid. Employees on FMLA leave are required to report their status and intention regarding returning to work to the school division every four weeks. An employee who is on family and medical leave may not engage in employment for any other employer or self-employment while on leave. Falsification of records and failure to correct records known to be false are violations of this policy and will result in discipline which may include termination from employment. Rules about FMLA and how to apply are available at Policy GCBE.
**Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) - Overtime**
ACPS Policy GAA, provides that employees covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act must be compensated for all hours that they are “suffered or permitted” by their supervisors to work. Compensation for work beyond forty (40) hours per week will be in the form of overtime pay or compensatory time off. To provide supervisors with latitude in using “non-exempt” employees to meet the school division’s operational requirements, the supervisor may establish a flexible work schedule. Flexible scheduling will not be used as a response to employee tardiness and must not negatively impact ACPS operations.

Employees whose duties are executive, administrative, professional, or computer-related in nature, as defined by the FLSA, are exempt from FLSA and are not eligible to earn overtime pay.

**Change in Name or Marital Status**
The Human Resources Department should be notified in writing of any changes in name, marital status, address, and/or termination of employment. In cases of change in name and/or marital status, new tax forms must be submitted to the Finance Department (Policy DL).

**Sick-Leave Donation Program**
The Voluntary Sick Leave Donation Programs allows for the transfer of unused accrued sick leave from one employee to another employee who needs such leave because of a qualifying health condition affecting the employee or a family member. The Voluntary Leave Donation Program is provided as a benefit to eligible employees. Participation in the program either as a leave recipient or leave donor is strictly voluntary. Acceptance of donated leave signifies agreement to the terms and conditions of this policy and its accompanying regulations including, but not limited to, submission of requested medical documents and required monitoring activities. [https://www.acps.k12.va.us/cms/lib/VA01918616/Centricity/Domain/804/benefits/leave-donations.pdf](https://www.acps.k12.va.us/cms/lib/VA01918616/Centricity/Domain/804/benefits/leave-donations.pdf)

**School Attendance Regulations**
Every parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of any child who will have reached the fifth birthday on or before September 30 of any school year and who has not passed the eighteenth birthday shall send such child to a public school or otherwise provide the child with an education in accordance with state law unless the child is exempt from the state’s compulsory attendance requirement. Please review the school attendance regulations Regulations JEA-R.