

# Pike County Schools

## District Handbook

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### **Website:**

<http://www.pike.k12.ga.us>

Twitter: <http://www.twitter.com/#!/PikeGASD>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/PikeGASD>

### **Vision:**

Creating Schools that Children Love

### **Mission:**

Developing Creative Problem-Solvers Ready for College and Career

### **Operating Principles:**

1. Given the appropriate time and resources, all children can demonstrate high levels of critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration.
2. The instructional climate must intentionally promote the development of students' personal responsibility (soft skills, executive functioning, and metacognition) in a caring and supportive environment.
3. Standardized test scores are but one measure of a student's educational progress; more important is what students can do with the knowledge and skills they acquire.
4. Today's students are digital natives, so technology must be ubiquitous in our schools.
5. All students deserve a rigorous learning environment.

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## **Personnel**

### **Certified/Classified Hiring:**

The Pike County Board of Education seeks to employ qualified and effective individuals in positions within the school district as vacancies occur. While the School Board alone is authorized to approve for hire, the district recognizes the need to approve persons who have been selected to fill vacant positions to begin work between the regularly scheduled Board meetings on a provisional status.

Pursuant to this, the human resources department will assign individuals who have been selected through the district's selection process, a provisional status in accordance with the Georgia Professional Standards Commission rule 505-2-.42 Clearance Certificate, and effective Dec. 15, 2010. Code: GBD-R, GCD-R

### **Criminal Background Check:**

A criminal background check will be conducted at or prior to employment on every person who is employed by the Board of Education for the first time to fill either a full-time or part-time certified or classified position with this School District. For this purpose, the applicant shall be fingerprinted as required by state law. Subsequent criminal record checks will be conducted on all personnel in accordance with state laws, state board rules, and rules of the Professional Standards Commission including the Clearance Certificate. Code: GAK (1)-R (2)

### **Professional Personnel Recruitment:**

The goal of the Pike County Board of Education is to secure qualified, competent and committed employees in order to assure an effective and efficient school system. In accordance with this goal, the system is committed to effective recruitment and selection processes based upon initiative, alertness to qualified candidates who are capable of contributing to the mission of the system. Code: GBC

### **Drug Free Work Place:**

The 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 public safety and welfare. In accordance with this declaration, the Board of Education strictly prohibits the use of the above referenced drugs and controlled substances and

declares to adhere to the drug free work force policy. Code: GAMA (Procedures GBD-R (1) & GCR-R (1) GAMA-R (1)

**Drug Screening of Bus Drivers:**

The Pike County Board of Education is dedicated to providing safe and efficient transportation for students transported on school buses. Thus, the Board recognizes that safe transportation depends on unimpaired judgment, physical dexterity, reflex action, and unimpaired senses of sight and hearing of employees in safety sensitive functions. This Board will not tolerate unauthorized use, abuse, possession or sale of alcohol or controlled substances by its employees. Code: GCRA (1)

**Employee Tobacco Use:**

In accordance with the “Georgia Smoke Free Air Act of 2005”, Pike County Schools prohibits smoking by employees and visitors in any school building or property owned by the district or in any school owned vehicle including school buses or at any on or off campus school sponsored event at any time. In addition, this prohibition includes the use of tobacco products by employees and visitors at all times when supervising students. Code: GAN

**Harassment:**

The Pike County Board of Education strictly prohibits any acts 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 at any school event or activity. Any violation of this policy 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. Code: GAEB

**Pike County Personnel Dress Code:**

All employees of Pike County schools serve as role models for the students and as representatives of the Pike County School District. Consistent with these roles, all personnel shall dress professionally and appropriately relative to their specific job duties and responsibilities. Code: GBRL-R (1)

**Leaves and Absences:**

All employees are required to adhere to the work calendar(s) established by the Board. The employees of the Board may take approved leave only in accordance with the Board policy governing personnel leaves and absences or other leave policies enacted by the Board of Education. Professional Learning Days are “protected” days and not authorized for leave, unless approved by the Superintendent or designee. Unless otherwise provided by the Board of

Education, principals and other supervisors are not authorized to rearrange the work calendars of employees. Each employee of the Board is entitled to sick leave with full pay, computed on the basis of one and one fourth (1 ¼) working days for each completed month (20 school days of service). The leave provided for under this policy is available to employees in accordance with the Board Policy. Code: GBRH/GARH-R (1) Reference: GBRI-R (1)

**Federal Family and Medical Leave Act:**

Employees of the Board who have been employed by the Board for at least 12 months and who have worked at least 1250 hours during the 12 month period immediately preceding the commencement of leave are eligible to take unpaid leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act. The Board does intend to enact certain options as the act authorizes.

**Professional Personnel Work Loads:**

The minimum workday for which basic state pay is earned is eight hours and the minimum workweek is forty hours or equivalent annual minutes based on the employee work calendar. A schedule designating the beginning and end of each work day for teachers will be set by the Superintendent or the Principal of each school. Circumstances sometimes necessitate a longer workday on campus. Code: GBRC

**Professional Personnel Lay- Off:**

It is the function of the Board of Education is to employ personnel and manage resources within limitations defined by funding sources of the school system. Consequently, it shall be the prerogative of the Board to abolish job positions, to reduce the length of the school year and salary of certificated or non-certificated personnel, and to reduce the number of employees when seeking to cope effectively with program changes or financial exigency. Code: GBKA

**Complaints and Grievances:**

Implementing the provisions of O.C.G.A. 20-2-989.5, certified personnel shall have the right to present and resolve complaints at the lowest organizational level possible. Code: GAE

**Professional Personnel Promotion (Career Ladder):**

Vacancies in the school system at the assistant principal level or above will be filled by educational personnel within the system whenever possible given that internal applicants have a history of successful performance in the Pike County School System. Code: GBJ

**Employee Transfer Procedures:**

The Board provides opportunities for employees to voluntarily request transfers to other schools and departments based upon Board approved procedures. This procedure does not limit the Board's right, through the Superintendent, to assign or reassign any employee. Code: GBC-R

**Classified Personnel Overtime Pay:**

Overtime must be approved in advance by the Director of Finance based on a written request from a supervisor. Code: GCRD-R (1)

**Equal Opportunity Employment:**

The School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, or sex in its employment practices, student programs and dealings with the public. It is the policy of the Board of Education to comply fully with the requirements of Title VI, Title IX, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act and all accompanying regulations. Code: GAAA

**Staff Political Activities:**

Employees should always differentiate between their activities as individuals and their official positions with Pike County School System. Code: GAHB



## **Business Management**

### **Payday Schedule:**

Payday is generally the last workday of each month. The annual exception is December to accommodate the holiday schedule. Other possible exceptions are Thanksgiving and Spring Break month as necessary. Check the pay date schedule posted at [www.pike.k12.ga.us](http://www.pike.k12.ga.us).

### **Direct Deposit:**

This employee convenience feature deposits your monthly paycheck in the bank of your choice. Depending on your bank, pay will generally be deposited in your account early on the morning of payday. Contact the Payroll office for details.

### **Tax Documents and Withholding:**

Annual tax reporting (W-2's) will be available to you as early as possible in January but always by the end of the month. If you would like to make changes in Federal or State tax withholding anytime during the year, please access your account in iVisions. Remember that you are responsible for the amount of tax withheld from each paycheck. You can view your current withholding status on the stub of your paycheck or direct deposit advice.

### **Purchasing:**

Purchase order approval by the Superintendent or Finance Director is a prerequisite for all purchases. Obligation made prior to such approval will be your own financial responsibility. Contact your school or department budget control designee for help with purchasing. Reference the Purchasing administrative rule at [www.pike.k12.ga.us](http://www.pike.k12.ga.us) for complete details.

### **Travel:**

You can, with prior approval, be reimbursed for travel expense associated with work activities. State of Georgia travel regulations and local administrative rule govern all travel activities and reimbursements. See the rule "Employee Travel Regulations" for details and updates. Necessary travel forms are located in the Documents section of the District website.

### **Mileage:**

Mileage is reimbursed for the number of miles to your destination according to the most direct, reasonable route as determined by online sources Google Maps or MapQuest from the home or office/school, whichever is closer.

### **Food Service Management:**

The Pike County School Nutrition Program budget does not allow charging of meals by students or teachers. A progressive charge protocol can be found in Administrative Rule: EEA-R (1) and Code: EE-R (1). Inquiries may be directed to the School Nutrition Program Director.

### **Transportation**

#### **Special Use of School Buses:**

School buses can only be used for school purposes by in-school groups. Field trips must be approved by school principals at least 10 school days before the trip is to be made. The proper field trip submission and approval process must be made via school principal to the Transportation Coordinator. Additionally, all system field trip rules and procedures must be followed. Non-school groups, except 4-H clubs, will not be permitted to use school buses. Who to Contact: Superintendent's Office and/or Transportation Coordinator Admin Rule reference: IFCB-R (1) IFCB\_R (2) Form Reference: Appendix – PC Field Trip Request Form Code: EDDA-R (1)

### **Fiscal Management**

#### **Purchase Orders and Purchasing:**

The prerequisite for all purchasing is approval of a purchase order. Purchasing, with few exceptions such as emergencies in maintenance or transportation, must follow the purchasing life cycle described below. Obligations to purchases created out of sequence and without approval will be the responsibility of those creating such obligations.

### **Facilities**

#### **Chemical Waste and Hazardous Material Disposal:**

It shall be the responsibility of the Principals and Directors to inventory their facilities and areas for excess chemicals and hazardous materials on a semi-annual basis. All items listed will be added to a master list of items to be disposed of by an organization in good standing with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. All documentation shall be filed by and retained by the Facilities, Technology and Maintenance Director for permanent record keeping and retained by that department. Code: FDBA-R (1)

**Energy Use Request:**

A request form shall be completed and e-mailed to the facilities director for each activity in his or her area which will need energy before or past the standard operating hours of 8:00 A.M. and 4:00 P.M. Monday through Friday for all schools. The Administrative Services Office hours are from 8:00 A.M. until 5:00 P.M. Monday through Friday. Code: FA-R (1)

**Facility Change Request Form:** <http://www.pike.k12.ga.us>

Any and all modification to Pike School Buildings/Grounds must be submitted to and approved by the Superintendent/Director of Technology and Operations before the start of any project.

**Instruction****Internet Acceptable Use:**

It is the belief of the School system that the use of telecommunications, including the internet, in instructional programs is an educational strategy that facilitates communication, innovation, resource sharing, and access to information. Use of the Internet must be in support of education and research and consistent with the educational mission, goals, and objectives of the school system. Code: IFBG

**Electronic Technologies:**

Voice mail, email, and Internet usage assigned to an employee's computer or telephone extensions are solely for the purpose of conducting Pike County School business. All emails will be deleted after 12 months. Sending and forwarding of advertisements, emails for personal gain, chain letters, junk mail, jokes and executable files is prohibited. Refer to Administrative Rule for Data Storage Limitations (e-mail, desktop, and my docs). Code: IFBG-R (1) ECG-R (1)

**Grading System:**

The Pike County School System believes that students must be engaged in a rigorous curriculum with multiple and various opportunities to demonstrate progress and mastery. Accordingly, an appropriate system for reporting academic progress and attainment is necessary. Code: IHA-R (2)

**Diversity Celebration Plan:**

Principals shall establish and coordinate a cultural diversity plan in each school that will plan and execute learning opportunities for students K-12. There will be a monthly focus for cultural studies, and activities shall correlate with GPS/Common Core Curricula. Code: IDAH-R (1)

### **Supplementary Materials Selection and Adoption:**

Learning resources and textbooks used by the Pike County School System shall be selected by the Learning Resources Adoption Committee appointed by the Director of Teaching and Learning. The Committee shall consist of central office administration, teachers from appropriate subject areas and grade levels and other appropriate school personnel. The selection process shall be guided by state board regulations and any procedures implemented by the Superintendent. Furthermore, educators should exact great caution when introducing supplementary materials in to the classroom that can be divisive, inflammatory, insensitive, or in bad taste. IFAB-R (1)

### **Media Programs:**

The System-Level Media Committee shall be responsible for developing procedures for the school media centers on:

- A. Selecting media and instructional materials,
- B. Handling requests for reconsideration of materials,
- C. Considering gifts of instructional resources,
- D. Using non-school owned materials, and
- E. Complying with copyright law.

These above procedures are further detailed in the System Media Handbook and reviewed annually for appropriate updates. Code: IFBC-R (1)

### **Athletics Field Trip:**

A written or electronic schedule with HOME and AWAY dates, game times and planned bus departure times shall be submitted to the Principal and/or Athletic Director at least one month before the first scheduled date of an away trip. Code: IFCB-R(1) Educational: IFCB-R (2)

## **Students**

### **Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA):**

A parent/guardian of a student may, upon request, inspect any instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum for the student. The request shall be made in writing to the school principal. The principal shall schedule a conference with the parent within five business days and make the instructional materials available. Parents shall be notified prior to the administration of physical examinations or screenings that the school may administer to students. This notice shall offer the parent the opportunity to opt the student out of any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening that is (1) required as a condition of attendance; (2) administered by

the school and scheduled by the school in advance; and (3) not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student, or of other students. A list of non-required information may be found in the code of conduct under PPRA. Code: JR

**Teacher Removal Act:**

State code § 20-2-737 supports the authority of principals and teachers in the school system to remove a student from the classroom in cases of disruptive, disorderly or dangerous conduct pursuant to provisions of state law. Teachers and Principals are required to take corrective measures by filing a report of any student exhibiting behavior that repeatedly or substantially interferes with the teacher's ability to teach, or student's ability to learn, whereas such behavior is in violation of the student code of conduct. Code: JCD

**Student Records / Family Right and Privacy Act (FERPA):**

Confidentiality of student records shall be preserved while access is provided to parents; eligible students (those over eighteen years of age or enrolled in post-secondary educational institutions); professional educators with legitimate educational interests; and, those federal or state officials whose access is authorized in connection with an audit, evaluation of federal or state supported education programs; or for the enforcement and compliance with federal legal requirements related to those programs.

**Equal Educational Opportunities:**

The School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, or sex in its employment practices, student programs and dealings with the public. It is the policy of the Board of Education to comply fully with the requirements of Title VI, Title IX, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act and all accompanying regulations. Any employee, student, applicant for employment, parent or other person who believes he or she has been discriminated against or harassed in violation of this policy must make a complaint in accordance with the procedures provided by the district, which can be found at the Districts website by selecting District, Board of Education, Policies.

**Spills/Infection Control:**

Employees should review the procedures for the handling of blood and other bodily fluids, which can be found at <http://www.pike.k12.ga.us>. Code: GANA-R (1)

**First Aid / Automated External Defibrillators:**

It is the primary goal for the system to maintain and provide adequate safety to employees, students and its community. Every building owned by the Board of Education will be equipped with a defibrillator in assisting trained individuals in CPR and emergency situations.

**Student Accident Report:**

Student Accident Insurance is a secondary plan that covers parents of students that are not insured or their expenses exceeds the family health insurance. All students participating in sports and /or activity during school time are eligible for the maximum amount on the benefit schedule. The student accident report must be filled out and submitted as a supporting document for all injuries not related to drugs, intoxication, or non-prescribed medication. Supervisors/Sponsors must complete this report concerning all injuries occurring on school property.

**Seclusion or Restraint of Students:**

Physical restraint may only be used when a student is harming themselves, others, or imminent danger is present. Staff members who handle discipline, or have historically been called upon to physically restrain students, must be trained in Mindset. Mindset trains educators in de-escalation techniques; when to use restraint, and how to safely restrain students. Parents must be notified in writing utilizing the incident report (Restraint Incident Report Form), within one school day from the use of the restraint. The Special Education Department Chair, at each school, is responsible to file and maintain all incident reports. A debriefing meeting will take place by the end of the school day with all involved staff (at least one of these persons must be trained in Mindset). At this time, the restraint incident will be discussed and a behavior intervention plan, along with a functional behavior assessment, will be created or modified as needed. The use of seclusion, which is leaving a student unattended or alone in a room, is strictly prohibited.

It is required and it is the duty of teachers, administrators, guidance counselors, visiting teachers, social workers and school psychologists to report abuse within 24 hours upon reason or cause to believe that any child is being or has been abused.

All reporters listed above are mandated reporters held liable in reporting child abuse.

**Student Reporting: Acts of Sexual Abuse or Sexual Misconduct:**

Any student, parent, or friend of a student, who has been the victim of an act of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct by a teacher, administrator or other school system employee, is urged to make an verbal report of the act to any teacher, counselor or administrator at his/her school.

Any teacher, counselor or administrator receiving a report of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct of a student by a teacher, administrator or other employee shall make an oral report of the incident immediately by telephone or otherwise to the school principal or principal's designee, and shall submit a written report of the incident to the school principal or principal's designee within 24 hours. If the principal is the person accused of the sexual abuse or sexual misconduct, the oral and written reports should be made to the Superintendent or the superintendent's designee.

Any school principal or principal's designee receiving a report of sexual abuse as defined in O.C.G.A. 19-7-5 shall make an verbal report immediately, but in no case later than 24 hours from the time there is reasonable cause to believe a child has been abused. The report should be made by telephone and followed by a written report in writing, if requested, to a child welfare agency providing protective services and to the appropriate police authority or district attorney.

Reports of acts of sexual misconduct against a student by a teacher, administrator or other employee not covered by O.C.G.A. 19-7-5 or 20-2-1184 shall be investigated immediately by school or system personnel. If the investigation of the allegation of sexual misconduct indicates a reasonable cause to believe that the report of sexual misconduct is valid, the school principal or principal's designee shall make an immediate written report to the Superintendent and the Professional Standards Commission Ethics Division. Please reference with Board Policy JCAC.

**Pike County Schools Disclaimer:**

The most current version of this document can be located on our Pike County Website <http://www.pike.k12.ga.us>. Board Policies and Administrative Rules posted on the Pike County website will supersede anything that can be found in this Employee Handbook.