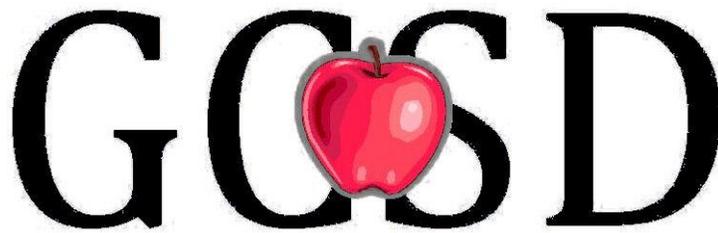


Gilchrist County School District

Employee Handbook



Fulfilling Every Student's Potential

Robert G. Rankin, Superintendent
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Trenton, Florida 32693
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**A Publication of the
Human Resources Department**

Robert G. Rankin
Superintendent

Ronda Parrish
Assistant Superintendent

BillieJo Bible
Director of Human Resources

Welcome

The Gilchrist County School District's goal is "*Fulfilling Every Student's Potential*". In order to fulfill every student's potential it takes a team of hard-working, dedicated professionals. As an employee of GCSD you are an important part of that team, and you contribute to the success of our students. Also, as an employee, you are a representative of one of the greatest school districts in the state of Florida. We want you to feel proud to be a part of our team.

We encourage you to learn about the policies, procedures, expectations, and benefits related to your employment; which are outlined in this handbook. This handbook serves as a tool to answer many of the common questions employees may have in reference to their employment. In the event you cannot find an answer to a question related to personnel issues or procedures please contact the Human Resources Department directly.

The information contained in this handbook is subject to change. All changes will be communicated through official notices, and revised information may supersede, modify, or eliminate existing policies. The employee handbook is not a contract of employment or a legal document. It is, however, the responsibility of the employee to read and comply with the procedures contained in this handbook and any revision made to it.

Administrative Directory of Services

Superintendent
Robert G. Rankin

Assistant Superintendent
Ronda Parrish

Curriculum and Resources

Linda Gartin, Dir Secondary Education & Reading
, Dir Elementary Education & ESOL
Patricia Powers, Dir Resource Development
Clara Buckner, Federal Programs Support Specialist

Support

Jennifer Terry, Receptionist

Finance

David Dose, Dir Finance
Tammy Beauchamp, Finance Officer / Risk Mgr
Patty Brown, Finance Officer
Leigh Hartzog, Finance Clerk

Food Service

Linda Perry, Dir Food Service
Jeri Wilson, Clerk

Human Resources

BillieJo Bible, Dir Human Resources

M.I.S

Evelyn Barratt, Dir M.I.S.
Jeri Wilson, Clerk

Operations

David Spencer, Dir Operations
Bronna Sheffield, Operations Specialist

Reception

Jennifer Terry, Fiscal Clerk

Special Programs

Lisa Rowland, Dir Special Programs
Salley Martin, PreK Coordinator
Mandy Brock, Staffing Specialist
Jill Bullock, School Psychologist
Kelly Myers, Secretary

Truancy

Sharon Langford, Truancy Officer

Technology

Aaron Wiley, Dir Technology
Sam Hall, Technology Assistant
Cynthia Pailthorpe, Technology Assistant
Robert Cooper, Technology Assistant
Jimmy Ballentine, Technology Assistant

Operations

David Spencer Dir Operations
Bronna Sheffield, Operations Specialist

Principals / Assistant Principals

Suzanne Mathe, Principal BES
Donnelle Hartsfield, Asst Principal BES
Sherry Lindsey, Principal BHS
Lisa Barry, Asst Principal BHS
Brent Douglas, Asst Principal BHS
Ronda Adkins, Principal TES
Scott Allen, Asst Principal TES
Wendy O'steen, Asst Principal TES
Cheri Langford, Principal THS
Devin Colley, Asst Principal THS
Ray Stoel, Asst Principal THS

School Board Members

Christie McElroy, District 1
Susan Owens, District 2
Michelle Walker-Crawford, District 3
Julie Thomas, District 4
Deen Lancaster, District 5
Lindsey Lander, Board Attorney

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Personnel
And
Employment

Board Policies

The sections covered in this handbook are brief explanations, for more details and/or precise wording please refer to board policies. Board policies can be found on the district's website or requested through the school board office.

Personnel Records

Personnel records – regarding employment status, promotions, transfers, salary, leaves, commendations, etc. are placed in a permanent file in the District Office.

Human Resources strives to maintain up to date personnel records on each employee. It is the employee's responsibility to notify HR within 10 days of any changes of name, address, telephone number, emergency contact, beneficiaries, benefit changes, and/or any other changes. If you have questions about your personnel file or information contained within please contact Human Resources.

It is the responsibility of each employee to use their legal name, reflected on their social security card, in dealing with the district and other professional agencies. Any employee who legally changes his/her name or address shall notify the Human Resources department within 10 days of the change. If a legal name change has occurred the employee will be required to furnish new forms to the district; new forms include driver's license, social security card, insurance change forms, and/or retirement change forms. Any employee who is required to have a Florida Educator Certificate or other license/certificate shall maintain the license or certificate in his/her legal name. All certified educators are responsible for notifying the Florida Department of Education of any legal name or address changes.

Access to Personnel Files

Employees may view material in a personnel file with an advanced notice, and in the presence of the personnel records keeper or other authorized district personnel. If an employee would like copies of any material in a personnel file they must make a request with reasonable advanced notice to the personnel records keeper. Personnel files are open to public inspection, with the exception of the restrictions in F.S. 1012.31 and 119. Exemption for personnel files include: Complaints or material related to on-going investigations, current performance evaluations, performance evaluations prepared prior to July 1, 1983, derogatory material against employee, payroll deductions, medical records, and any reports of injury or illness.

Immigration & Naturalization Compliance

GCSD complies with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 and is committed to employing only those who are authorized to work in the United States. As a condition of employment, each new employee must properly complete, sign, and date the first section of the Immigration and Naturalization Service Form (I-9). In addition, re-hired employees may be required to complete a new I-9. Proper identification to be entered on the I-9 will also be required.

Employment Defined

Full-time: A regular full-time employee is a person who is employed for the school term or for the school fiscal year to render the minimum number of hours each day as established by the Board for that position or job.

Part-time: A part-time employee is a person who is employed to render less than the number of hours each day as established by the Board for a regular full-time employee.

Temporary: A temporary employee is a person whose employment is expected to be for a limited time to fill a vacancy for which a permanent employee is not available or to perform some work of a temporary nature. Such employment will cease at the close of the school term or school fiscal year or when the temporary work has been completed. A temporary employee may be a part-time or full-time employee.

Vacancies

Notice of vacancies within the school district shall be posted on the district's website, at the district office, at each school, in newspapers when necessary, and other recruitment websites.

Application Process

Open positions are filled by promotions or transfers of qualified current employees whenever possible. Interested applicants should apply via the requirements stated in the open position posting.

Use of Social Security Numbers

GCSD protects the privacy and confidentiality of our employees and students. We comply with federal and state laws and meet the required standards for securing personal information. As prescribed by law [Fla. Stat. §119.071(5)(a)2&3] GCSD is authorized to collect, use, or release social security numbers of employees and other individuals for the purpose of the district's duties and responsibilities in human resource operations, payroll, benefits, background checks, medical claims, IRS reporting, or other functions where they are needed and legally allowed to be used and requested by the Florida Department of Education and or Federal government.

Experience Verification

Each year of experience to be counted for salary purposes must meet the criteria prescribed by law. Experience credit may not exceed the limits established by the board or the terms of a negotiated agreement. All experience verification must be:

Provided on GCSD Experience Verification form, business stationary by former employer, or by a notarized affidavit. Experience verification must include specific dates of employment, job title, full or part-time, self-employed experience must be verified by

an individual knowledgeable of the applicant's service (no experience verification will be accepted if completed by an applicant or applicant's family member).

Instructional employees and administrators who are certified (teachers, administrators), who have worked in a public school system, and have applicable experience will receive year for year experience credit for each year verified.

Non-Instructional employees who have applicable Gilchrist County School system experience will receive year for year experience credit. Non-Instructional employees who have applicable experience from outside will receive half experience credit (one step for every two years of verified experience).

Instructional employees hired after July 1, 2011 who have advanced degrees (master's, specialist, or doctorate) are eligible for a degree supplement if the degree is in an academic subject area related to their position, or a field related to public education. Official transcripts must be provided before salary is adjusted.

When an applicant is employed by GCSD the Human Resources office will process the experience verification paperwork and authorize the employee's salary. As experience verifications are received in the Human Resources office, new salary authorizations are made retroactive to the employee's effective date of hire, providing the experience verifications forms are received within a timely manner.

Payroll

In compliance with federal labor laws, employees must accurately record daily work hours on the appropriate time log. Falsification of these payroll records is grounds for termination.

Paychecks for regular employees are subject to mandatory payroll deductions for Social Security tax, Medicare tax, and federal withholding tax, based on Form W-4 and the tax tables furnished by Internal Revenue Service. It is the employee's responsibility to correctly fill out a W-4 form and submit it to Human Resources. Employees are permitted to submit a new W-4 as often as they desire, and changes will be entered into the payroll system promptly.

Payroll deductions are available for all School Board approved benefits. It is the employee's responsibility to request and authorize any changes to their deductions in writing.

Pay Schedule

All employees of GCSD are paid on the last working day of the month. As an example: If Spring Break begins before the end of a month, and ends after the end of the month 10-month employees will be paid the last day they work before the break; and 12-month employees will be paid as regular. Since all employees are off the Christmas/New Year break, employees are paid the last working day of the month; unless funds are not available.

Voluntary Transfers

Any voluntary transfer of an employee to another site or location in the district shall be in accordance with the Contract Agreement between the Gilchrist Employees United and the Gilchrist County School Board. The process is initiated by the employee. The releasing principal or supervisor signs the transfer form acknowledging the transfer, and the receiving principal or supervisor signs the transfer form accepting the employee. The Human Resources Department assumes the responsibility for the paperwork. The Superintendent and the School Board must approve the transfer.

Outside Employment

Outside employment or “moonlighting” on the part of any employee shall not violate the moral standards of the community or the Professional Code of Ethics prescribed in State Board of Education Rules. Under no conditions shall outside employment conflict with the employee’s performance of regular duties or with the extra-curricular activities related to his/her position.

Discrimination

The Gilchrist County School District maintains that all employees shall be recruited, selected, and assigned solely on the basis of experience, qualifications, and the necessary requirements for the vacant position. Race, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, national background, and marital status will not be considered as factors for employment; nor shall any qualified disabled person be excluded from consideration for employment solely on the basis of his/her disability.

Employment of personnel for Gilchrist County School District is in compliance with Federal and State laws regarding non-discrimination and preference. Equal employment opportunities shall be provided to all applicants and employees with regards to recruitment, selection, and assignment of personnel: and under all employment conditions (promotions, discharges, salary, fringe benefits, job training, job classifications, employment qualifications and criteria) without regards to race, color, sex, religion, age, disability, marital status, or national origin.

Reasonable Accommodations

In accordance with the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) of 1990, an employee may request reasonable accommodations when he/she meets the criteria of a disability as defined by ADA. ADA has a three-part definition of disability. Under ADA, an individual with a disability has:

- A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity;
- A record of such an impairment; or is regarded as having such impairment.

Reasonable Accommodations shall be provided that will not impose undue hardship to the school or district. Reasonable accommodations can involve the following:

- Modifications or adjustments to a job application process that enable or qualify an applicant with a disability to be considered for the position such qualified applicant desires; or

Modifications or adjustments to the work environment or to the manner or circumstances under which the position held or desired is customarily performed, that enable a qualified individual with a disability to perform the essential functions of that position; or

Modifications/adjustments enabling employees with disabilities to enjoy equal benefits and privileges of employment as are enjoyed by other similarly situated employees without disabilities (making existing facilities readily accessible and usable by individuals with disabilities, job restructuring).

Employees desiring reasonable accommodations in employment may contact Human Resources.

Probationary Period for Non-Instructional Employees

Non-instructional employees shall serve a probationary period upon initial employment. If a collective bargaining agreement does not provide for the conditions of a probationary period then the following shall govern the implementation of this policy:

The probationary period shall begin the first day of regular employment.

The probationary period shall be as per negotiated by union contract in duration.

The probationary period may be extended if the Superintendent determines necessary.

A probationary employee who is recommended for termination (not renewed) shall not have right of appeal nor have a written explanation.

Probationary employees shall be entitled to the same benefits that are provided other employees in the same work position.

Probationary employees are considered “at will” employees, which means either the probationary employee or the Gilchrist County School District may terminate the relationship at any time.

Probationary Period for Instructional Employees

Instructional employees are hired on a probationary contract status for the first year, which means either the probationary instructional employee or the Gilchrist County School District may terminate the relationship at any time.

Administrative Employees

Administrative employees are placed on annual contract beginning the first day of regular employment. Administrative employees are those in administrative exempt, non-bargaining positions.

Resignation / Retirement

When an employee decides to resign or retire from GCSD, a resignation form must be submitted to the principal, administrator, Human Resources, or Superintendent for board approval.

The Department of Education requires an exit form be completed by each instructional employee upon termination and submitted via the Human Resource Department. Instructional employees are encouraged to have a personal exit interview with Human Resources to obtain this information.

To apply for retirement with Florida Retirement System (FRS) the appropriate paperwork can be downloaded from the FRS website at www.myfrs.com. The district cannot advise employees on their retirement decisions and/or plan choices. Human Resources will have a notary available to assist with retirement forms needing notarization.

DROP

The Deferred Retirement Option Program (DROP) as defined in Chapter 121, Florida Statutes, is an alternative method of deferred payment of retirement benefits for up to 60 or 96 months after an eligible member of the Florida Retirement System reaches his/her normal retirement date but wishes to continue employment with a Florida Retirement System employer. In order to participate, the employee must submit a binding letter of resignation, establishing a deferred termination date. DROP will allow the participant to defer all retirement benefits payable during the DROP period. Upon termination of DROP, the participant will receive the DROP benefits and their regular retirement benefits under Chapter 121, Florida Statutes.

To apply for DROP with FRS the appropriate paperwork can be downloaded from their website at www.myfrs.com. The district cannot advise employees on their DROP options or choices. Human Resources will have a notary available to assist with DROP forms needing notarization.

Orientation

All new employees must attend new hire orientation in order to complete employment paperwork. New hire orientation is scheduled and conducted by Human Resources.

Oath of Loyalty

Florida law requires that all state employees sign an Oath of Loyalty. This form is a part of the new hire paperwork, and should be completed at the time of employment.

Fingerprinting

Florida law requires that all employees be fingerprinted. It is the responsibility of a newly hired or rehired employee to pay the fees associated with fingerprinting established by Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE). Fingerprints are taken by a contracted outside agency and results are sent to GCSD, FDLE and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Employees must be fingerprinted before they can begin work. The outside fingerprinting agency does not receive fingerprint results.

Fingerprints will also be sent to the Florida Department of Education for instructional employees applying for their initial teacher certification. If an instructional/administrative employee's fingerprint report indicates a criminal history, the employee's record shall be referred to the Bureau of Educator Standards / Professional Practices.

Fingerprint results are considered confidential information and may not be released to anyone, except the employee, FDLE, FBI, and Bureau of Educator Certification (BEC)/Professional Practices. Any employee desiring to obtain a copy of their fingerprint results must request a copy from Human Resources, must pick up the results in person, and must sign a release form.

Self-Reporting Rule

As required by the provisions of State Board of Education, the Principles of Professional Conduct of the Education Profession in Florida, and Florida Statutes all employees are required to comply with "Self-Reporting Rule" for arrests and convictions. Under the rule employees are required to report to the district within 48 hours any arrests/charges involving the abuse of a child or the sale and/or possession of a controlled substance or any disqualifying offense. In addition, self-reporting is required for any conviction, finding of guilt, withholding of adjudication, commitment to a pretrial diversion program, or entering of a plea of guilty or *nolo contendere* for any criminal offense other than a minor traffic violation with 48 hours after the final judgment.

Code of Ethics

All employees are required to maintain and promote personnel integrity, high ideals, and human understanding. The Board shall also expect all administrative, instructional, and support staff members to adhere to the Code of Ethics of the Education Profession in Florida and the Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida. All employees are required to complete Ethics training on ethical standards. All employees are responsible for reporting misconduct by School District employees. Misconduct should be reported to the Human Resources Department, and can be reported directly to the Florida Department of Education.

Antifraud Measure – Reporting Fraud

The GCSD will not tolerate fraud or the concealment of fraud. S.B. Policy 7.121 specifically prohibits fraud, and concealment of fraud.

Fraud includes, but is not limited to:

- Knowingly misrepresenting the truth or concealment of a material fact in order to personally benefit or to induce another to act to his/her detriment.
- Falsifying or unauthorized altering of District documents.
- Accepting bribes, gifts, or favors if given to influence employees' decision making.
- Conflicts of interest.
- Disclosing confidential bidding information in order to give an unfair advantage during bid process.
- Causing the District to pay unjustified excessive prices or fees.
- Theft, tampering, or unauthorized removal or destruction of GCSD property, including records, furniture, fixtures, or equipment.
- Theft of confidential information.
- Breach of fiduciary duty (using District assets for personal gain, mismanagement).
- Using District equipment or work time for any outside business activity.

The obligation to report fraud includes instances where an employee knew or should have known that an incident of fraud occurred. Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, termination of employment, termination of contract, or legal action.

Guidelines for reporting fraud: Report all instances of suspected fraud to Human Resources. You may remain anonymous when filing a report or you may ask that your identity be kept confidential. If you request your identity be kept confidential, your identity will only be disclosed to those employees reviewing and investigating the complaint. Keep in mind that it may be more difficult to investigate anonymous allegations.

To report suspected fraud, contact:

Human Resources

310 NW 11th Ave, Trenton FL 32693

Ph: 352-463-4403

BibleB@mygcsd.org

Fax: 352-463-4405

or Florida Department of Education

Office of Inspector General

325 West Gaines Street, Ste 1201

Tallahassee, FL 32399-0410

850-245-0403 or oig@fldoe.org

<http://www.fldoe.org/ig/complaint.asp>

Professionalism

All employees are expected to demonstrate professional and appropriate behavior. All employees are expected to abide by school and School Board rules, and state and federal laws. Each employee is held to a high standard of professionalism in setting examples for students. Under no circumstances shall any employee be permitted to use profane or obscene language in his/her relationship with students. All employees should avoid saying anything derogatory about a colleague to anyone – inside or outside the district. Employees should show respect for the positions held by subordinates, colleagues, and superiors in the school district.

As an employee you represent GCSD to every parent, student, and community member you come in contact with. Parents expect our schools to be a safe place for their children; a place where education is provided in a secure, pleasant environment. As an employee it is your job to assure the people we serve that our schools are safe, and GCSD employees are friendly, caring people who value them and their children. We pride ourselves on being a public service entity that makes every effort to “go the extra mile.”

Remember that you are a role model for our students and other employees. Your behavior is observed, and it impacts students and colleague’s behavior today and in the future. Because of this, your behavior must be exemplary.

Attendance and Promptness

Because we serve the public, the importance of getting to work on time and being present every day is most important. The public expects and has a right to demand prompt and efficient service. If you must be absent, it is your responsibility to notify your supervisor at once. This allows him/her to reassign your work and maintain a high standard of service. Excessive absenteeism may be grounds for disciplinary action or dismissal. We cannot operate as effectively when an employee is absent.

Personal Mail and Telephone Calls

Please have all personal mail delivered to your residence. Personal use of the telephone is discouraged except in an emergency. However, for purely personal messages, you should make other arrangements for calls during your work day.

Use of School Board Property

The School Board provides you with necessary equipment, materials, and vehicles to carry out the job assigned to you. If you are assigned any equipment, it becomes your responsibility to exercise care in its operation. Personal use of vehicles, materials, supplies, tools or other equipment is not permitted. Violation could result in discharge, prosecution or both.

All employees shall maintain safe and sanitary conditions in their work areas. Unauthorized use, theft, or vandalism of School Board property or the property of others is

prohibited. Violation of this rule will result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Disparaging Remarks

Employees shall not use the classroom, or any part of school facilities, as a platform for making disparaging remarks against students, parents, teachers, and/or administrators. Conduct contrary to this policy may constitute grounds for disciplinary action.

Employee Relations

The Gilchrist County School Board believes that the work conditions, wages, and benefits that are offered to its employees are competitive with those offered by other school districts in this region. If employees have concerns about work conditions or compensation they are strongly encouraged to voice these concerns openly and directly to their immediate supervisors. Experience has shown that when employees deal openly and directly with supervisors, the work environment can be excellent, communications can be clear, and attitudes can be positive. The school district is committed to its employees and seeks to respond effectively to employee concerns.

If employees prefer to exercise their right to be represented by a collective bargaining agent, the school board will respect that choice. As some employees in the Gilchrist County School District have already chosen third party representation, the district affirms the commitment to retaining positive relationships with the existing bargaining unit.

Grievance

Whenever an employee or applicant feels that (s)he has a complaint, every effort is to be made to arrive at a satisfactory resolution of the problem on an informal basis. When this cannot be done, employees not covered by a collective bargaining complaint procedure, can resort to the more formal procedures as provided herein. If the collective bargaining agreement is silent on an issue this procedure may be used by the employee.

Procedures for filing a grievance are as follows:

Informal Discussion – If an employee believes there is a basis for complaint, (s)he shall discuss the complaint with his/her immediate supervisor (except in cases of discrimination or harassment allegations involving the supervisor, in which case they shall report to the Equity Coordinator) within five days of the occurrence of the alleged violation except in cases involving harassment or discrimination in which 60 days will be allowed.

Level One – If the complainant is not satisfied with the informal resolution (s)he may, within 10 days, file a formal complaint on the proper form and deliver it to his/her immediate supervisor or alternate. The Supervisor or alternate shall communicate his/her answer in writing to the complainant within 10 days after receipt of the complaint. Class complaints involving more than one supervisor and complaints involving an administrator above the building level may be filed by the complainant at level two.

Level Two – If the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution at level one

(s)he may, within 10 days of the answer, file a copy of the complaint with the Superintendent. Within 10 days of receipt of the complaint the Superintendent shall indicate his/her disposition in writing to the complainant.

Board Appeal – If the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution by the Superintendent, (s)he shall have the right to appeal the Superintendent’s decision to the School Board; provided request for placement on Board agenda is filed within 10 days.

Confidentiality and protection from retaliation will be provided to the extent possible to any employee, student, applicant or affected party who alleges discrimination or harassment.

Child Abuse

Each school district employee is considered a “mandated reporter”. All employees have an affirmative duty to report all cases of actual or **suspected** cases of child abuse or neglect, and shall immunity from liability if such cases are reported in good faith. The failure of an employee to report suspected cases of child abuse shall subject the employee to disciplinary measures. Report child abuse to Human Resources or directly to the Department of Children & Families at <http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/abuse/report> or by calling 1-800-96-ABUSE.

Weapons Prohibited

Weapons are not allowed on campus by anyone, except Law Enforcement. Employees, students, and parents are prohibited from carrying any gun, pistol, sword, knife, razor, or any other item which may be used as a weapon on school grounds, into any school building, or on a school bus or in an automobile or other vehicle parked on the school grounds or adjacent thereto. Employees, students, and parents who fail to comply with this policy may be arrested, suspended from duty, or expelled.

Alcohol and Drug-Free Workplace

No employee shall possess, consume or sell alcoholic beverages or be under the influence of alcohol on the job or in the workplace. No employee shall unlawfully manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess, use or be under the influence of, on the job or in the workplace, any narcotic, drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana or any other controlled substance, as defined in the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 812) and as further defined by regulations at 21 CFR or Florida Statutes, Chapter 893, without a valid prescription.

“Workplace” is defined as the site for the performance of work done in connection with the duties of an employee of the School Board. That term includes any place where the work of the school district is performed, including a school building or other school premises; any school-owned vehicle or any other school-approved vehicle used to transport students to and from school or school activities, or any off-school property during a school-sponsored or school-approved activity, event or function, such as a field trip, workshop or athletic event.

As a condition of employment each employee will abide by the terms of this policy and the GCSB Drug Free Workplace Procedures as negotiated by GCSB and GE/United. Employees are required to notify the Superintendent of any criminal drug statute arrest or conviction for a

violation occurring on the premises of the School Board, at the workplace, or during the conduct of any official activity related to the School Board within 48 hours. Identified employees must be in compliance with Board Policy.

The School Board shall notify the appropriate agency within 10 days after receiving such notice from an employee or otherwise receiving actual notice of such conviction and take one of the following actions, within 30 days of receiving such notice, with respect to any employee who is so convicted:

1. Require such an employee to participate satisfactorily in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved for such purposes by a federal, state or local health, law enforcement, or other appropriate agency.
2. If the employee fails to participate satisfactorily in such program, the employee may be non-renewed or his/her employment may be suspended or terminated, at the discretion of the School Board. OR
3. Take appropriate personnel action against such an employee, up to and including termination.

Tobacco Use in District Facilities

All uses of tobacco products in any form are prohibited in any District-owned facility, vehicle used to transport students, or other areas designated for student use at any time.

Operation of School Board Vehicles

Some employees, as part of their duties, are assigned GCSD owned vehicles. These vehicles are to be used for school business only. Safety belts must be worn at all times in GCSD owned vehicles equipped with them. Any employee assigned a vehicle who has excessive at-fault traffic citations is subject to disciplinary action, and may have his/her driving privileges cancelled. This could cause termination of employment.

Aids, Blood Borne Pathogens, & Environmental Hazards

The Board shall adopt appropriate procedures and guidelines consistent with federal and state regulations regarding the training and methods of handling and reducing the potential risks of exposure to blood borne pathogens, other communicable diseases, and environmental hazards, such as asbestos, lead in drinking water, and radon gas.

Sexual Harassment

The School Board forbids sexual harassment, or any other form of illegal harassment, of any employee, student, volunteer or visitor. The Board will not tolerate sexual harassment, or any other form of illegal harassment by any of its employees, students, volunteers or agents. The prohibition against discrimination including sexual and other forms of illegal harassment shall also apply to nonemployee volunteers who work subject to the control of school authorities, and to all vendors or service providers who have access to School Board facilities.

Teacher Certification

The Human Resources Department has been designated by the Superintendent to work directly with the Bureau of Educator Certification, Florida Department of Education, and to assist personnel with certification issues.

An individual recommended for an instructional position shall be properly certified, be eligible for certification, meet conditions prescribed in State Board of Education rules or qualify for employment or re-employment as a non-degreed vocational education or adult education teacher.

All current instructional personnel are required to renew their professional certificates through the district. Human Resources will work with instructional personnel in providing renewal paperwork and in-service history for renewal. It is the responsibility of instructional personnel with professional certification to ensure they earn at least 120 in-service points within the validity period of their current certificate for renewal.

Instructional Personnel who are applying for their first professional certificate will apply directly through the FLDOE website, or may use a paper application available in the Human Resources office. It is the responsibility of instructional personnel with temporary certification to meet the requirements set by the Florida Department of Education and defined in the Statement of Status of Eligibility.

Teaching Out-of-Field

The employment or assignment of out-of-field teachers may occur when a qualified and appropriately certificated teacher is unavailable. Any teacher who is employed or assigned out-of-field shall be required to satisfy the course credit requirement in State Board of Education Rule if (s)he is appointed in a subsequent school year(s). The deadline for earning the six semester hours of college credit or equivalent in the appropriate field shall be one calendar year from the date of initial appointment to the out-of-field teaching assignment.

Each principal shall report to the Superintendent any teacher who is assigned to teach a subject(s) for which (s)he is not properly certificated. Such reports shall be filed at the beginning of each school year or when changes occur and shall include the following information: teacher's name, the certificate area(s) on the Florida Educator Certificate, the out-of-field assignment, and the justification. The School Board minutes shall reflect such approvals.

Recommendations will be given to a teacher to assist in meeting in-field certification requirements.

Performance Evaluations

The performance of each employee is a key to the overall success of the GCSD in carrying out its mission, goals, and programs. Supervisors and employees are strongly encouraged to discuss job performance and goals in an informal, day-to-day basis so the employee can better understand what the job requirements are, as well as what the supervisor expects of him/her in their job. The success of the school system depends upon the combined efforts of employees, managers, supervisors, and administrative staff. The performance evaluation system is designed to provide both supervisors and employees the opportunity to discuss job tasks, identify and correct weaknesses, encourage and recognize strengths, and discuss positive, purposeful approaches for meeting goals that would improve student performance, job performance, and the quality of service provided.

The Superintendent shall develop or select personnel performance assessment systems for all staff. Each member of the staff shall receive an annual evaluation by his immediate administrative supervisor. The purpose of the evaluation shall be to improve the services of personnel in all departments. The administrative supervisors and department heads shall use the evaluation form provided by the Superintendent.

Nursing Mothers

Under the provision of the Fair Labor Standards Act, the District shall provide reasonable unpaid breaks for an employee to express breast milk for her child for up to one (1) year after the birth of the child. A private area, free from intrusion, shall be made available to the employee. A nursing mother shall be responsible for notifying her supervisor of her intent to exercise her right under the Fair Labor Standards Act.

Infants and Children in the Workplace

The presence of infants and children not of school age could be considered a disruption in the workplace and therefore is to be avoided except in emergency situations for the safety of the infant(s) & children, to avoid disruptions in job duties of employee's and co-workers, to reduce liability, to maintain a professional learning environment for students, and to maintain a professional work environment for employees. If bringing an infant or child to work with the employee is unavoidable, the employee must contact his or her administrator as soon as possible to discuss the situation and obtain permission to have the infant or child accompany the employee while working. Consideration should not be given to allowing infants or children with an illness to come to work with an employee.

Employee Benefits

Overview of Benefits

Eligible employees of the GCSD are provided a wide range of benefits. A number of the benefits such as, social security, workers' compensation, state retirement, disability, FMLS, and unemployment compensation cover all employees in manner prescribed by law. Benefit eligibility is dependent upon a variety of factors including employee classification. Some benefits require contributions from the employee. Human Resources can identify the benefits for which you are eligible.

The following benefits are available to eligible employees:

Health Insurance	Dental & Vision
Life Insurance	Tax-Sheltered Annuity Plans
Payroll Deduction	Sick Leave/Personal Leave
Auto Mileage/Travel	Direct Deposit
Credit Union	Paid Holidays
Sick Leave Bank	Training
Uniform Allowance	Retirement
Flexible Spending (Cafeteria 125 Plan)	
Optional Insurance (Dental, Vision, Disability, Cancer, Life)	

Auto Mileage / Travel

Reimbursement is provided to employees for authorized travel when approved by the employee's supervisor, superintendent, and/or School Board. Law establishes rates for travel. No reimbursement is given for travel between the employee's home and work site.

Travel forms must be submitted in a timely manner and in many cases must be accompanied by an approved leave form.

Uniform and Uniform Maintenance

The School Board appropriates funds for the purchase uniforms and maintenance of uniforms for approved employees (i.e. food service workers, mechanics, bus drivers) because of required regulations.

Retirement

New employees, who have not retired from FRS, automatically become members of the Florida Retirement System (FRS) and are covered by Federal Social Security. Employees are required to contribute 3% into the FRS fund and the district pays the remainder of the contribution. The district matches your social security contributions. FRS offers two plans; the regular pension plan and the investment plan. The district cannot advise you on which plan to choose.

Effective 7/1/2010 the re-employment rules for FRS changed.

- FRS members who retire from the Pension Plan after 7/1/2010 cannot return to any FRS employer or position for six months following retirement, there are not exceptions to this rule.

- A Pension Plan retiree may return to an FRS position in the seventh month through the 12th month, but must give up their retirement benefit during that period.
- After the 12th month a Pension Plan retiree may begin drawing their retirement benefit in addition to their salary.
- For re-hire rules for the Investment Plan retirees please contact the Investment Plan Financial Guidance line at 1-866-446-9377.
- A retiree from the Pension Plan or Investment Plan who is re-hired after 7/1/2010 will not be eligible to earn a second retirement benefit.
- For more specific information about FRS and your retirement please contact FRS directly at 1-866-446-9377.

Retiree Insurance and Medicare

Employees who retire from the Gilchrist County School District are welcome to remain on the group health, dental/vision, and some supplemental insurance. However, employees who are not actively working are not eligible for the School Board's contribution towards their benefits, leaving the retiree financially responsible for the full monthly premium.

Retirees who are age 65 are eligible for Medicare. Medicare is divided into separate parts: Medicare A (hospitalization), Part B (physicians) and Part D (prescription coverage). These three (3) components together will safely replace the School Board's group health insurance plan and in most cases, will cost the retiree much less.

Valery Insurance Agency is the Board approved company that provides Medicare Supplement to our retirees. Valery can assist retirees, employees considering retirement and spouses of employees and retirees in selecting the best Medicare approved plan to fulfill each person's individual medical needs. Valery works with over fifteen school districts and over 20 counties and municipalities within the State of Florida.

The Florida Retirement System (FRS) provides to qualified retirees a Health Insurance Subsidy (H.I.S.) in the amount of \$5 for each year of service with an FRS employer (minimum benefits of \$30 and maximum of \$150). The H.I.S. paperwork is sent to new retirees around the time of their first retirement check is received. Once the H.I.S. paperwork has been submitted to FRS and the subsidy begins, the H.I.S. will remain in effect regardless of where health insurance is held. If an employee retires, maintaining the GCSD group health insurance and later changes to another carrier, the H.I.S. will remain in effect. The H.I.S. benefit will remain active until the State of Florida initiates a change in this benefit.

For more information regarding the Medicare Supplements available, please contact:

Valery Insurance Agency
 2113 Gulf Boulevard
 Indian Rocks Beach, FL 33785
 Phone (727) 517-8888
 Toll Free (800) 330-8445
 Fax (727) 517-8887
 Email valeryagency@verizon.net
 Web www.valeryagency.com

Terminal Leave Pay

Terminal pay benefits are paid according to the most recent negotiated contract and per school board policy. Any payout over the amount of \$5,000 must be sent directly to BENCOR Administrative Services to be placed into a 401(a) Special Pay Plan. For more information on BENCOR and the 401(a) plan please contact Human Resources.

Employees transferring to other districts in the state of Florida will have the option to transfer leave balances to another district. The employee shall indicate their choice of being paid out or transferring leave on the retirement/resignation form.

Insurance

Employees are provided an opportunity to participate in Board approved insurance plans that offer a variety of covered services. Employees are encouraged to select the benefit package that best meets their family's needs. The board authorizes pre-tax payroll deductions as well as pays the premium amount for the base health plan on each employee who enrolls in the group health plan. For those employees who do not elect group health insurance coverage through the district, they may elect to enroll in the current dental/vision/disability insurance plan, and the board will pay the premium for the employee's coverage.

Employees are responsible for premiums above the rate for the base health plan, and for adding coverage for family members to their health, dental/vision/disability, or life insurance plans. Insurance coverage is available the first day of the following month of the employment start date.

If an employee's insurance needs change, it is their responsibility to inform Human Resources within 30 days of the qualifying event. Events such as marriage, divorce, birth/adoption of a child, spouse job loss, loss of other insurance, etc. are considered qualifying events.

COBRA

The Federal Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) gives employees and their qualified dependents the opportunity to continue health insurance coverage under an employer-sponsored plan when a "qualifying-event" would normally result in the loss of eligibility. Under COBRA, the employee or beneficiary pays the full premium amount for coverage at the employer's group rates. The district's COBRA Administrator will provide each eligible employee with a written notice describing rights granted under COBRA, as well as the necessary documentation to enroll in COBRA coverage.

Workers' Compensation Insurance

GCSO provides workers' compensation insurance at no cost to employees. This program covers any injury or illness sustained in the course of employment that requires medical treatment. Any employee who sustains a work-related injury or illness should inform his or her supervisor immediately. No matter how minor an on-the-job injury may appear, it is important that it be reported immediately. This will enable an eligible employee to qualify for coverage as quickly as possible. When a case is submitted to be covered by workers' compensation the district's third party administrator will determine eligibility and benefits available.

Training Opportunity

A variety of training activities are provided throughout the year for employees to have the opportunity to keep up-to-date of changes in the field of education. Professional development / In-service programs are designed to help employees improve student performance, the job performance, foster personal growth, as well as assist employees in meeting professional regulations and standards. Credit for participation in professional development / in-service training is awarded based on the district's approved Master In-Service Plan and state Board of Education regulations.

The Human Resource department works with the directors of Secondary and Elementary Education to ensure all credit earned is tracked for certification purposes.

Employee Assistance Program

The Employee Assistance Program is intended to help employees who are suffering from personal problems, which could affect and interfere with their work performance. The goal of this program is to help employees who develop such problems by providing consultation and/or referring the employee to other resources for assistance to prevent the condition or problem from progressing to a degree where the employee cannot work effectively. Confidentiality of information is maintained, except in situations where such information is prohibited by law or judged to be in violation of best practices and professional ethics. Employees will not place their job(s) in jeopardy nor be discriminated against because of participation in the Employee Assistance Program. Employees needing this service or desiring further information should contact Human Resources or call one of the Employee Assistance Program lines directly.

Employee Leave

Leave Requests

All leave must be covered by leave duly authorized and granted. Leave may be with or without pay as provided by law and regulations of School Board policy. Leave forms are provided by the district and are available at each work site. Leave forms must be submitted for approval to the employee's direct supervisor. It is the employee's responsibility to submit leave forms. Leave shall be officially granted in advance and shall be used for the purposes set forth in the leave application. Leave for sickness or other emergencies may be deemed to be granted in advance if prompt report is made to the proper authority. No leave, except military leave, will be granted for a period in excess of one year.

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent and approval by the School Board, a leave of absence may be granted for administrative, instructional, and non-instructional personnel for reasons of health or education.

Personal Leave

Employees may be allowed *the number of days per contract* paid leave for personal reasons each year to be charged against accrued sick leave. Such leave shall be non-cumulative and any request for such leave shall be approved, in advance, by the Superintendent or his/her designee.

Unpaid personal leave must be request in writing and approved by the School Board. Unpaid personal leave is considered on its own merit and on a case by case basis.

Annual Leave

Employees who are employed on 12 month contracts shall accrue annual leave, exclusive of holidays. One day per month cumulative to 12 days per year for less than five years of continuous service in the District. One and one-fourth days per month cumulative to 15 days per year for five years or more of continuous service in the District. One and one-half days per month cumulative to 18 days per year for 10 years or more of continuous service in the District.

Annual leave may be accrued from year to year not to exceed 30 days at the beginning of any fiscal year. Any accrued annual leave in excess of 30 days shall be taken before June 30th of each year, or the employee will be compensated for any overage as of that date beginning June 30, 1986. Employees shall be encouraged to use accrued annual leave on an annual basis.

Sick Leave

Personnel employed on a full time basis shall be entitled to earn one day of sick leave per month of employment. Such leave shall be cumulative from year to year, and any leave charged against accrued sick leave shall be with full compensation.

Administrative and non-instructional personnel - Such full time employees shall be credited with four days of sick leave at the end of the first month of employment of each contract year and shall thereafter be credited for one day of sick leave for each month of employment.

Instructional personnel - Such full time employees shall be entitled to four days of sick leave as of the first day of employment of each current year, and thereafter is credited for one day of sick leave at the end of each month of employment.

The total number of sick leave days earned shall be no more than one day of sick leave times the number of months of employment during the year of employment, or four days whichever is greater. Sick leave shall not be used prior to the time it is earned.

All sick leave must be submitted within 5 days of returning to work.

Sick Leave Bank

Any School Board employee who is a member of the bargaining unit shall be eligible to participate in the Sick Leave Bank after one year of employment provided they have one accumulated day. To become a member of the Sick Leave Bank, a bargaining unit member shall voluntarily contribute one of their accumulated sick leave days within the first month of eligibility. The Sick Leave Bank shall be declared active when 25 sick leave days have been contributed to the Sick Leave Bank.

When an employee, who is a member of the sick bank, has exhausted all of their sick leave they can request days from the sick leave bank. The request must be made in writing to the Sick Leave Bank Committee. For more details please see School Board Policy 6.34D.

Absence Without Leave

Administrative and Instructional - Any member of the administrative or instructional staff who is willfully absent from duty without leave shall forfeit compensation for the time of the absence and the employee's contract shall be subject to cancellation by the School Board. In addition, such absence without leave shall interrupt continuity of service.

Non-Instructional - Any other employee who is willfully absent from duty without leave shall be subject to dismissal from employment and shall forfeit compensation for the time of the absence.

Professional Leave

Professional leave may be granted to an administrative or instructional staff member with or without pay in accordance with School Board Policy 6.27D. Professional leave is defined as leave granted to an instructional or administrative staff member to engage in activities resulting in professional benefit or advancement including earning of college credits and degrees or contributing to the teaching profession. Extended professional leave is such leave exceeding more than 30 consecutive days. Professional leave or extended professional leave shall be initiated by the employee. Professional leave may be granted to attend educational meetings, clinics, workshops and similar meetings while school is in session. Professional leave may be with or without pay. If such leave is approved with pay, the employee may receive compensation as authorized under his/her contractual agreement with the School Board.

Military Leave

Military leave shall be granted to an employee who is required to serve in the armed forces of the United States or of the state of Florida in fulfillment of obligations incurred under the Selective Service Laws or because of membership in the reserves of the armed forces or the National Guard. When an employee enters voluntarily into any branch of the armed forces for temporary or an extended period of service, military leave shall be granted at the School Board's discretion. Provided, however, an employee whose absence will interfere with the orderly operation of the school program shall be denied military leave except in unusual cases.

Jury Duty and Witness Leave

An employee of the Board who is summoned as a member of a jury panel may be granted temporary duty leave. Any jury fees may be retained by the employee. The Board shall not reimburse the employee for meals, lodging, and travel expenses incurred while serving as a juror. An employee who is subpoenaed as a witness, not involving personal litigation, may be granted temporary leave. Any witness fees may be retained by the employee. The Board shall not reimburse the employee for meals, lodging, and travel expenses incurred while serving as a witness.

Illness or Injury in the Line of Duty

Any full time regular employee shall be entitled to illness-or-injury-in-line-of-duty leave for a period not to exceed 10 school days when he/she has to be absent from work because of a personal injury received in the discharge of his/her duties or because of illness from any contagious or infectious disease contracted in the performance of his/her duties. Illness-in-line-of-duty leave is intended to deal with the illnesses normally known as childhood diseases; such as, mumps, measles, and chicken pox. This leave does not include normal adult illnesses such as colds and influenza. This leave is non-cumulative.

FMLA (Family & Medical Leave Act)

FMLA (Family & Medical Leave Act) 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

Employees should contact Human Resources to request FMLA.

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 servicemember during a single 12-month period. A covered servicemember 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 servicemember medically unfit to perform his or her duties for which the servicemember 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.

For additional information: 1-866-4US-WAGE (1-866-487-9243) TTY: 1-877-889-5627 WWW.WAGEHOUR.DOL.GOV

Contact Numbers

Human Resources	352-463-4403
Employee Assistance (Mutual of Omaha) (Counseling, Substance Abuse, Financial, etc)	800-316-2796
Employee Assistance (SunLife) (Counseling, Substance Abuse, Financial, etc)	877-595-5284
Employee Benefits Assistance (Health Insurance, Short & Long Term Disability, Life Insurance)	855-215-7068
Teacher's Liability Insurance Coverage	855-722-5542
Valic (Bradley Easom)	352-299-6436
Florida Retirement System (FRS)	866-446-9377
Quitline (Smoking Cessation)	877-U-CAN-NOW or 877-822-6669