

Substitute Teacher Handbook

2017-2018



**103 Eldridge Street
Sylvester, GA 31791
(229) 776-8600 Fax (229) 776-8603
www.worthschools.net
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Welcome to Worth County School District

Dear Substitute Teacher:

You are a vital part of our teaching staff. Your contribution as a substitute teacher not only impacts the instructional program of our schools, but also greatly affects individual students, teachers, and our district as a whole. What you do makes a difference!

We are confident that you will do everything possible to meet the standards outlined by the school you are assigned to and the teacher for whom you are substituting. Every effort will be made to ensure that your day goes as smoothly as possible. When in doubt, do not hesitate to check with the front office staff, a nearby teacher, or the grade level team leader or department head for additional information. Procedures may vary from school to school.

Please use this booklet as a guide to a successful career as a substitute teacher with the Worth County School District. The content is arranged to assist you in finding answers quickly to questions that may arise as you work at the various schools. If you do not find the answer in this handbook, please don't hesitate to ask.

We recognize the challenge of your assignments, appreciate the energy and skill you put forth to make our schools run smoothly, and hope your experiences as a substitute teacher in Worth County will be rewarding and enjoyable.

Sincerely,

Human Resources

Worth County School District Purpose Statement

The purpose of the Worth County School District is to ensure a quality education for all students leading to graduation and productive citizenship.

Worth County School District Beliefs

We believe that...

- All students can learn and are unique learners;
- Education is a shared responsibility of the student, home, school, and community;
- Schools should maintain a safe and structured learning environment;
- All students should meet or exceed educational standards provided by a rigorous and relevant curriculum;
- All decisions should be driven by accurate and relevant data;
- College and career readiness activities prepare students for the future workforce;
- Students engaged in co- and extra-curricular activities perform better;
- Readily accessible technology resources improve teaching and learning;
- The system should employ and retain highly qualified personnel who demonstrate a high degree of professionalism;
- Job embedded professional learning results in improved instruction and increased student achievement;
- Prompt and regular attendance by all leads to improved performance;
- Effective and open communication is essential for the achievement of educational goals.

Worth County School District Vision

- Our vision for the Worth County School District is for our graduation rate to reach 80% or above, and for students to meet or exceed established accountability measures.
- We will achieve this vision by providing high expectations, a relevant and rigorous curriculum, data driven standards-based instructional practices, appropriate interventions, and celebrations of success as we move forward.
- As a result of our success, we will attract and retain high quality teachers provide a foundation for community economic growth, and prepare graduates for post-secondary success.

Worth County Board of Education

- Mr. William Jenkins – Chair – bjenkins@worthschools.net
Mr. Melvin Jefferson – District 1 – mjefferson@worthschools.net
Mr. Russell Beard – District 2 – jjones@worthschools.net
Mr. William Oliver – District 3 – bolivar@worthschools.net
Mr. Randy Bacon – District 4 – rbacon@worthschools.net

Board of Education Meetings

Regular monthly meetings of the Worth County Board of Education are held at the Worth County Board Office (103 Eldridge Street) on the second Thursday of each month at 7 PM.

Disclaimer

This handbook has been designed to help familiarize you with some of our policies, procedures, benefits, work rules, and other areas of concern to employees of the Worth County School District. The information in this handbook does not create or amend any contract of employment. The Worth County Board of Education has the right to adopt new policies and procedures and to modify, amend, or eliminate any of its existing policies and procedures. Any changes will take priority over the information stated in this handbook even if the changes have not been reprinted or substituted into the handbook. Schools may institute additional procedures relating to normal school operations, but those may not conflict with the board policy or items specified in this handbook. While this document is transmitted to you electronically, it is requested that you keep it in a location which is accessible. Feel free to make a hard copy if needed.

For additional, more detailed information or if you have questions, please refer to the Worth County Board of Education Policy Manual, which can be located at the district's web site (www.worthschools.net – Quick Links – Board of Education – Board Policies) or contact the Human Resources Department.

Central Office Staff

SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE

Superintendent of Schools
Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent
Receptionist/Leave Keeper

Bill Settle – bsettle@worthschools.net
Kimberly Oliver – koliver@worthschools.net
Marilyn Powell – mapowell@worthschools.net

BUSINESS & FINANCE DEPARTMENT

Director of Finance
Assistant Finance Director
Accounts Payable
Payroll Specialist
Benefits Specialist

Amy Senkbeil – asenkbeil@worthschools.net
Teresa Odom – todom@worthschools.net
Naverah Jimmerson – njimmerson@worthschools.net
Lacey Heard – lheard@worthschools.net
Melissa Emerson – memerson@worthschools.net

CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, & ASSESSMENT DEPARTMENT

Director of Curriculum & Instruction
Student Support Services Coordinator
School Social Worker

Dr. Djana Goss – dgoss@worthschools.net
Sandi Giddens – sgiddens@worthschools.net
Tracie Turner – tturner@worthschools.net

FEDERAL PROGRAMS DEPARTMENT

Director of Federal Programs

Christie Foerster – cfoerster@worthschools.net

HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

Director of Human Resources
HR Administrative Assistant

Felecia Cook – fcook@worthschools.net
Kanicee Walker – kwalker@worthschools.net

MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT

Director of Maintenance
Assistant Director of Maintenance
Secretary

Jimmy Odom – jiodom@worthschools.net
Glen McDonald – gmcDonald@worthschools.net
Kristi McDaniel – kmcdaniel@worthschools.net

SCHOOL NUTRITION DEPARTMENT

Director of School Nutrition
School Nutrition Bookkeeper

Kristen Garland – kgarland@worthschools.net
Janet Smith – jsmith@worthschools.net

SPECIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Director of Special Education
Special Education Secretary

Dr. Yolanda Smith – ysmith@worthschools.net
Lee Hobby – lhobby@worthschools.net

TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT

Director of Technology
Instructional Technology Specialist

Justin Judy – jjudy@worthschools.net
Christy Haskins – chaskins@worthschools.net

TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

Interim Director of Transportation
Assistant Director of Transportation
Transportation Secretary

Jerry Jones – jjones@worthschools.net
Elaine Bozeman – ebozeman@worthschools.net
Amanda Carter – acarter@worthschools.net

SCHOOL/BUS SHOP INFORMATION

Worth County Primary School

1304 North Isabella Street
Sylvester, GA 31791
Phone: (229) 776-8660
Fax: (229) 776-8665
Principal: Jared Worthy
Grades: PreK – 2

Worth County Middle School

1305 North Isabella Street
Sylvester, GA 31791
Phone: (229) 776-8620
Fax (229) 776-8624
Principal: Tiffany Sevier
Grades: 6 – 8

Worth County Achievement Center

103 Eldridge Street
Sylvester, GA 31791
Phone: (229) 776-8600
Fax (229) 776-8603
Principal: Will Smith
Grades: 6 – 12

Worth County Elementary School

1906 GA HWY 313
Sylvester, GA 31791
Phone: (229) 776-8605
Fax: (229) 776-8607
Principal: Dr. Steven Rouse
Grades: 3 – 5

Worth County High School

406 West King Street
Sylvester, GA 31791
Phone: (229) 776-8625
Fax (229) 777-2075
Principal: Harley Calhoun
Grades: 9 – 12

Bus Shop

142 Rebecca Drive
Sylvester, GA 31791
Phone: (229) 776-8612
Fax (229) 776-8666

Substitute Teacher Responsibilities

- You must follow the lesson plans provided by the teacher. **This will assure continuity of instruction for the students.**
- Begin classroom activities promptly.
- Keep students on-task.
- Maintain student discipline and classroom control consistent with school and district standards.
- Monitor students at all times. Do not sit and read personal books, newspapers, or conduct personal business on computers or cell phones. It is the substitute teacher's responsibility to circulate around the room and offer assistance to the students.
- Perform other duties as assigned by the principal (e.g. cover classes during the teacher's planning period, etc.)
- Report to school on time and be prepared to work the assigned hours. Schools run on a very tight schedule; therefore, tardiness may result in loss of job assignment. If an emergency arises, be sure to contact the school immediately.
- You must stay on campus during the entire assignment, including your lunch break.
- It is your responsibility to ensure the students are safe. **Never leave students unsupervised.** If an emergency occurs, the principal or principal's designee must be notified to provide temporary supervision.
- Notify the office of any accidents or student illness. You may be required to complete an incident report. It is imperative that complete and accurate information be included. Notify the office immediately if an injury occurs.
- Respect students' differences. Remarks you may think are humorous may in fact be considered cultural bias or harassment.
- Treat students, parents, and co-workers with dignity and respect.

Code of Ethics for Educators

You are considered to be on the same professional level as a regular teacher when you are substituting, and you are expected to observe the same ethical codes as the regular teacher. All employees in the Worth County School District are required to observe the Code of Ethics for Educators – a code that protects the health, safety and general welfare of students and staff, and ensures the citizens of Georgia a degree of accountability within the school district.

The following changes to the Professional Standards' Code of Ethics will be effective in the Worth County School District:

- a) **Definitions:** An educator will include any employee of our school district.
- b) **Standard 8:** Although non-certificated personnel do not receive contracts, all employees are expected to fulfill the terms and obligations of their jobs.
- c) **Disciplinary Action:** The district will not report violations of non-certificated personnel to the Georgia Professional Standards but will take disciplinary action as authorized by law and board policy.

Effective June 15, 2015

1) Introduction. The Code of Ethics for Educators defines the professional behavior of educators in Georgia and serves as a guide to ethical conduct. The Georgia Professional Standards Commission has adopted standards that represent the conduct generally accepted by the education profession. The code defines unethical conduct justifying disciplinary sanction and provides guidance for protecting the health, safety and general welfare of students and educators, and assuring the citizens of Georgia a degree of accountability within the education profession.

(2) Definitions

- (a) “Certificate” refers to any teaching, service, or leadership certificate, license, or permit issued by authority of the Georgia Professional Standards Commission.
- (b) “Child endangerment” occurs when an educator disregards a substantial and/or unjustifiable risk of bodily harm to the student.
- (c) “Educator” is a teacher, school or school system administrator, or other education personnel who holds a certificate issued by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission and persons who have applied for but have not yet received a certificate. For the purposes of the Code of Ethics for Educators, “educator” also refers to paraprofessionals, aides, and substitute teachers.
- (d) “Student” is any individual enrolled in the state’s public or private schools from preschool through grade 12 or any individual between and including the ages of 3 and 17 under the age of 18. For the purposes of the Code of Ethics and Standards of Professional Conduct for Educators, the enrollment period for a graduating student ends on August 31 of the year of graduation.
- (e) “Complaint” is any written and signed statement from a local board, the state board, or one or more individual residents of this state filed with the Georgia Professional Standards Commission alleging that an educator has breached one or more of the standards in the Code of Ethics for Educators. A “complaint” will be deemed a request to investigate.
- (f) “Revocation” is the invalidation of any certificate held by the educator.
- (g) “Denial” is the refusal to grant initial certification to an applicant for a certificate.
- (h) “Suspension” is the temporary invalidation of any certificate for a period of time specified by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission.
- (i) “Reprimand” admonishes the certificate holder for his or her conduct. The reprimand cautions that further unethical conduct will lead to a more severe action.
- (j) “Warning” warns the certificate holder that his or her conduct is unethical. The warning cautions that further unethical conduct will lead to a more severe action.
- (k) “Monitoring” is the quarterly appraisal of the educator’s conduct by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission through contact with the educator and his or her employer. As a condition of monitoring, an educator may be required to submit a criminal background check (GCIC). The Commission specifies the length of the monitoring period.
- (l) “No Probable Cause” is a determination by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission that, after a preliminary investigation, either no further action need be taken or no cause exists to recommend disciplinary action.

(3) Standards

- (a) Standard 1: **Legal Compliance** - An educator shall abide by federal, state, and local laws and statutes. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to the Commission or conviction of a felony or of any crime involving moral turpitude; of any other criminal offense involving the manufacture, distribution, trafficking, sale, or possession of a controlled substance or marijuana as provided for in Chapter 13 of Title 16; or of any other sexual offense as provided for in Code Section 16-6-1 through 16-6-17, 16-6-20, 16-6-22.2, or 16-12-100; or any other laws applicable to the profession. As used herein, conviction includes a finding or verdict of guilty, or a plea of *nolo contendere*, regardless of whether an appeal of the conviction has been sought; a situation where first offender treatment without adjudication of guilt pursuant to the charge was granted; and a situation where an adjudication of guilt or sentence was otherwise withheld or not entered on the charge or the charge was otherwise disposed of in a similar manner in any jurisdiction.
- (b) Standard 2: **Conduct with Students** - An educator shall always maintain a professional relationship with all students, both in and outside the classroom. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:
1. committing any act of child abuse, including physical and verbal abuse;
 2. committing any act of cruelty to children or any act of child endangerment;

3. committing any sexual act with a student or soliciting such from a student;
4. engaging in or permitting harassment of or misconduct toward a student that would violate a state or federal law;
5. soliciting, encouraging, or consummating an inappropriate written, verbal, electronic, or physical relationship with a student;
6. furnishing tobacco, alcohol, or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any student; or
7. failing to prevent the use of alcohol or illegal or unauthorized drugs by students who are under the educator's supervision (including but not limited to at the educator's residence or any other private setting).

(c) Standard 3: **Alcohol or Drugs** - An educator shall refrain from the use of alcohol or illegal or unauthorized drugs during the course of professional practice. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. being on school or Local Unit of Administration (LUA)/school district premises or at a school or a LUA/school district-related activity while under the influence of, possessing, using, or consuming illegal or unauthorized drugs; and
2. being on school or LUA/school district premises or at a school-related activity involving students while under the influence of, possessing, or consuming alcohol. A school-related activity includes, but is not limited to, any activity sponsored by the school or school system (booster clubs, parent-teacher organizations, or any activity designed to enhance the school curriculum i.e. Foreign Language trips, etc).

(d) Standard 4: **Honesty** - An educator shall exemplify honesty and integrity in the course of professional practice. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to, falsifying, misrepresenting or omitting:

1. professional qualifications, criminal history, college or staff development credit and/or degrees, academic award, and employment history;
2. information submitted to federal, state, local school districts and other governmental agencies;
3. information regarding the evaluation of students and/or personnel;
4. reasons for absences or leaves;
5. information submitted in the course of an official inquiry/investigation; and
6. information submitted in the course of professional practice.

(e) Standard 5: **Public Funds and Property** - An educator entrusted with public funds and property shall honor that trust with a high level of honesty, accuracy, and responsibility. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. misusing public or school-related funds;
2. failing to account for funds collected from students or parents;
3. submitting fraudulent requests or documentation for reimbursement of expenses or for pay (including fraudulent or purchased degrees, documents, or coursework);
4. co-mingling public or school-related funds with personal funds or checking accounts; and
5. using school or school district property without the approval of the local board of education/governing board or authorized designee.

(f) Standard 6: **Remunerative Conduct** - An educator shall maintain integrity with students, colleagues, parents, patrons, or businesses when accepting gifts, gratuities, favors, and additional compensation. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. soliciting students or parents of students, or school and/or LUA/school district personnel, to purchase equipment, supplies, or services from the educator or to participate in activities that financially benefit the educator unless approved by the local board of education/governing board or authorized designee;
2. accepting gifts from vendors or potential vendors for personal use or gain where there may be the appearance of a conflict of interest;

3. tutoring students assigned to the educator for remuneration unless approved by the local board of education/governing board or authorized designee; and

4. coaching, instructing, promoting athletic camps, summer leagues, etc. that involves students in an educator's school system and from whom the educator receives remuneration unless approved by the local board of education/governing board or authorized designee. These types of activities must be in compliance with all rules and regulations of the Georgia High School Association.

(g) **Standard 7: Confidential Information** - An educator shall comply with state and federal laws and state school board policies relating to the confidentiality of student and personnel records, standardized test material and other information. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. sharing of confidential information concerning student academic and disciplinary records, health and medical information, family status and/or income, and assessment/testing results unless disclosure is required or permitted by law;

2. sharing of confidential information restricted by state or federal law;

3. violation of confidentiality agreements related to standardized testing including copying or teaching identified test items, publishing or distributing test items or answers, discussing test items, violating local school system or state directions for the use of tests or test items, etc.; and

4. violation of other confidentiality agreements required by state or local policy.

(h) **Standard 8: Abandonment of Contract** - An educator shall fulfill all of the terms and obligations detailed in the contract with the local board of education or education agency for the duration of the contract. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. abandoning the contract for professional services without prior release from the contract by the employer, and

2. willfully refusing to perform the services required by a contract.

(i) **Standard 9: Required Reports** - An educator shall file reports of a breach of one or more of the standards in the Code of Ethics for Educators, child abuse (O.C.G.A. §19-7-5), or any other required report. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. failure to report all requested information on documents required by the Commission when applying for or renewing any certificate with the Commission;

2. failure to make a required report of a violation of one or more standards of the Code of Ethics for educators of which they have personal knowledge as soon as possible but no later than ninety (90) days from the date the educator became aware of an alleged breach unless the law or local procedures require reporting sooner; and

3. failure to make a required report of any violation of state or federal law soon as possible but no later than ninety (90) days from the date the educator became aware of an alleged breach unless the law or local procedures require reporting sooner. These reports include but are not limited to: murder, voluntary manslaughter, aggravated assault, aggravated battery, kidnapping, any sexual offense, any sexual exploitation of a minor, any offense involving a controlled substance and any abuse of a child if an educator has reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused.

(j) **Standard 10: Professional Conduct** - An educator shall demonstrate conduct that follows generally recognized professional standards and preserves the dignity and integrity of the education profession. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to any conduct that impairs and/or diminishes the certificate holder's ability to function professionally in his or her employment position, or behavior or conduct that is detrimental to the health, welfare, discipline, or morals of students.

(k) **Standard 11: Testing** - An educator shall administer state-mandated assessments fairly and ethically. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. committing any act that breaches Test Security; and

2. compromising the integrity of the assessment.

(4) Reporting

(a) Educators are required to report a breach of one or more of the Standards in the Code of Ethics for Educators as soon as possible but no later than ninety (90) days from the date the educator became aware of an alleged breach unless the law or local procedures require reporting sooner. Educators should be aware of legal requirements and local policies and procedures for reporting unethical conduct. Complaints filed with the Georgia Professional Standards Commission must be in writing and must be signed by the complainant (parent, educator, or other LUA/school district employee, etc.).

(b) The Commission notifies local and state officials of all disciplinary actions. In addition, suspensions and revocations are reported to national officials, including the NASDTEC Clearinghouse.

(5) Disciplinary Action

(a) The Georgia Professional Standards Commission is authorized to suspend, revoke, or deny certificates, to issue a reprimand or warning, or to monitor the educator's conduct and performance after an investigation is held and notice and opportunity for a hearing are provided to the certificate holder. Any of the following grounds shall be considered cause for disciplinary action against the holder of a certificate:

1. unethical conduct as outlined in The Code of Ethics for Educators, Standards 1-11 (GaPSC Rule 505-6-.01);
2. disciplinary action against a certificate in another state on grounds consistent with those specified in the Code of Ethics for Educators, Standards 1-11 (GaPSC Rule 505-6-.01);
3. order from a court of competent jurisdiction or a request from the Department of Human Resources that the certificate should be suspended or the application for certification should be denied for non-payment of child support (O.C.G.A. §19-6-28.1 and §19-11-9.3);
4. notification from the Georgia Higher Education Assistance Corporation that the educator is in default and not in satisfactory repayment status on a student loan guaranteed by the Georgia Higher Education Assistance Corporation (O.C.G.A. §20-3-295);
5. suspension or revocation of any professional license or certificate;
6. violation of any other laws and rules applicable to the profession; and
7. any other good and sufficient cause that renders an educator unfit for employment as an educator.

(b) An individual whose certificate has been revoked, denied, or suspended may not serve as a volunteer or be employed as an educator, paraprofessional, aide, substitute teacher or in any other position during the period of his or her revocation, suspension or denial for a violation of The Code of Ethics. The superintendent and the educator designated by the superintendent/Local Board of Education shall be responsible for assuring that an individual whose certificate has been revoked, denied, or

suspended is not employed or serving in any capacity in their district. Both the superintendent and the superintendent's designee must hold GaPSC certification. Should the superintendent's certificate be revoked, suspended, or denied, the Board of Education shall be responsible for assuring that the superintendent whose certificate has been revoked, suspended, or denied is not employed or serving in any capacity in their district.

Authority O.C.G.A. § 20-2-200; 20-2-981 through 20-2-984.5

Student Discipline

As the substitute teacher, you are responsible for the conduct of the class under your direction. A positive approach to discipline is encouraged. Discipline problems tend to be minimized in a classroom where the substitute is prepared, organized, adaptable, and demonstrates understanding of the subject matter. Teachers are expected to use reasonable methods to establish control in the classroom and on the playgrounds. Corporal punishment or laying hands on a child by the teacher is not permitted under any circumstances. If serious discipline problems arise and you are unable to solve the problem, report the problem to an administrator immediately.

Substitute Teaching Assignments

A **substitute teacher** is called upon to fill the position of a regularly employed teacher who is absent from service. The amount of work varies with the needs of the district and the qualifications of the individual. Substitute teachers are employed on an on-call, day-to-day, as needed basis.

A **long-term substitute** is one who serves continuously in the same assignment for more than 10 consecutive days. The substitute teacher will be paid the regular daily rate for the first 10 days. The long-term rate is effective beginning the 11th day until the assignment is completed. A substitute who only has a high school diploma or a GED certificate cannot work in any one classroom more than 10 consecutive days (GaPSC Rule 505-2-.36).

Due to Affordable Care Act (ACA) restrictions, Worth County School District substitutes will be limited to work no more than 16 days each month. Long-term substitutes are also limited to work 16 days each month.

Cancellation of Accepted Assignment

Substitutes who accept assignments are expected to serve in those assignments. If you accept a job and cannot fill the position, please cancel the assignment 24 hours before the expected start time. Notify the appropriate person at each school. Never call another substitute teacher to replace you.

Additional Duties

Substitute teachers assume all responsibilities assigned to the regular teacher including bus duty and additional duties including covering classes during planning periods if needed by school administration. If there are any questions, the school principal or assistant principal is to be consulted. Check with the school office to determine if there are any duties for which your teacher may be responsible for on that day or for that week.

Salary

Substitute pay will be as follows as approved by the Worth County Board of Education:

Short-term Daily Rate

Certified: \$70.00/day (8 hours); \$35.00 for half-day (4 hours)

Non-Certified: \$60.00/day (8 hours); \$30.00 for half-day (4 hours)

Long-term Daily Rate

Certified: \$150.00/day (8 hours); \$75.00 for half-day (4 hours)

Non-Certified: \$65.00/day (8 hours); \$32.50 for half-day (4 hours)

Taxes

Taxes are taken out each month to include FICA and Medicare in accordance with federal regulations. Taxes are based on withholding forms completed by the employee for federal and state taxes. Employees may make changes to these as needed. If a form is not completed for federal or state taxes, by law they must be withheld as if single with zero exemptions.

If you do not see any state or federal taxes taken out of your payroll check you may need to claim fewer allowances on your W-4 or G-4. It is not the responsibility of the Worth County School District to give

tax advice. Your W-2 will be processed at the end of the year in accordance with your earnings and taxes. No adjustments will be allowed after the year closes.

Paychecks are disbursed once a month – the month after your substitution (e.g. Substitution completed in the month of September will be paid in October).

Removal from Service

Substitute teachers may be removed from service to the district at any time it is deemed necessary and appropriate to do so. Removal from service may also result from not accepting jobs for a long period of time, declining too many jobs, not keeping personal information current, or for other legal reasons deemed necessary and appropriate. If circumstances warrant it, the substitute may be restricted immediately from service to the district pending the outcome of any investigation of policy or procedure violations. Substitutes may also be excluded from working at particular schools if the school administration and the human resources director conclude it is in the best interest of the district to do so.

Background Check

All personnel, certificated as well as non-certificated, employed by the Worth County Board of Education shall be fingerprinted and have a criminal history check. All certificated personnel employed in this school district shall have a criminal history check made as required by law upon any certificate renewal application to the Georgia Professional Standards Commission. Criminal history checks of non-certificated personnel in continued employment in the school district shall occur each fifth (5th) year of employment. The cost of the criminal history checks for all certificated and non-certificated personnel shall be the responsibility of each employee. **Reference Policy: GAK(1)**

Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting

All Worth County School District employees and volunteers are mandated reporters under law (O.C.G.A. 19-7-5(a)). The school social worker shall be the appropriate local district person to coordinate and record reports of suspected child abuse and neglect for Worth County Schools. Employees suspecting child abuse and neglect shall report such suspicions to the school counselor, school principal, or appointed designee. A report will then be made to the Worth County Department of Family and Children Services and the school social worker. The school counselor shall be the school liaison with protective services staff of the Worth County Department of Family and Children Services.

Confidentiality

As a substitute teacher, you will often engage in activities or conversations that involve confidential information about students, families, and/or school personnel, and may be asked by others outside the school setting about these persons or issues. It is important, therefore, that substitutes are aware of confidentiality protocols and requirements. The Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):

- School officials with legitimate educational interest;
- Other schools to which a student is transferring;

- Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
- Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
- Accrediting organizations;
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
- Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
- State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

In addition, schools may disclose, without consent, “directory” information such as a student’s name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance unless the parent has requested that those records not be released. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. A good rule of thumb is that information is passed on to others only on a “need-to-know” basis. Only those persons directly involved with the child’s education (and therefore, have a “need to know”) may receive information about the child.

Crisis Intervention Plan

The school district and each school have an Emergency Preparedness Plan approved by GEMA. Plans are on file in each location. Training is provided by the appropriate administration at each site.

Dress Code

The dress and grooming policy of employees are significant factors in the educational process of students. Furthermore, creating an exemplary model for students is required. In keeping with this understanding, every employee will be requested to maintain a level of personal hygiene necessary to ensure an appropriate educational environment and to refrain from any mode of dress which is not exemplary for students. Employees are expected at all times to present a professional image to students, coworkers and the public.

Drug-Free Workplace

The Worth County Board of Education declares that the manufacture, distribution, sale or possession of controlled substances, marijuana and other dangerous drugs in an unlawful manner or being at work under the influence of alcohol, controlled substances, marijuana or other dangerous drugs is a serious threat to the public health, safety and welfare. With this in mind, the board declares that its work force must be absolutely free of any person who would knowingly manufacture, distribute, sell or possess a controlled substance, marijuana or a dangerous drug in an unlawful manner. This prohibition specifically includes, but is not limited to, the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance or alcohol in the employee's workplace. This prohibition also includes, but is not limited to, an employee being under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances while on duty.

Any employee who is convicted for the first time, under the laws of this state, the United States, or any other state, of any criminal offense involving the manufacture, distribution, sale or possession of a controlled substance, marijuana or a dangerous drug shall be subject to disciplinary action. At a minimum, such an employee shall be suspended for a period of not less than two months and shall be required to complete, at his or her own expense, a drug abuse treatment and education program licensed under Chapter 5 of Title 26 of the Official Code of Georgia and approved by the board. At a maximum, such an employee may be terminated from his employment with the school system. Any employee who is convicted for a second or subsequent time under the laws of this state, the United States, or any other state, of any criminal offense involving the manufacture, distribution, sale or possession of a controlled substance, marijuana or a dangerous drug shall be terminated from his or her employment and shall be ineligible for employment for a period of five years from the most recent date of conviction.

If, prior to an arrest for an offense involving a controlled substance, marijuana or a dangerous drug, an employee notifies the superintendent or the superintendent's designee that the employee illegally uses a controlled substance, marijuana or a dangerous drug and is receiving or agrees to receive treatment under a drug abuse treatment and education program licensed under Chapter 5 of Title 26 of the Official Code of Georgia and approved by the board, the employee shall be entitled to maintain his or her employment for up to one year as long as the employee follows the treatment plan. During this period, the employee shall not be separated from employment solely on the basis of the employee's drug dependence, but the employee's work activities may be restructured if practicable to protect persons or property. No statement made by an employee to the superintendent or the superintendent's designee in order to comply with this code section shall be admissible in any civil, administrative or criminal proceeding as evidence against the public employee. The rights granted by this policy shall be available to an employee only once during a five year period and are intended to be and shall be interpreted as being the same as those minimum rights granted pursuant to the Georgia Drug-Free Work Force Act and any subsequent amendments thereof.

As a condition of employment, each employee must abide by the terms of this policy and must notify the board within five days after any arrest on any drug-related criminal charge and further notify the board within five days of any conviction of a drug-related offense.

A copy of this policy shall be disseminated to all employees either directly or through employee handbooks.

The Worth County Board of Education shall not consider for employment any applicant who has been convicted for the first time of any drug offense as described above for a three month period from the date of conviction nor shall the board consider any applicant for employment who has been convicted for the second time of any drug offense as described above for a five year period from the most recent date of conviction.

For purposes of this policy, "conviction" refers to any final conviction in a court of competent jurisdiction, specifically including acceptance of a plea of guilty, nolo contendere, or any plea entered under the First Offenders Act of Georgia or any comparable state or federal legislation.

No certified employee or employee with a contract for a definite term shall be subject to suspension or termination pursuant to this policy except in compliance with the provisions of the Fair Dismissal Act of Georgia, Official Code of Georgia Annotated 20-2-940 through 947. This policy is not intended and shall not be interpreted as prohibiting the school system from taking appropriate disciplinary action against any employee where there exists evidence that an employee uses, distributes or sells illegal drugs even though the employee has not been convicted of any criminal offense or where there exists evidence that an employee is under the influence of alcohol while on duty, except that the school system may not use the statement of any employee to the superintendent requesting treatment as described in this policy.

The school district shall provide such staff development as required by state or federal law to inform employees of the dangers of drug abuse, the availability of employee assistance and drug counseling and treatment and the terms of this policy. **Reference Policy: GAMA-Drug-Free Workplace**

Harassment Policy

It is the policy of this school district to prohibit any act of harassment of students or employees by other students or employees based upon race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age or disability at all times and during all occasions while at school, in the workplace or at any school event or activity. Any such act by a student or employee shall result in prompt and appropriate discipline, including the possible termination of employment or suspension or expulsion of the student. **Reference Policy: GAEB**

Social Media Rules and Guidelines

I. Purpose

The Worth County School District recognizes the educational value inherent in the responsible use of social media. The district also recognizes, however, that potential misuse of these sites by employees or students may harm the safety, reputations, and/or careers of those involved, as well as to the reputation of the district and the teaching profession in general.

The purpose of this policy is to establish rules and guidelines for the acceptable use of social media by Worth County School District employees. This policy sets forth regulations governing: 1) the use and management of professional social media accounts by authorized users on behalf of a school and 2) the use of personal social media accounts by Worth County School District employees.

In addition to the rules and guidelines contained within this policy, an employee's use of social media may also be subject to applicable rules contained in other Worth County School District policies or other applicable law, rules, or regulations.

II. Definitions

“Social Media” means any internet-based technology or website that facilitates or promotes interactive communication, participation or collaboration. Examples of social media include, but are not limited to, the websites or applications Blogger, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Tumblr, Foursquare, Meetup.com, Flickr, YouTube, Yelp, Second Life, and Wikipedia and the interactive tools and functions they provide to users.

“Social Media Content” means and includes any materials, documents, photographs, graphics and other information that is created, posted, or transmitted using social media.

“Social Media Account” means any account, or other method of private access, which allows the creation or posting of social media content to any social media website or application.

“Professional Social Media Account(s)” means a social media account created and used for the sole purpose of creating social media content related to Worth County School District activities and consistent with the terms and conditions contained herein.

“Personal Social Media Account(s)” means a social media account which is created and used by an individual for personal use or any other use unrelated to Worth County School District activities. Such accounts are not sanctioned, monitored, or approved by Worth County School District.

III. Professional Social Media Accounts

A. Creation and Management of District-wide or School-wide Professional Social Media Accounts

The Worth County School District central office may create and maintain professional social media accounts for the purpose of releasing general news and information. Schools, at the discretion of the principal, may also create and maintain professional social media accounts for such purposes. Schools which create and maintain professional social media accounts must add, at a minimum, the school principal or his/her designee and the Worth County School District Technology Director or his/her designee as co-administrator or co-owner of any such professional social media accounts.

Worth County School District employees who are charged with creating or managing district wide or school wide professional social media accounts must refrain from allowing personal or political viewpoints to dictate the social media content which is shared. Such employees are expected to post only important and relevant information which will be useful to and appreciated by the public. Such employees should use proper spelling and grammar in creating any such social media content and

must abstain from using “text talk” unless necessary to meet character limits.

District-wide or school-wide professional social media accounts require commitment to ensure that such accounts remain an up-to-date source of information. Therefore, such employees are encouraged to post often. Examples of appropriate and post-worthy materials include, but are not limited to:

- Good news/What's happening at your school/site;
- Picture of the Day/Other school-related pictures;
- Event reminders;
- Congratulations on big accomplishments;
- Notifications related to school bus operations; or
- Emergency notifications (weather or otherwise)

Worth County School District employees charged with the management of any professional social media account may: 1) block subscribers who post abusive or inappropriate content or otherwise post content which would constitute a violation of any provision contained herein if posted by a Worth County School District Employee; or 2) delete comments that contain inappropriate social media content or would otherwise constitute a violation of any provision contained herein if posted by a Worth County School District Employee.

Worth County School District does not expressly approve of or ensure the accuracy of any social media content. No social media content shall constitute a binding representation, agreement, offer, or endorsement on behalf of Worth County School District. Liking, linking, retweeting, or subscribing to another post or “fan page” does not constitute an endorsement on the part of Worth County School District of that post or “fan page’s” creator, or of his or her opinion, product, or service; the same applies to comments posted by others to any professional social media accounts.

B. Creation and Management of other Professional Social Media Accounts by Teachers

In cases where an employee desires to use social media as an enhancement to his or her instructional or school-based responsibilities, the use of a personal social media account is prohibited. Instead, the creation and use of a professional social media Account may be appropriate for such purposes.

Employees who desire to engage with students via a professional social media account must notify their administrator and provide a link to such professional social media account and also provide the username and password for such professional social media account. However, this requirement shall not be applied to require any employee to provide their username or password for any personal social media accounts. Schools and departments should designate one administrator to be responsible for maintaining username and password information for professional social media accounts.

IV. Personal Social Media Accounts

District employees are expected to comply with the standards set out herein when using a personal social media account.

In some instances, an employee’s use of a personal social media account may reflect poorly on the Worth County School District, may wrongly appear to represent a district policy or opinion, or may wrongly appear to be on behalf of the district. For these reasons, social media content posted on personal social media sites: 1) Shall not contain the Worth County School District logo or any likeness thereto; and 2) Shall not suggest or imply in any manner that such content is made or published on behalf of the district; 3) Shall not contain any information which refers to individual students.

Additionally, Worth County School District employees are strongly discouraged from each of the following activities with respect to a personal social media account:

1. Accepting or initiating invitations to “friend” students (family and relatives excluded) or otherwise providing students with direct access to an employee’s personal social media account.
2. Engaging in private messaging exchanging with students (family and relatives excluded). All online conversations between a district employee and a student should be carried out on the social media’s public messaging or public comment area.

Employees should refrain from using personal social media accounts during student contact hours.

V. Prohibited Uses of Social Media in General

Worth County School District employees are prohibited from using social media (whether through the use of a professional social media account or a personal social media account) in any manner which:

1. Publishes or re-publishes any racial or ethnic slur, profanity, personal insult, or similar language;
2. Intentionally involves any district employee in any dispute or conflict with other district employees;
3. Intentionally interferes with the work or duties of any district employee;
4. Intentionally disrupts the smooth and orderly operation of Worth County School District;
5. Intentionally creates or contributes to a harassing, demeaning, or hostile working environment for any district employee;
6. Intentionally places in doubt the reliability, trustworthiness, or sound judgment of the Worth County School District or any of its employees.
7. Intentionally harms the reputation of WCSS or intentionally casts Worth County School District in a bad light or tends to discredit the district;
8. Discloses any information about the district or its employees which might reasonably be considered to be private or confidential;
9. Discloses any information in violation of FERPA, as described in Section VI hereof;
10. Otherwise impairs or compromises his or her ability to interact with the public and/or to carry out the functions of his or her job; or
11. Otherwise violates any applicable law, rule, or regulation.

VI. FERPA Compliance

The disclosure of information regarding Worth County School District students is governed by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”) and the regulations promulgated thereunder.

As provided in the annual notification issued by the Worth County School District, the district is authorized by FERPA to disclose certain routine information, referred to as “directory information”, without consent. Directory information includes the student's name, address, telephone listing, electronic mail address, photograph, date and place of birth, major field of study, grade level, enrollment status (e.g., undergraduate or graduate, full-time or part-time), dates of attendance, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, degrees, honors, and awards received, and the most recent educational agency or institution attended. Notwithstanding any

other provision contained herein, social media content may not contain any further or other information regarding a Worth County School District student. Further, if a parent, guardian, or eligible student has exercised the right to opt-out of the disclosure of directory information as explained in the Worth County School District annual notification regarding FERPA, then no such information regarding or related to that student may be contained or published within any social media content.

V. Employee Discipline

In the event that any Worth County School District employee violates any provision contained herein, such employee may be subject to disciplinary action up to and potentially including termination.

VI. Governing Law

If any provision of this policy is inconsistent with any applicable state or federal law, rule, or regulation, then such provision shall yield and the applicable law shall govern.

Nothing in this policy is intended to stifle or violate any person's right to free speech under the First Amendment. **Reference Policy: IFBG-R(1)**

Tobacco Use

In accordance with the Georgia Smoke Free Air Act of 2005, smoking shall be prohibited at any time in any school building or property owned or leased by the Worth County School District, including outdoor events held in stadiums, or at any time in any school-owned vehicle, including any school buses. In addition, this prohibition includes the use of other tobacco products by employees at all times, including when such employees are directly instructing or supervising students. Direct supervision includes coaching, band directing, acting as a sponsor or advisor of a club or similar school organization and other instructional roles. Employees shall not store or possess tobacco or tobacco-related products on their person or in their belongings in such a manner that such products are visible to students.

School district employees who violate this policy may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, including reprimand, suspension with or without pay or termination. **Reference Policy: GAN**

Use of Equipment and Resources

Employees entrusted with public funds and property should honor that trust with a high level of honesty, accuracy, and responsibility. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, misusing school-related funds or property; failing to account for funds collected from students or parents; and submitting fraudulent requests for reimbursement of expenses.

Computers

Worth County School District computer hardware, software, and data should be used for assigned responsibilities only and should be protected from damage, destruction, viruses, theft, and unauthorized access and use. Employees should have no expectation of privacy when using Worth County School District electronic resources. **Reference Policy: IFBG**

Internet

Electronic resources should be used to support assigned responsibilities. Employees should have no expectation of privacy when using electronic systems, and should minimize use of the Internet for personal reasons during working hours. **Reference Policy: IFBG and IFBGE**

Telephone

Personal use of telephones should be kept to a minimum during working hours. Personal long-distance calls should not be charged to Worth County School District telephones or accounts.

Workers' Compensation

Employees may be entitled to workers' compensation benefits if injured on the job. The injury must arise out of and in the course of employment. The injured employee must provide notice of the injury immediately, but no later than 30 days after the accident, to the employer. Failure to do so may result in the loss of benefits.

If an injury occurs, notify your immediate supervisor or designee immediately. For all injuries (no matter how minor), an injured employee must see the school nurse. A *Work Related Incident Report* must also be completed. If medical treatment is needed, the employee must select from the Workers' Compensation Physicians Panel. This panel of approved physicians is posted in common areas (e.g. break rooms, meeting areas for employees, etc.). Only those providers listed on the panel are authorized to provide medical care for a work-related injury. In the event of a serious emergency, the injured employee should be transported to the nearest hospital emergency room. All forms must be submitted to Human Resources by the designated person at each location within 24 hours of occurrence **for all injuries** (even if the employee does not seek medical attention).

In accordance with Georgia State Board of Workers' Compensation Bill of Rights for the Injured Worker, the injured employee must choose to either use sick leave or be docked for the first seven (7) days of a job related injury. Employees are required to complete a *Workers' Compensation Leave Option* form and submit it to Human Resources with all other required Workers' Compensation forms.

In the event the injured employee must be absent from work because of a work-related injury, the employee shall be eligible for benefits in accordance with the workers' compensation insurance paid by the district. If the employee is absent from work 5 or more consecutive days, long term sick leave will be coordinated to run concurrent with the workers' compensation related absences. Workers' compensation pay and sick leave pay may not be collected simultaneously. A *Fitness for Duty* form must be submitted to Human Resources before the employee is allowed to return to work. Questions about workers' compensation should be directed to the Human Resources Department.

Worth County School District

William "Bill" Settle, Superintendent



103 Eldridge Street
Sylvester, GA 31791

Phone: 229-776-8600 :- Fax: 229-776-8603
Website: <http://worthschools.net>

State of Georgia
County of Worth

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF NO RIGHT TO UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION BENEFITS

As an on-call, at-will substitute with the Worth County School District, I do hereby recognize, understand and agree to the following:

- **I HAVE NO RIGHT TO UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION BENEFITS UNDER GEORGIA LAW O.C.G.A. TITLE 34;**
- The substitute position which I am applying for is a temporary position on an "as needed" basis;
- The placement of my name on a list of substitute teachers or other substitute positions does not guarantee any work;
- I may, or may not, be called to work, nor am I required to work when called upon;
- I maintain the right to refuse work on a day-to-day basis;
- I may be removed with or without cause from the approved substitute list at any time;
- I may stop working as a substitute at any time; and
- I have been informed in writing that under Georgia law, the above stated characteristics of my job make me **INELIGIBLE FOR ANY UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION BENEFITS** offered under Title 34. *Campbell v. Poythress*, 216 Ga. App. 834 (1995); *Department of Labor v. Baldwin County Hospital Authority et al.*, 241 Ga. App. 119, 526 S.E. 2d 153 (2000); **and** *Rockdale County Public Schools v. Michael Thurmond, Commissioner, Georgia Department of Labor (2010)*.

Name (printed) _____

Signed _____

This _____ day of _____, 20_____

WORTH COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER