

Recommendation to approve:

Governing Principles

1720/4015/7225	Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Complaint Procedure
1760/7280	Prohibition Against Retaliation

Board Members

2130	Board Member Compensation and Expenses
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Recommendation for a 30-day review:

Student Performance

3400	Evaluation of Student Progress
3405	Student at Risk of Academic Failure
3410	Testing and Assessment Program
3431	Conflict Resolution
3440	Recognizing Excellence

Special Curriculum Objectives

3510	Religious-Based Exemptions from School Programs
3515	Religion in the Schools
3520	Special Education Programs
3530	Citizenship and Character Education
3540	Comprehensive Health Education Program

Services & Activities to Support Education Program

3610	Counseling Program
3620	Extracurricular Activities and Student Organizations
3640/5130	Student Voter Registration

Benefits

7650	Employee Travel and Other Expense Reimbursement
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Fiscal Accountability

8305	Federal Grant Administration
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DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, AND BULLYING COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Policy Code: 1720/4015/7225

The Vance County Board of Education (the “board”) takes seriously all complaints of unlawful discrimination, harassment, and bullying. The process provided in this policy is designed for those individuals who believe that they may have been discriminated against, bullied, or harassed in violation of policy 1710/4021/7230, Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying or policy 1730/4022/7231, Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disabilities. Individuals who have witnessed or have reliable information that another person has been subject to unlawful discrimination, harassment, or bullying also should report such violations to one of the school system officials listed in subsection C.1. of this policy. Reports may be made anonymously.

A. DEFINITIONS

1. Alleged Perpetrator

The alleged perpetrator is the individual alleged to have discriminated against, harassed, or bullied the complainant.

2. Complaint

A complaint is an oral or written notification made by a person who believes he or she is the victim of unlawful discrimination, harassment, or bullying.

3. Complainant

The complainant is the individual complaining of being discriminated against, harassed, or bullied.

4. Days

Days are the working days, exclusive of Saturdays, Sundays, vacation days, or holidays, as set forth in the school calendar. In counting days, the first day will be the first full working day following receipt of the complaint. When a complaint is submitted on or after May 1, time limits will consist of all weekdays (Monday – Friday) so that the matter may be resolved before the close of the school term or as soon thereafter as possible.

5. Investigative Report

The investigative report is a written account of the findings of the investigation conducted in response to a complaint.

6. Investigator

The investigator is the school official responsible for investigating and responding to the complaint.

7. Report

A report is an oral or written notification that an individual, other than the reporter, is a suspected perpetrator or victim of unlawful discrimination, harassment, or bullying.

B. REPORTING BY EMPLOYEES OR OTHER THIRD PARTIES

1. Mandatory Reporting by School Employees

Any employee who witnessed or who has reliable information or reason to believe that an individual may have been discriminated against, harassed, or bullied in violation of policy 1710/4021/7230 or policy 1730/4022/7231 must report the offense immediately to an appropriate individual designated in subsection C.1., below. An employee who does not promptly report possible discrimination, harassment, or bullying shall be subject to disciplinary action.

2. Reporting by Other Third Parties

All members of the school community including students, parents, volunteers, and visitors are also strongly encouraged to report any act that may constitute an incident of discrimination, harassment, or bullying.

3. Anonymous Reporting

Reports of discrimination, harassment, or bullying may be made anonymously but formal disciplinary action may not be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

4. Investigation of Reports

Reports of discrimination, harassment, or bullying will be investigated sufficiently to determine whether further action under this policy or otherwise is necessary, and school officials shall take such action as appropriate under the circumstances, regardless of the alleged victim's willingness to cooperate. At the option of the alleged victim, the report may be treated as a complaint by the alleged victim under this policy.

C. COMPLAINTS BROUGHT BY ALLEGED VICTIMS OF DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, OR BULLYING

1. Filing a Complaint

Any individual who believes that he or she has been discriminated against, harassed, or bullied is strongly encouraged to file a complaint orally or in writing to any of the following individuals:

- a. the principal or assistant principal of the school at which either the alleged perpetrator or alleged victim attends or is employed;
- b. an immediate supervisor if the individual making the complaint is an employee;
- c. the executive director of human resources if the alleged perpetrator or alleged victim is an employee of the school system (or the superintendent if the executive director of human resources is the alleged perpetrator);
- d. the Title IX coordinator for claims of sex discrimination or sexual harassment (see policy 1710/4021/7230 for contact information);
- e. the Section 504 coordinator or the ADA coordinator for claims of discrimination on the basis of a disability (see policy 1710/4021/7230 for contact information); or
- f. for claims of other forms of prohibited discrimination, the applicable civil rights coordinator as established in policy 1710/4021/7230.

2. Time Period for Filing a Complaint

A complaint should be filed as soon as possible but no later than 30 days after disclosure or discovery of the facts giving rise to the complaint. Complaints submitted after the 30-day period may be investigated; however, individuals should recognize that delays in reporting may significantly impair the ability of school officials to investigate and respond to such complaints.

3. Informal Resolution

The board acknowledges that many complaints may be addressed informally through such methods as conferences or mediation. The board encourages the use of informal procedures such as mediation to the extent possible; however, mediation or other informal procedures will not be used to resolve complaints alleging sexual assault or sexual violence, complaints by a student of sexual harassment perpetrated by an employee, or when otherwise inappropriate. Informal procedures may be used only if the parties involved voluntarily agree.

If an informal process is used, the principal or other designated personnel must (1) notify the complainant that he or she has the option to end the informal process and begin formal procedures at any time and (2) make a copy of this policy and

other relevant policies available to the complainant. Any informal process should be completed within a reasonable period of time, not to exceed 30 days unless special circumstances necessitate more time. If informal procedures fail to resolve the matter in a reasonable period of time or are inappropriate, or if the complainant requests formal procedures, the complaints will be investigated promptly, impartially, and thoroughly according to the procedures outlined in the remainder of this policy.

4. Other Resources

Individuals may also contact the Office for Civil Rights at the U.S. Department of Education:

4000 Maryland Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20202-1475
Telephone: 202-453-6020 TDD: 800-877-8339
FAX: 202-453-6021 Email: OCR.DC@ed.gov

D. PROCESS FOR ADDRESSING COMPLAINTS OF ALLEGED INCIDENTS OF DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, OR BULLYING

1. Initiating the Investigation

a. Whoever receives a complaint of discrimination, harassment, or bullying pursuant to subsection C.1. shall immediately notify the appropriate investigator who shall respond to the complaint and investigate. The investigator of a complaint is determined as follows.

- 1) If the alleged incident occurred under the jurisdiction of the principal, the investigator is the principal or designee, unless the alleged perpetrator is the principal, the executive director of human resources, the superintendent, or a member of the board. If the alleged perpetrator is any other employee, the principal or designee shall conduct the investigation in consultation with the executive director of human resources or designee.
- 2) If the alleged perpetrator is the principal, the executive director of human resources or designee is the investigator.
- 3) If the alleged incident occurred outside of the jurisdiction of a principal (for example, at the central office), the executive director of human resources or designee is the investigator unless the alleged perpetrator is the executive director of human resources, the superintendent, or a member of the board.
- 4) If the alleged perpetrator is the executive director of human

resources, the superintendent or designee is the investigator.

- 5) If the alleged perpetrator is the superintendent, the board attorney is the investigator. (In such cases, whoever receives a complaint of discrimination, harassment, or bullying shall immediately notify the executive director of human resources who shall immediately notify the board chair. The board chair shall direct the board attorney to respond to the complaint and investigate.)
 - 6) If the alleged perpetrator is a member of the board, the board attorney is the investigator. (In such cases, whoever receives a complaint of discrimination, harassment, or bullying shall immediately notify the superintendent who shall direct the board attorney to respond to the complaint and investigate. Unless the board chair is the alleged perpetrator, the superintendent shall also notify the board chair of the complaint.)
- b. As applicable, the investigator shall immediately notify the Title IX, Section 504, ADA, or other relevant coordinator of the complaint, and, as appropriate, may designate the coordinator to conduct the investigation.
 - c. The investigator shall explain the process of the investigation to the complainant and inquire as to whether the complainant would like to suggest a course of corrective action.
 - d. Written documentation of all reports and complaints, as well as the school system's response, must be maintained in accordance with policy 1710/4021/7230.
 - e. Failure to investigate and/or address claims of discrimination, harassment, or bullying shall result in disciplinary action.

2. Conducting the Investigation

- a. The investigator is responsible for determining whether the alleged act(s) constitutes a violation of policy 1710/4021/7230 or policy 1730/4022/7231. In so doing, the investigator shall impartially, promptly, and thoroughly investigate the complaint. The investigator shall interview (1) the complainant; (2) the alleged perpetrator(s); (3) individuals identified as witnesses by the complainant or alleged perpetrator(s); and (4) any other individuals, including other possible victims, who may have relevant information. The investigation will include a review of all evidence presented by the complainant or alleged perpetrator.
- b. The complaint and investigation will be kept confidential to the extent possible. Information may be shared only with individuals who need the

information in order to investigate and address the complaint appropriately and those with a legal right to access the information. Any requests by the complainant for further confidentiality will be evaluated within the context of the legal responsibilities of the school system. Any complaints withdrawn to protect confidentiality must be recorded in accordance with policy 1710/4021/7230.

- c. The investigator shall review the factual information gathered through the investigation to determine whether, based on a preponderance of the evidence, the alleged conduct constitutes discrimination, harassment, or bullying, giving consideration to all factual information, the context in which the alleged incidents occurred, the age, and maturity of the complainant and alleged perpetrator(s), and any other relevant circumstances. The investigator shall submit a written investigative report to the superintendent and, as applicable, to the Title IX, Section 504, ADA, or other coordinator.

3. Notice to Complainant and Alleged Perpetrator

- a. The investigator shall provide written notification to the complainant of the results of the investigation within 15 days of receiving the complaint, unless additional time is necessary to conduct an impartial, thorough investigation. The investigator shall specify whether the complaint was substantiated and, if so, shall also specify:

- 1) reasonable, timely, age-appropriate, corrective action intended to end the discrimination, harassment, or bullying, and prevent it from recurring;
- 2) as needed, reasonable steps to address the effects of the discrimination, harassment, or bullying on the complainant; and
- 3) as needed, reasonable steps to protect the complainant from retaliation as a result of communicating the complaint.

- b. If required by federal law, information regarding specific disciplinary action imposed on the alleged perpetrator(s) will ~~not~~ be given to the complainant, such as when ~~unless~~ the information relates directly to the complainant (e.g., an order requiring the perpetrator not to have contact with the complainant). School officials are encouraged to consult with the superintendent and board attorney before releasing such information, however.

- b.c. If the investigator determines that the complaint was substantiated, the perpetrator(s) shall be subject to discipline or other corrective steps, as described in policy 1710/4021/7230. If the corrective steps involve

actions outside the scope of the investigator's authority, the superintendent will be notified so that responsibility for taking the corrective steps may be delegated to the appropriate individual.

e.d. Each alleged perpetrator will be provided with a written summary of the results of the investigation in regard to whether the complaint was substantiated, whether the alleged perpetrator violated relevant law or board policies by his or her actions, and what, if any, disciplinary actions or consequences will be imposed upon the perpetrator in accordance with board policy. The perpetrator may appeal any disciplinary action or consequence in accordance with board policy and law. However, an appeal by the perpetrator of disciplinary action does not preclude school officials from taking appropriate action to address the discrimination, harassment, or bullying.

4. Appeal

- a. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the results of the investigation, he or she may appeal the decision to the superintendent (unless the alleged perpetrator is the executive director of human resources or the superintendent, in which cases the complainant may appeal directly to the board in accordance with the procedure described in subsection D.4.b below). The appeal must be submitted in writing within five days of receiving the notice of the results of the investigation. The superintendent may review the documents, conduct any further investigation necessary, or take any other steps the superintendent determines to be appropriate in order to respond to the complaint. The superintendent shall provide a written response within 10 days after receiving the appeal, unless further investigation is needed.
- b. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the superintendent's response, he or she may appeal the decision to the board within five days of receiving the superintendent's response. The board will review the documents, direct that further investigation be conducted if necessary, and take any other steps that the board determines to be appropriate in order to respond to the complaint. Upon request of the complainant, the board will hold a hearing pursuant to policy 2500, Hearings Before the Board. The board will provide a written response within 30 days after receiving the appeal, unless further investigation is necessary or the hearing necessitates that more time be taken to respond.

E. TIMELINESS OF PROCESS

The number of days indicated at each step of the process should be considered a maximum. Every effort should be made to expedite the process.

If any school official charged with investigating the complaint or reviewing the investigation fails at any step in the process to communicate a decision within the specified time limit, the complainant will be entitled to appeal the complaint to the next step unless the official has notified the complainant of the delay and the reason for the delay, such as the complexity of the investigation, review, or report. The school official shall make reasonable efforts to keep the complainant apprised of progress being made during any period of delay. Delays that interfere with the exercise of any legal rights are not permitted.

Failure by the complainant at any step in the process to appeal a complaint to the next step within the specified time limit will be considered acceptance of the decision at that step, unless the complainant has notified the investigator of a delay and the reason for the delay and the investigator has consented in writing to the delay.

F. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

1. No reprisals or retaliation of any kind will be taken by the board or by an employee of the school system against the complainant or other individual on account of his or her filing a complaint or report or participating in an investigation of a complaint or report filed and decided pursuant to this policy, unless the person knew or had reason to believe that the complaint or report was false or knowingly provided false information.
2. All meetings and hearings conducted pursuant to this policy will be private.
3. The board and school system officials will consider requests to hear complaints from a group, but the board and officials have the discretion to hear and respond to complainants individually.
4. The complainant may be represented by an advocate, such as an attorney, at any meeting with school system officials.
5. Should, in the judgment of the superintendent or designee, the investigation or processing of a complaint require that an employee be absent from regular work assignments, such absences shall be excused without loss of pay or benefits. This shall not prevent the superintendent or designee from suspending the alleged perpetrator without pay during the course of the investigation.

G. RECORDS

Records will be maintained as required by policy 1710/4021/7230.

Legal References: Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, 29 U.S.C. 621 *et seq.*, 34 C.F.R. pt. 110; Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. 12101 *et seq.*, 28 C.F.R. pt. 35; Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. 1232g; Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. 705(20), 794, 34 C.F.R. pt. 104; Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C.

2000d *et seq.*, 34 C.F.R. pt. 100; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000e *et seq.*, 29 C.F.R. pt. 1604; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. 1681 *et seq.*, 34 C.F.R. pt. 106; Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act, 20 U.S.C. 7905, 34 C.F.R. pt. 108; *Racial Incidents and Harassment Against Students at Educational Institutions; Investigative Guidance*, U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (1994); *Revised Sexual Harassment Guidance: Harassment of Students by School Employees, Other Students, or Third Parties*, U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (2001); *Notice of Non-Discrimination*, U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (2010); *Gebser v. Lago Vista Independent School District*, 524 U.S. 274 (1998); *Davis v. Monroe County Board of Education*, 526 U.S. 629 (1999); G.S. 115C-407.15 through -407.18

Cross References: Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying (policy 1710/4021/7230), Student and Parent Grievance Procedure (policy 1740/4010), Hearings Before the Board (policy 2500), Assaults, Threats, and Harassment (policy 4331)

Adopted: March 14, 2016

Replaces: Board policy ACA, Sexual Harassment

[Revised:](#)

Vance County Board of Education (the “board”) members and employees are expected to be honest and ethical in the performance of their duties and to comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws, policies, and regulations. The board encourages employees to report possible financial improprieties, ethical violations, and other illegal practices and intends that employees who report such matters in good faith will not be subject to retaliation or other adverse employment consequences.

If an employee reasonably believes that (1) there has been a violation of federal, state, or local law, policy, or regulation, public policy, or an individual’s ethical duties and (2) the violation is due to a practice, policy, act, or omission of the board of education, an individual board member, a school system employee, or an entity/person with whom the school system has a business relationship, the employee should report that matter in accordance with policy 1750/7220, Grievance Procedure for Employees, or policy 1720/4015/7225, Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Complaint Procedure. Any complaint alleging a violation by the superintendent or the board should be filed with the board chair for investigation. The board chair will report the complaint to the board, and the board will authorize a prompt and thorough investigation or other action as necessary.

The Vance County Board of Education (the “board”) prohibits and will not tolerate any form of reprisal, retaliation or discrimination against any employee who (1) in good faith, has made or intends to make a report of wrongdoing described in this policy; that there has been a violation of federal, state or local law, regulation or public policy due to a practice, policy, act or omission of the board of education, of a school system employee or of an entity/person with whom the school system has a business relationship; or (2) has refused to carry out a directive which may constitute a violation of federal, state or local~~federal~~ law, policy, rule or regulation or poses a substantial or specific danger to public health and safety.

~~An employee who reasonably believes that any such violation exists may file a grievance in accordance with policy 1750/7220, Grievance Procedure for Employees, or a complaint in accordance with policy 1720/4015/7225, Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Complaint Procedure.~~

To be protected by this policy, employees who report violations or suspected violations must be acting in good faith based on a reasonable belief that the reported information represents an unlawful activity, policy, or practice. The protection extends to those whose allegations are made in good faith but prove to be mistaken. The board reserves the right to discipline employees who know or have reason to believe that the report is inaccurate. Further, except as otherwise required by law,

The provisions of this policy apply only to those situations in which an employee brings the alleged unlawful activity, policy or practice to the attention of school officials or the board and provides school officials or the board with a reasonable opportunity to investigate and correct the alleged unlawful activity. If necessary, school officials or the board may specify reasonable steps to protect the complaining employee from retaliation.

Each employee will receive a copy of this policy and sign a statement verifying his or her receipt and understanding of this policy.

Legal References: Sarbanes-Oxley Act, 18 U.S.C. 1513(e); G.S. 115C-335.5; 126-5(c5), -84, -85, -86, -87, -88

Cross References: Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Complaint Procedure (policy 1720/4015/7225), Grievance Procedure for Employees (policy 1750/7220), [Code of Ethics for School Board Members \(policy 2120\)](#), [Board Member Conflict of Interest \(policy 2121\)](#), [Ethics and the Purchasing Function \(policy 6401\)](#), [Staff Responsibilities \(policy 7300\)](#), [Employee Conflict of Interest \(policy 7730\)](#)

Adopted: March 14, 2016

BOARD MEMBER COMPENSATION AND EXPENSES

Policy Code:

2130

A. COMPENSATION

Vance County Board of Education (the “board”) members will be compensated for the performance of official school system business. The amount of compensation will be established according to applicable laws.

B. Expenses for Conferences, Conventions, and Other Board Development Activities

Subject to budgetary limitations, the board will defray reasonable out-of-pocket expenses incurred by board members for professional and board development. In accordance with policy 2123, Board Member Opportunities for Development, funds for board member participation in development activities will be budgeted annually. The board chair will monitor expenditures to ensure that expenditures do not exceed the amount of funds allocated in the budget.

1. Authorization to Attend Professional and Board Development

All professional and board development expenses to be paid with school system funds must support school system objectives and be reasonable in cost.

~~Board members who wish to use school system funds to attend a development opportunity within the state must have the prior written approval of the board chair. In order for a board member to use school system funds to attend a development opportunity located out of state, the board member must receive the written approval of the board in advance at an official board meeting.~~

~~Board members who attend a conference, convention, or other professional development activity will provide a report of the event to other board members.~~

2. Reimbursable Expenses

The board intends that its members exercise good judgment in incurring travel expenses when pursuing professional and board development opportunities. Members are expected to exercise the same care in incurring expenses that a prudent person would exercise if traveling on personal business and expending personal funds. School system funds are not to be used to pay excess costs or additional expenses that are for the convenience or personal preference of a board member or to pay for expenses incurred by family members or other guests of a board member.

School system funds may be used to pay the following expenses incurred by a board member for attendance at an approved conference, convention, or other professional development activity.

a. Conference Registration Fees

The board will pay registration fees for approved conferences and other events. Ordinarily, registration is arranged through the superintendent's office and prepaid. If not prepaid, registration fees will be reimbursed in accordance with the requirements of subsection D.1.

b. Lodging Expense

Hotel reservations will be scheduled through the superintendent's office. Hotel expenses not prepaid will be reimbursed in accordance with the requirement of subsection D.1. The allowance for lodging will be limited to reasonable actual and necessary expenses. A board member sharing a room with a family member or guest will be limited to the single occupancy rate. Tips for room service, valet, and other hotel services are not reimbursable. Personal services available at the hotel, such as spa services, laundry, child care, and other personal services, are not reimbursable.

c. Meals

The total daily allowance for meals while traveling overnight on official school system business will be limited to the current state allowances. No reimbursement will be provided for meals for family members or other guests of the board member. Alcoholic beverages are not reimbursable.

In extenuating circumstances, the board chair may authorize reasonable meal costs in excess of the state-approved rates. The vice-chair may authorize excess meal costs incurred by the board chair.

d. Travel by Private Vehicle

Mileage for approved travel will be reimbursed at the current state rate, using the board member's home as the origination point. Parking fees and tolls are also reimbursable.

e. Air Travel

If air travel is necessary, airline reservations will be scheduled through the superintendent's office and paid by the school system in advance. Reservations will be for coach fare only. Airline reservations for traveling companions may be booked at the same time if the board member provides a personal credit card or makes other advance arrangements with the finance

officer for personal payment. Taxi or other reasonable and necessary transportation fees for travel to and from airports are reimbursable. Rental car fees will be reimbursed when it is more reasonable to rent a car than to use a taxi or other transportation option.

3. Personal Expenses

All other travel and related expenses not covered in these guidelines, including, but not limited to, expenses for laundry, entertainment, between meal snacks, pet boarding, and toiletries or other personal items, are considered personal expenses and are not reimbursable.

4. ~~Cancelled Trips and Missed Events~~

~~If a board member cancels a trip or otherwise fails to attend an event for which the school system has prepaid or incurred other expense, the board member is responsible for reimbursing the school system for all funds advanced or expended on the member's behalf, including any cancellation fees.~~

~~A board member will not be required to reimburse the school system for expenses paid on the member's behalf if the member is not able to travel because of a medical emergency or death in the immediate family or an emergency work situation; however, the board member must reimburse the school system any funds advanced for the travel.~~

C. Other Business Expenses

1. Purchase of Merchandise or Products

Board members should not ordinarily find it necessary to purchase merchandise or other products to carry out official school business. In circumstances when it is reasonable for a board member to make such a purchase, the member should notify the board chair and superintendent in advance of any purchase in an amount greater than \$50. Requests for reimbursement for the expenditure of personal funds for merchandise or other products must follow the procedures established in subsection D.1 below, and any additional procedures requested by the finance officer.

2. Other Expenses Incurred in the Conduct of Official Board Business

The board chair may approve reimbursement of other reasonable and necessary business expenses incurred by board members. The vice-chair may approve reimbursement of other reasonable and necessary business expenses incurred by the board chair. Expenses associated with overnight travel require prior written approval from the board chair (or vice-chair for overnight travel by the board chair). All reimbursements will be made in accordance with subsection D.1, below.

D. PROCESS FOR REIMBURSEMENT AND TRAVEL ADVANCES

1. Reimbursements

Board members will be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses incurred in the performance of their duties as provided in Sections B and C. All reimbursements are contingent upon funds available.

Board members should submit requests for reimbursement, along with supporting documentation of the expenses, within 30 days of incurring the expenses.

All claims for reimbursement of expenses must (1) be in writing, itemized, and supported with original detailed receipts, except that no receipt is required for meals that will be reimbursed at the state-approved flat rates; (2) document the official school business purpose for which the expenses were incurred; (3) be signed by the board member; and (4) be approved by the board chair (or vice-chair for requests submitted by the board chair). Claims for reimbursement of expenses that required prior approval must also include a copy of the prior written approval. Claims related to attendance at a conference, convention, or other board development activity must also include a copy of the event agenda. Claims involving an event hosted by a board member must also include a list of the individuals in attendance.

2. Travel Advances

Board members may request an advance of funds for estimated out-of-pocket travel and related reimbursable expenses. The board member is responsible for returning any funds advanced in excess of the board member's documented reimbursable expenses.

Legal References: G.S. 115C-38; 138-6; 153A-92

Cross References: Board Member Opportunities for Development (policy 2123)

Other References: *North Carolina Budget Manual*, Section 5 (Office of State Budget and Management), available at <https://www.osbm.nc.gov/library>

Adopted:

Replaces: Board policy BHD, Board Member Compensation and Expenses

Revised:

An evaluation system of students' academic performance is necessary to help ensure that all students are succeeding within the framework of the educational goals and objectives of the Vance County Board of Education (the "board"). The board believes that the formal issuance of student evaluations on a regular basis promotes continuous assessment of a student's performance; informs the student, his or her parents or guardians, and the school counselor about the student's performance and progress; and provides a system of notice that allows intervention strategies to be implemented if necessary to improve the student's performance. The board encourages teachers and principals to pursue innovative methods of evaluating progress.

The superintendent or designee shall establish an evaluation system for assessing an individual student's academic achievement and progress relative to benchmarks set for students at that instructional level. The evaluation system should provide for regular communication with parents so that they may be informed and involved in their child's education.

Teachers shall evaluate student performance and keep accurate records in order to substantiate a grade or assessment given in a course.

Legal References: G.S. 115C-47, -81

Cross References: Parental Involvement (policy 1310/4002), Goals and Objectives of the Educational Program (policy 3000)

Adopted:

Replaces: Board policy IKA, Grading and Reporting Student Progress

It is the goal of the Vance County Board of Education (the “board”) that all students will make adequate academic progress each year and thereby acquire the skills necessary for secondary education and career success. To realize this goal, students who are at risk of academic failure and who are not successfully progressing toward grade promotion and graduation must be identified and provided additional assistance. The principal or designee is responsible for ensuring that students at risk are identified and that the school improvement team develops a plan to include successful transition between grade spans for such students in compliance with G.S. 115C-105.41.

A. IDENTIFICATION OF AND ASSISTANCE TO STUDENTS AT RISK

The superintendent shall organize available resources to implement a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) that uses data-driven problem-solving and research-based instructional practices for all students. The superintendent shall establish processes and standards for addressing concerns about student performance and for documenting student responses to research-based instruction and interventions within the MTSS. Using information about the student’s response to instruction and/or interventions and other student performance data, school personnel must identify students at risk of academic failure as early as reasonably may be done, beginning in kindergarten. School administrators and teachers shall address the needs of students identified as at risk of academic failure through the supports available in the MTSS and/or other processes established by the superintendent. The parents or guardians of such students should be included, through oral or written communication or other means, in the implementation and review of academic and/or behavioral interventions for their children.

B. TRANSITION PLANS

Transitions in the school environment can be stressful experiences that pose academic, social, and emotional challenges for students. Addressing students’ academic, social, and emotional needs to create successful transitions provides students with a better chance of academic success. A comprehensive and coordinated transition plan will be implemented for students who are at risk of academic failure in order to facilitate their educational transitions between elementary school and middle school and between middle school and high school.

The superintendent shall appoint a transition team to design, implement, and evaluate a school system transition plan. This team will be comprised of stakeholders who can identify the needs of students at the different developmental levels and implement plans that produce positive results for students at risk of academic failure. Such stakeholders may include principals, teachers, support staff and other school system employees, parents of students in the school system, and local business and community leaders such as civic group leaders, health department personnel, preschool and Head Start program personnel, faith community leaders, and personnel from local colleges, universities, and

community colleges. At each school, the school improvement team shall use the school system transition plan to design a school-based transition plan tailored to meet the specific needs of that school's population. The transition plan may be included in the school improvement plan. See policy 3430, School Improvement Plan.

The transition plans should be designed to encourage successful transitions that foster respect for individual differences, encourage understanding of the whole child, create a sense of trust and belonging, and reduce child and family anxiety about school. The plans must include an on-going evaluation process to verify that the outcomes established for the different transition levels are being accomplished and that these goals are updated as student data and environmental changes occur.

Legal References: G.S. 115C-105.41; State Board of Education Policy GCS-Q-001

Cross References: School Improvement Plan (policy 3430)

Other Resources: NC DPI Memorandum to LEAs *Re: Session Law 2015-46*, (August 11, 2015), available at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/superintendents/messages/2015/08/education-plans-memo.pdf>; NC DPI Multi-Tiered System of Support resource page, available at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/curriculum/responsiveness/>; *Transition Planning for 21st Century Schools*, N.C. State Board of Education/Department of Public Instruction, available at <http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/docs/curriculum/home/transitions.pdf>

Adopted:

Replaces: Board policy IGBC, Programs for Disadvantaged Students and IGBI, Programs for Exceptional Students

The Vance County Board of Education (the “board”) believes that an effective testing and assessment program evaluates the progress of individual students and helps ensure that educational goals and objectives are being met for every child. A testing program also assists in the continued refinement of the instructional program. In addition, data from tests and assessments provide measures of student learning that are useful for evaluating educator effectiveness.

Every effort will be made to ensure that the testing program contributes to the learning process rather than detracts from it. Efforts also will be made to use only culture-free or culture-fair tests in order to ensure that measurements are reasonably accurate.

A. ADMINISTRATION OF TESTS, SCREENINGS, AND OTHER ASSESSMENTS

The superintendent shall provide for the proper administration of all state-required tests, screenings, and other assessments and any state-required remedial instruction and/or retesting in accordance with all requirements established by law or the State Board of Education. The superintendent, in consultation with the school principals, shall determine how results from such measures will be used in determining students’ final grades, provided that the requirements described in Section B, below, and any other applicable state requirements are met.

The superintendent shall provide for the online administration of state-required tests to the extent required by the State Board of Education or the Department of Public Instruction, and otherwise as feasible within available resources. The superintendent shall keep the board informed of any resources or other measures needed to support online test administration.

Students may participate in field testing and other sample testing as designated by the State Board or the Department of Public Instruction.

The superintendent shall develop security and administration procedures for the state testing program and other assessments that are consistent with State Board of Education requirements and relevant law. The superintendent shall ensure that all relevant personnel are instructed in such procedures. All testing personnel, teachers, and school administrators are required to be familiar with and adhere to all applicable testing manuals, handbooks, and guides, including the Testing Code of Ethics, for state and locally-required tests. Failure to follow procedures may result in disciplinary sanctions, including termination or revocation of administrative and/or teaching licenses.

B. HIGH SCHOOL FINAL EXAMS AND END-OF-COURSE TESTING

High school students must take all end-of-course (EOC) tests, NC Final Exams, and Career and Technical Education State Assessments (CTE Post-Assessments) required by

the State Board of Education. The results of EOC tests, NC Final Exams, and CTE Post-Assessments will count as 250 percent of a student's final grade in each high school course for which there is an EOC test, NC Final Exam, or CTE Post-Assessment. This requirement does not apply to EOC tests for students following the Occupational Course of Study. Further, CTE students who earn a credential will not be required to take the CTE Post-Assessment in the course.

C. MINIMIZING TIME SPENT TESTING

The superintendent or designee shall ensure that the time students spend taking standardized state and local tests and the frequency of field testing at a particular school are minimized. Specifically, the superintendent shall ensure the following.

1. Schools will devote no more than two days of instructional time per year to the taking of practice tests that do not have the primary purpose of assessing current student learning.
2. Students will not be subject to field tests or national tests during the two-week period preceding their school's administration of end-of-grade tests, end-of-course tests, or regularly scheduled final exams.
3. No school will participate in more than two field tests at any one grade level during a school year.
4. All annual assessments of student achievement adopted by the State Board of Education pursuant to G.S. 115C-174.11(c)(1) or other applicable law and all final exams for courses will be administered within the final ten instructional days of the school year for year-long courses and within the final five instructional days of the semester for semester courses. Exceptions will be permitted to accommodate a student's individualized education program and Section 504 plans and for the administration of final exams for courses with national or international curricula required to be held at designated times.

Legal References: The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. 1232g, -h; 34 C.F.R. pt. 99; G.S. 115C, art. 10A; 115C-47, -81, -83.5, -83.6, -174.11, -174.12(a), -174.13, -174.22, -174.25, -276, -288, -307, -402.5; State Board of Education Policies GCS-A series; GCS-C series; GCS-N series; TCP-C-006; 16 N.C.A.C. 6D .0301 – .0306

Cross References: Professional and Staff Development (policy 1610/7800), Goals and Objectives of the Educational Program (policy 3000), Student Promotion and Accountability (policy 3420), Student Records (policy 4700), Public Records – Retention, Release, and Disposition (policy 5070/7350)

Other References: *NC Final Exams Test Administrators' Guides*, available at <http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/accountability/common-exams/>

Adopted:

Replaces: Board policy IKAA, Secondary Examinations, IKE, Student Accountability For Academic Achievement-Promotion/Retention (in part), and ILB, Standardized Testing

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Policy Code:

3431

To create and maintain a safe, orderly, and inviting learning environment, students must have the skills to resolve conflicts in non-violent ways.

All schools are encouraged to include a conflict resolution plan in the school improvement plan as provided in policy 3430, School Improvement Plan.

The central curriculum committee shall explore opportunities to integrate conflict resolution skills into the standard course of study and other curricula.

Legal References: G.S. 115C-47, -105.27

Cross References: School Improvement Plan (policy 3430), Alternative Learning Programs/Schools (policy 3470/4305)

Adopted:

The Vance County Board of Education (the “board”) strongly encourages programs and activities that recognize and reward excellence in student academic achievement, character, and leadership.

A variety of programs, such as honor rolls, honor societies, and citizenship and leadership awards, may be implemented to recognize outstanding student achievement. The board encourages school recognition ceremonies and community recognition ceremonies to honor scholarship and distinguished character and leadership abilities.

Administrators and teachers are responsible for developing and implementing various means of recognizing student achievement.

Legal References: G.S. 115C-36, -47

Cross References: Goals and Objectives of the Educational Program (policy 3000), Class Rankings (policy 3450)

Adopted:

RELIGIOUS-BASED EXEMPTIONS FROM SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Policy Code: **3510**

The curriculum of the school system will be based on the current statewide instructional standards. The Vance County Board of Education (the “board”) and the school administrators will exercise their authority to select appropriate materials and teach the curriculum in an effective manner. The board supports the free exercise of religion and prohibits discrimination on the basis of religion. While students are expected to participate in all required courses and school activities, the board recognizes that at times parents may object to a specific school course or activity. This policy is designed to provide parents with a process for seeking a religious-based exemption for their child from a required school course or activity.

If parents have religious-based objections to certain programs, they may petition to exempt their child from participation. Any request for exemption should be submitted to the superintendent in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. The request must be in writing.
2. The request must specify the activities or studies that violate their religious beliefs and explain how their religious beliefs are violated by the activity.
3. The request may suggest a proposed alternate activity or study.

The superintendent shall review the request in accordance with any constitutional or statutory standards and shall accommodate the request when required to do so by law. If accommodation is not required by law, the superintendent or designee may choose to accommodate such a request after weighing factors, such as the interest of the child, the impact on other students, and the availability of alternative activities or materials. An appeal of the superintendent’s decision may be made to the board through the student grievance procedure.

Legal References: U.S. Const. amend. I; N.C. Const. art. I, § 14; G.S. 115C-36, -47

Cross References: Student and Parent Grievance Procedure (policy 1740/4010), Goals and Objectives of the Educational Program (policy 3000), Curriculum Development (policy 3100)

Adopted:

The United States Constitution and North Carolina Constitution protect the right of an individual to subscribe to any religious beliefs or to no religious beliefs at all. It is the policy of the Vance County Board of Education (the “board”) to comply with federal and state law regarding religion and religious expression in the schools. The board will neither advance nor inhibit any religion or religious belief, viewpoint, expression, or practice. It is also the policy of the board to support, within the framework of the United States Constitution and the North Carolina Constitution, the free, private exercise of individual religious beliefs by students and school employees. The board will not prevent, or otherwise deny participation in, constitutionally protected prayer in the system’s schools, consistent with guidance issued by the U.S. Department of Education and applicable judicial decisions interpreting the religion clauses of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. This policy supersedes any other board policy that is inconsistent with it.

The board also recognizes the importance of the religious heritage of the United States of America and North Carolina, and respects the diverse religious beliefs of members of the school community. School employees are expected to show respect for the beliefs of all students and employees. Also, school programs and activities should be designed to foster understanding, appreciation, and respect for the diverse beliefs of the school system’s students and employees.

In order to ensure that the school system upholds constitutional standards within the religiously neutral role assigned to public schools, school employees should request approval from the school principal before planning a school-sponsored instructional activity, observance, program, or other event that will include religious content or could be construed as a religious ceremony or celebration. As necessary, the principal shall confer with the superintendent or designee to determine whether the proposed activity is consistent with constitutional requirements. The superintendent or designee shall consult the board attorney whenever prudent to do so to determine the applicable legal standards and/or the constitutionality of the proposed activity.

If the proposed activity is inconsistent with such standards, it will not be permitted.

The superintendent, in consultation with the board attorney, shall develop administrative regulations designed to comply with the requirements of the United States Constitution and court decisions interpreting the Constitution. The regulations also shall address pertinent statutes enacted by the North Carolina General Assembly.

Legal References: U.S. Const. amend. I; Equal Access Act, 20 U.S.C. 4071-4074; N.C. Const. art. I, § 14; G.S. 115C-36, -47, -407.30 through -407.33

Cross References: Board Attorney (policy 2610), Goals and Objectives of the Educational Program (policy 3000), Curriculum Development (policy 3100), Religious-Based Exemptions from School Programs (policy 3510), Distribution and Display of Non-School Material (policy 5210)

Adopted:

SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS/ RIGHTS OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Policy Code:

3520

The Vance County Board of Education (the “board”) requires that all special education programs operating in this school system be in compliance with *Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities* as adopted by the State Board of Education.

All children with disabilities will be accorded rights as required by federal and state law. See also policy 1730/4022/7231, Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disabilities.

The residence of a child with disabilities will be determined in accordance with G.S. 115C-366 and policy 4120, Domicile or Residence Requirements.

The board encourages parents, guardians, surrogate parents, custodians, eligible students, and school employees to work cooperatively to ensure that the special needs of students are met. Parents will be provided with information about their rights, the rights of their child, and the responsibilities of the school system toward meeting the special needs of their child.

Legal References: Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. 12131 *et seq.*, 28 C.F.R. pt. 35; Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. 1400 *et seq.*, 34 C.F.R. pt. 300; Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. 705(20), 794, 34 C.F.R. pt. 104; G.S. 115C art. 9; 115C-366, -390.5 through -390.12; *Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities*, State Board of Education Policy GCS-D-000

Cross References: Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disabilities (policy 1730/4022/7231), Domicile or Residence Requirements (policy 4120)

Adopted:

| [Replaces: Board policy JB, Equal Education Opportunities](#)

The Vance County Board of Education (the “board”) encourages all students to develop an understanding of citizenship, including the importance of a citizen’s rights and responsibilities. At a minimum, the citizenship curriculum will incorporate the civic literary requirements of the Basic Education Plan and any statutory requirements regarding the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance and the display of flags. In addition, within the timeframe established by state requirements, the high school curriculum will meet all state standards for teaching individual responsibility and other historical founding principles of our nation.

BOARD CITIZENSHIP REQUIREMENTS AND OPTIONS

The curriculum committee established in policy 3100, Curriculum Development, shall develop the curriculum regarding citizenship. In addition to meeting any state requirements, the citizenship curriculum also should be designed to reinforce the student behavior management plan. The curriculum shall include addressing character traits as provided in the Basic Education Plan. The character traits should include, but are not limited to, courage, good judgment, integrity, civility, kindness, perseverance, responsibility, tolerance, self-discipline, respect for school personnel, responsibility for school safety, service to others, and good citizenship.

The citizenship curriculum must require that: (1) the United States and North Carolina flags be displayed in each classroom, when available; (2) recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance be scheduled on a daily basis; (3) appropriate instruction be provided on the meaning and historical origins of the North Carolina and United States flags and the Pledge of Allegiance; (4) Constitution and Citizenship Day be observed on September 17 to commemorate the signing of the United States Constitution or be observed the preceding or following week if students are not in school on September 17; and (5) appropriate instruction and/or recognition be provided concerning the significance of Memorial Day.

The citizenship curriculum also may include appropriate instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and guidelines for the use and display of the North Carolina and United States flags. The curriculum must ensure that no student will be compelled to salute the flag, recite the Pledge of Allegiance, stand to acknowledge the flag or stand to participate in the Pledge of Allegiance, or otherwise feel coerced to participate. In addition, the citizenship curriculum may encourage teachers to use the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance as an opportunity to teach students about the history concerning coercion and the importance of the First Amendment to the Bill of Rights. Any flags donated or otherwise made available must be displayed in the classrooms.

Furthermore, the citizenship curriculum may include for middle school and high school students a community volunteer service requirement in order to demonstrate the value and effectiveness of volunteer contributions to the community. To be approved by the board, the curriculum (1) must provide students with sufficient notice of the service requirement; (2) must provide students with enough options to meet the interests and transportation needs of the students; and (3) must not infringe on the constitutional rights of students by compelling or coercing a student to hold a

particular viewpoint on volunteerism.

Legal References: 36 U.S.C. 106(d); G.S. 115C-12(33), -47(29a), -81(g), (h), (h1); N.C. Session Law 2011-273

Cross References: Goals and Objectives of the Educational Program (policy 3000), Curriculum Development (policy 3100)

Adopted:

| [Replaces: Board policy IGAA, Citizenship](#)

COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH EDUCATION PROGRAM

Policy Code:

3540

The Vance County Board of Education (the “board”) is committed to a sound, comprehensive health education program that provides students with accurate information and encourages them to be responsible for their own health and behavior. The board recognizes the primary role of parents in providing for the health and well-being of their children and seeks to involve parents as provided in this policy. The comprehensive health education program provided by the school system will meet the requirements of the Basic Education Program (BEP), G.S. 115C-81(e1), and aligned state-adopted standards. The board may, in its discretion, expand on the subject areas to be included in the program and on the instructional objectives to be met.

A. COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH EDUCATION PROGRAM

A comprehensive health education program must be taught to students from kindergarten through ninth grade. As required by law, the health education program must include age-appropriate instruction on bicycle safety, nutrition, dental health, environmental health, family living, consumer health, disease control, growth and development, first aid and emergency care, mental and emotional health, drug and alcohol abuse prevention, prevention of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), including HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases, and reproductive health and safety education.

As required by law and beginning in seventh grade, reproductive health and safety education will include age-appropriate instruction on sexual abstinence until marriage, STDs, the human reproductive system, preventable risks for preterm birth in subsequent pregnancies, effective contraceptive methods for preventing pregnancy, awareness of sexual assault and sexual abuse, and sex trafficking prevention and awareness.

B. PARENTAL OPPORTUNITIES TO REVIEW MATERIALS AND WITHHOLD CONSENT FOR STUDENT PARTICIPATION

Each year before students participate in reproductive health and safety education or in other separate instruction on the prevention of STDs, including HIV/AIDS, or the avoidance of out-of-wedlock pregnancy, the principal or designee shall notify parents of the opportunity to review the materials and objectives that will be used in instruction. A copy of all objectives and materials will be available for review in the media center of each school where these subjects will be taught.

The principal or designee shall also notify parents of the right to withhold or withdraw consent for their child’s participation in all reproductive health and safety education instruction or in specific topics such as STDs, the effectiveness and safety of contraceptive methods, awareness of sexual assault and sexual abuse, and sex trafficking prevention and awareness. Parents may also withhold consent to student participation in other separate instruction on the prevention of STDs, including HIV/AIDS, or the avoidance of out-of-wedlock pregnancy. Any parent wishing to withhold consent must

do so in writing to the principal.

C. STANDARDS FOR INSTRUCTION

For reproductive health and safety education, teachers shall follow the instructional objectives and only use the age-appropriate materials that have been made available to parents for review in accordance with this policy. Information conveyed during instruction will be objective and based upon scientific research that is peer reviewed and accepted by professionals and credentialed experts in the field of sexual health education or other field authorized by law.

A determination of what is an appropriate education for a student with disabilities must be made in accordance with the student's individualized education plan, following all procedures as provided in the North Carolina *Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities*.

Legal References: G.S. 115C art. 9; 115C-36, -81(e1); State Board of Education Policies GCS-D-000, GCS-F-007; *Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities*, available at <http://ec.ncpublicschools.gov/policies/nc-policies-governing-services-for-children-with-disabilities>

Cross References:

Adopted:

| [Replaces: Board policy IGAH, Healthy Youth Act](#)

Guidance and counseling programs are provided by the school system with the ultimate aim of improving student performance by implementing strategies and activities that support and maximize student learning; helping students to grow in their personal and social development; and providing a foundation for acquiring the skills that enable students to make a successful transition from school to the world of work. The principal of each school shall develop a counseling program that meets the objectives of the State Board of Education's comprehensive school counseling program curriculum and the needs of the student population at that school.

School guidance counselors and other guiding adults in middle and high schools shall provide guidance and information to students about high school course selections and requirements prior to ninth grade, in order to inform them about the requirements for college entry, including accelerated preparation for college entry. Guidance counselors shall encourage ninth grade students to complete these requirements in less than four years if feasible and appropriate.

The counseling program is the shared responsibility of teachers, counselors, parents, and community members, and should operate with the collaboration of all individuals involved in educating students, including those who assist children with special needs or students who are at risk of dropping out of school or not meeting performance expectations. Input from parents and students should be sought in accordance with the school's plan for involvement of the community in school programs. All school personnel must follow the Parental Involvement Plan (policy 1310/4002) in regard to parental notification and permission for counseling programs. In addition, school personnel shall annually provide all students in Grades 9 through 12 with information on the manner in which a parent may lawfully abandon a newborn baby with a responsible person, in accordance with G.S. 7B-500.

Counseling may be provided on an individual basis or in small or large groups. School counselors may refer students who have extensive needs or needs that go beyond the purpose of the counseling program to community resources.

Students may seek counseling or be referred by staff or parents. Any staff member who is aware that a student is contemplating suicide or is otherwise suffering from an emotional or psychological crisis must immediately notify the counseling program in accordance with any rules established by the superintendent or principal. Any counselor or other staff member who knows or has cause to suspect child abuse, neglect, dependency, or death as a result of maltreatment must report the information as provided in policy 4240/7312, Child Abuse – Reports and Investigations, and as required by law.

Counseling programs are most effective when voluntarily entered into by a student. School officials and teachers may recommend a counseling program to help a student meet standards of conduct and academic performance established by the Vance County Board of Education (the "board") and school system. However, students will not be required to attend individual or small group counseling sessions to address identified significant personal issues unless agreement has been reached with the parent and student in a behavior contract, an intervention plan, or, for

special education students, an individualized education plan. (See Student Behavior Policies (4300 series), policy 3420, Student Promotion and Accountability, and policy 3520, Special Education Programs/Rights of Students with Disabilities.)

Information obtained in a session with a counselor may be privileged and protected from disclosure as provided by law. A counselor cannot be required to testify concerning privileged information unless, as provided by G.S. 8-53.4, the student waives the privilege or the court compels testimony as necessary to the proper administration of justice. The school counselor privilege does not, however, exempt the counselor from reporting child abuse as required by G.S. 7B-301. Any notation made by a counselor for his or her own use is a confidential document and is neither a public record nor a part of the student's record. Such confidential documents do not have to be shared with parents or others except as required by law. Any document prepared by a counselor that is shared or intended to be shared with other staff is considered an educational record of the student and is available to the parent or eligible student in accordance with policy 4700, Student Records.

Legal References: Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. 1232g; G.S. 7B-301, -500; 8-53.4; 115C-12, -47, -401; State Board of Education Policies GCS-F-011, GCS-L-006

Cross References: Parental Involvement (policy 1310/4002), Goals and Objectives of the Educational Program (policy 3000), Student Promotion and Accountability (policy 3420), Special Education Programs/Rights of Students with Disabilities (policy 3520), Child Abuse – Reports and Investigations (policy 4240/7312), Student Behavior Policies (4300 series), Student Records (policy 4700)

Adopted:

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Policy Code:

3620

The Vance County Board of Education (the “board”) recognizes the value of interscholastic athletics and extracurricular activities in promoting leadership and team skills, practicing democratic principles, and encouraging the lifelong learning process. Students are encouraged to participate in opportunities available at the school, including interscholastic athletics and student organizations. All activities are open to all students attending that school unless a restriction is justified and has been approved by the principal. The principal shall ensure that students and parents are notified of the various opportunities for participation in extracurricular activities. The principal shall establish any rules necessary for school- and student-initiated extracurricular activities.

A. EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITY REQUIREMENTS

Participation in extracurricular activities, including student organizations and interscholastic athletics, is a privilege, not a right, and may be reserved for students in good academic standing who meet behavior standards established by the board and the school. Participation in extracurricular activities may be restricted if a student (1) is not performing at grade level as provided in policy 3400, Evaluation of Student Progress; (2) has exceeded the number of absences allowed by policy 4400, Attendance; (3) has violated the student conduct standards found in the 4300 series of policies; or (4) has violated school rules for conduct. In addition, in order to be eligible for interscholastic athletics participation, students must have been in daily attendance ~~85 percent~~ **91 percent** of the previous semester and must meet all eligibility standards of the North Carolina High School Athletic Association, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, and any locally established requirements for interscholastic athletics participation.

School administrators choosing to exercise the authority to restrict participation based upon any of the reasons provided in the previous paragraph shall provide this policy and any additional rules developed by the superintendent or the principal to all parents or guardians and students. The grievance procedure provided in policy 1740/4010, Student and Parent Grievance Procedure, may be utilized by parents or students who believe that a student has been aggrieved by a decision made pursuant to this policy.

B. SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

1. Extracurricular activities may be used as a component of an at-risk student’s intervention plan. The intervention plan may include providing for or restricting the student’s participation in extracurricular activities. If the plan restricts the student’s participation, the plan must include other intervention strategies designed to improve student performance.
2. Students with disabilities must be accorded the legal rights required by federal and state law.

3. School administrators shall facilitate the inclusion and participation of transitioning military children in extracurricular activities, to the extent they are otherwise qualified, by:
 - a. providing information about extracurricular activities to transitioning military children; and
 - b. waiving application deadlines.

Legal References: Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. 12132, 28 C.F.R. pt. 35; Equal Access Act, 20 U.S.C. 4071-4074; Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. 1400 *et seq.*, 34 C.F.R. pt. 300; Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. 705(20), 794, 34 C.F.R. pt. 104; G.S. 115C art. 9, 115C-47(4), -391, -407.5; *Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities*, State Board of Education Policy GCS-D-000; N.C. High School Athletic Association Handbook; Middle/Junior High School Athletic Manual, available at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/curriculum/healthfulliving/athletics/>

Cross References: Parental Involvement (policy 1310/4002), Student and Parent Grievance Procedure (policy 1740/4010), Evaluation of Student Progress (policy 3400), Student Promotion and Accountability (policy 3420), School Improvement Plan (policy 3430), Children of Military Families (policy 4050), Student Behavior Policies (4300 series), Attendance (policy 4400), Community Use of Facilities (policy 5030)

Adopted:

The Vance County Board of Education (the “board”) is committed to securing the future of democracy by preparing young people to be educated, engaged voters. Further, the board is committed to working in collaboration with the local board of elections to encourage students to register to vote as permitted by North Carolina law.

In keeping with this commitment, the board directs the superintendent to establish a committee of high school social studies teachers and other appropriate school personnel to collaborate with the local board of elections to facilitate and encourage voter registration at all high schools in the school system.

In compliance with G.S. 163-82.23, the principal of each high school shall make available to all students and others who are eligible to register to vote the application forms described in G.S. 163-82.3.

Legal References: G.S. 115C-47(59), -81(g1)(1)(b); -82.3, -82.23

Cross References: Citizenship and Character Education (policy 3530)

Adopted:

EMPLOYEE TRAVEL AND OTHER EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

Policy Code:

7650

The Vance County Board of Education (the “board”) may reimburse employees for reasonable and necessary travel and other expenses incurred while performing school system business. All employee requests for reimbursement for travel or other expenses are subject to this policy. The superintendent and finance officer are responsible for developing and disseminating forms for requesting travel and other expense reimbursement, for maintaining and disseminating current information concerning applicable reimbursement rates, and for establishing any procedures or regulations necessary to implement this policy.

A. EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITY FOR CONTROLLING TRAVEL EXPENSES

The board intends that its employees who are required to travel do so in reasonable comfort. All employees traveling on school system business are expected to exercise good judgment in distinguishing between reasonable comfort and extravagance and to exercise the same care in incurring expenses that a prudent person would exercise if traveling on personal business and expending personal funds. Reimbursement will not be approved for excess costs or additional expenses that are for the convenience or personal preference of the employee. Unless specifically approved by the board in advance, unauthorized expenses include, but are not limited to, alcohol or tobacco, entertainment activities (e.g., sporting events, pay TV, movies), personal services (e.g., spa, laundry), personal items (e.g., toiletries, magazines, souvenirs), supplemental insurance on rental cars, fines for traffic violations, and meals, lodging, or other expenses for spouses, children, guests, or pets. Employees are responsible for being aware of applicable reimbursement rates and any other limitations established by the superintendent or finance officer prior to travel.

B. APPROVAL FOR TRAVEL

Out-of-county travel by any employee except the superintendent must receive prior written approval of the employee’s supervisor on the designated travel authorization form. Out-of-state travel also requires the superintendent’s prior written approval. The superintendent’s travel, whether out-of-county or out-of-state, must receive prior approval from the board chair on the designated travel authorization form. The request for approval must include an estimate of the anticipated cost of the travel and related expenses. Travel requests that exceed the amount budgeted for such purposes will be denied.

C. REIMBURSEMENT FOR TRAVEL EXPENSES

Employees may request reimbursement of actual expenses for mileage, meals, lodging, and other business-related expenses, such as conference registration fees and parking fees, incurred on approved trips for official school system business. Travel that does not directly benefit the school system is not reimbursable.

The reimbursement rates for mileage, meals, lodging, and other travel expenses will be in accordance with those established for state employees. Reimbursements will not exceed the annual budget allocated to the respective employee or department. All reimbursements are contingent upon funds available.

All claims for reimbursement of travel expenses must (1) include a copy of the approved travel request form; (2) be in writing, itemized, and supported with original receipts, except that no receipt is required for meals that will be reimbursed at the state-approved flat rates; (3) document the official school business purpose for which the expenses were incurred; (4) include a copy of the agenda if the travel was to a conference, meeting, or similar event; (5) be signed by the employee; and (6) be approved by the employee's supervisor, or in the case of the superintendent, by the board chair. If reimbursement is to be paid from federal funds, documentation of the business purpose must include the reason the claimant's travel is necessary to the federal program. All claims must be submitted in accordance with any additional requirements, procedures, or deadlines established by the superintendent or finance officer.

In extenuating circumstances, such as when lodging is not reasonably available at the state-approved rate, authorization for reasonable costs in excess of the state-approved rates may be approved by the employee's supervisor and the superintendent or designee, or in the case of the superintendent, by the board chair.

D. ADVANCEMENT OF TRAVEL EXPENSES

The board discourages providing an advance travel allowance to employees. In extraordinary circumstances, an advancement of funds not to exceed the estimated travel expense with a limit of \$500 for an approved trip may be made to an employee provided the employee makes a written request no later than one month prior to the departure date. The request must be approved by the employee's supervisor and the superintendent or designee except that advances for the superintendent must be approved by the board chair. The advance will be forwarded to the employee no sooner than five working days before the scheduled departure date.

Funds advanced may be used only for expenses that are otherwise reimbursable and documented in accordance with this policy. Upon return from the trip, the employee must provide a reconciliation of the actual expenses incurred as compared to the amount advanced in accordance with procedures and any applicable deadline established by the finance officer. The employee shall be responsible for returning any funds advanced in excess of the employee's documented reimbursable trip expenses.

An employee who fails to file a complete reconciliation by the applicable deadline or who does not return travel funds owed to the school system may be subject to disciplinary action and/or to recovery actions for the amount owed.

E. CANCELLED TRIPS

If an employee cancels a trip for which (1) a travel advance has been extended, (2) trip-related expenses have been prepaid by the school system, or (3) a penalty or charge resulting from the cancellation is incurred, the employee is responsible for reimbursing the school system for all funds advanced or expended by the school system as a result of the cancellation unless otherwise approved by the superintendent or designee. Failure to reimburse the school system as required may result in disciplinary action and/or actions to recover the amounts owed.

F. MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT FOR USE OF PERSONAL VEHICLE

Employees who use their personal vehicle to travel in the performance of their official job duties will be reimbursed at the rate for state employees for mileage incurred when traveling for job-related activities, subject to budgetary limitations. The superintendent may establish criteria for determining which employees are eligible for this mileage reimbursement. Reimbursement will not be authorized for travel between the employees' residence and the first or last scheduled stop of the day.

Mileage reimbursement requests for all employees except the superintendent must be approved by the employee's immediate supervisor and submitted as directed by the finance officer or superintendent. The superintendent's mileage reimbursement requests must be approved by the board chair and submitted to the finance officer at least quarterly.

G. REIMBURSEMENT OF OTHER BUSINESS EXPENSES

Employees purchasing merchandise or other items on behalf of the school system with personal funds must have prior approval of their supervisor and may be reimbursed for reasonable costs, up to a limit of \$50. Expenses of greater than \$50 must be approved in advance by the superintendent or designee, or in the case of the superintendent, by the board chair. Requests for reimbursement must follow the procedures established by the finance officer. All requests for reimbursement must be accompanied by a statement of the business purpose for the expense and a detailed receipt. Employees who are authorized to use school system procurement cards will not be reimbursed for purchases made using personal funds without prior approval of the superintendent or designee.

H. RESPONSIBILITY FOR MONITORING COMPLIANCE WITH THIS POLICY

The superintendent is responsible for monitoring employee compliance with this policy. The superintendent's expenditures for travel and other expenses will be reviewed at least quarterly by the board chair.

Legal References: G.S. 115C-36, -47(21), 138-6; 2 C.F.R. 200.474

Cross References: Board Member Compensation and Expenses (policy 2130)

Other References: *North Carolina Budget Manual*, Section 5 (Office of State Budget and Management), available at <https://www.osbm.nc.gov/library>

Adopted:

| [Replaces: Board Policy DLC, Travel Policies and Regulations](#)

The Vance County Board of Education (the “board”) intends to administer federal grant awards efficiently, effectively, and in compliance with all requirements imposed by law, the awarding agency, and the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction or other applicable pass-through entity.

A. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS AND INTERNAL CONTROLS

The finance officer shall be responsible to the superintendent to develop, monitor, and enforce effective financial management systems and other internal controls over federal awards that provide reasonable assurance that the school system is managing the awards in compliance with all requirements for federal grants and awards. Systems and controls must meet all requirements of federal law and regulation, including the *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards* (“Uniform Guidance”) issued by the U.S. Office of Budget and Management and any applicable state requirements, and shall be based on best practices.

The financial management and internal controls must provide for (1) identification of all federal funds received and expended and their program source; (2) accurate, current, and complete disclosure of financial data in accordance with federal requirements; (3) records sufficient to track the receipt and use of funds; (4) effective control and accountability over assets to assure they are used only for authorized purposes; and (5) comparison of expenditures against budget. In addition, written procedures must be established for cash management and for determining the allowability of costs, as required by the Uniform Guidance.

At a minimum, the systems and controls shall address the following areas.

1. Allowability

Costs charged by the school system to a federal grant must be allowed under the individual program and be in accordance with the cost principles established in the Uniform Guidance, including how charges made to the grant for personnel are to be determined. Costs will be charged to a federal grant only when the cost is (1) reasonable and necessary for the program; (2) in compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and grant terms; (3) allocable to the grant; (4) adequately documented; and (5) consistent with school system policies and administrative regulations that apply to both federally-funded and non-federally funded activities. Internal controls shall be sufficient to provide reasonable assurance that charges to federal awards for personnel expenses are accurate, allowable, and properly allocated and documented. Prior written approval for certain cost charges must be obtained as required by the awarding agency in order to avoid subsequent disallowances.

2. Cash Management and Fund Control

Payment methods must be established in writing that minimize the time elapsed between the draw of federal funds and the disbursement of those funds. Standards for funds control and accountability must be met as required by the Uniform Guidance for advance payments.

3. Procurement

All purchases for property and services made using federal funds must be conducted in accordance with all applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations, the Uniform Guidance, and the school system's written policies and procedures. The district shall avoid situations that unnecessarily restrict competition, as defined in 2 C.F.R. 200.319, and shall avoid acquisition of unnecessary or duplicative items. Noncompetitive procurement will be used only in the circumstances allowed by 2 C.F.R. 200.320. Individuals or organizations that develop or draft specifications, requirements, statements of work, and/or invitations for bids, requests for proposals, or invitations to negotiate, must be excluded from competing for such purchases.

Contracts are to be awarded only to responsible contractors possessing the ability to perform successfully under the terms and conditions of a proposed procurement. Consideration will be given to such matters as contractor integrity, compliance with public policy, record of past performance, and financial and technical resources. No contract shall be awarded to a contractor who is suspended or debarred from eligibility for participation in federal assistance programs or activities.

Purchasing records must be sufficiently maintained to detail the history of all procurements and must include at least the rationale for the method of procurement, selection of contract type, and contractor selection or rejection; the basis for the contract price; and verification that the contractor is not suspended or debarred.

The requirements for conflicts of interest established below in subsection A.4 are applicable to all procurements.

4. Conflict of Interest

Each employee, board member, or agent of the school system who is engaged in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by a federal grant or award ("covered individual") and who has a potential conflict of interest shall disclose that conflict in writing to the superintendent. The superintendent shall disclose in writing any potential conflict of interest to the federal awarding agency in accordance with 2 C.F.R. 200.112.

For purposes of this paragraph, a conflict of interest would arise when (1) the covered individual, (2) any member of his or her immediate family, (3) his or her partner, or (4) an organization which employs or is about to employ any of those parties has a financial or other interest in or receives a tangible personal benefit from a firm considered for a contract. A covered individual who is required to disclose a conflict in accordance with this paragraph shall not participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by a federal grant or award.

Covered individuals shall not solicit or accept any gratuities, favors, or items from a contractor or a party to a subcontract for a federal grant or award; however, covered individuals may accept (1) a single unsolicited item with a value of \$50 or less or (2) multiple unsolicited items from a single contractor or subcontractor having an aggregate monetary value of \$100 or less in a 12-month period. Violations of this rule are subject to disciplinary action.

5. Mandatory Disclosures

The superintendent shall disclose in writing to the federal awarding agency in a timely manner all violations of federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuities potentially affecting any federal award. The superintendent shall fully address any such violations promptly and shall notify the board accordingly. The board may request the superintendent to develop a plan of correction for board approval in appropriate situations as determined by the board.

6. Equipment and Supplies Purchased with Federal Funds

Equipment and supplies acquired with federal funds will be used, managed, and disposed of in accordance with applicable state and federal requirements. Property records and inventory systems shall be sufficiently maintained to account for and track equipment that has been acquired with federal funds.

7. Accountability and Certifications

All fiscal transactions must be approved by the finance officer and by the program manager or other person who can attest that the expenditure is allowable and approved under the federal program.

The finance officer shall submit all required certifications and is authorized to sign them on behalf of the board.

8. Monitoring and Reporting Performance

The superintendent shall establish sufficient oversight of the operations of federally supported activities to assure compliance with applicable federal requirements and to ensure that program objectives established by the awarding

agency are being achieved. Performance reports, including reports of significant developments that arise between scheduled performance reporting dates, must be submitted as required by federal or state authorities.

B. AUDITS AND CORRECTIVE ACTION

1. An annual independent audit will be conducted as provided in policy 8310, Annual Independent Audit. The finance officer will prepare all financial statements, schedules of expenditures, and other documents required for the audit.
2. At the completion of the audit, the superintendent or designee shall prepare a corrective action plan to address any audit findings. The plan must identify the responsible party and the anticipated completion date for each corrective action to be taken. The superintendent shall present the plan to the board for approval.
3. Compliance deficiencies discovered internally through administrative supervision must be addressed promptly with the goal of improving processes to encourage future compliance and reduce audit findings.

C. TRAINING

All individuals responsible for the administration of a federal grant or award shall be provided sufficient training to carry out their duties in accordance with all applicable requirements for the federal grant or award.

D. OTHER APPLICABLE BOARD POLICIES

Other board policies provide additional controls over the administration of federal grants. These include, but are not necessarily limited to:

1. Educational programs policies (policies in the 3000 series)
2. School nutrition services policies (policies in the 6200 series)
3. Purchasing policies (policies in the 6400 series)
4. Equipment, materials, and supplies policies (policies in the 6500 series)
5. Personnel policies (policies in the 7000 series)
6. Fiscal management policies (policies in the 8000 series)

The board intends to comply with all requirements applicable to the use of federal funds. To the extent that any provision of a board policy is contrary to a federal law, regulation, term, or condition applicable to a federal award, employees must follow the applicable federal requirement.

E. REPORTING MISMANAGEMENT OF FEDERAL FUNDS

Any employee who reasonably believes that federal funds have been misused or that the school system is otherwise in violation of any requirement applicable to the receipt and use of federal funds should report the matter as provided in policy 1760/7280, Prohibition Against Retaliation.

Legal References: 2. C.F.R. Part 200

Cross References: Prohibition Against Retaliation (Policy 1760/7280), Fiscal Management Standards (policy 8300)

Other References: *Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government* ("The Green Book") (GAO), available at <http://www.gao.gov/greenbook/overview>; *Internal Control Framework* (Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission (COSO)), executive summary, available at <http://www.coso.org/ic.htm>; *Compliance Supplement, Part 6, Internal Control* (Office of Management and Budget), available at https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/financial_fin_single_audit

Adopted:

| [Replaces: Board Policy DID, Fixed Asset Accounting Procedure \(in part\)](#)