



Certified Employee Handbook

Rich in **Tradition** on the **Future**
Focused

FORT THOMAS INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

20265-20276 Certified Employee Handbook

Brian Robinson, Superintendent

Fort Thomas Independent Board of Education
28 North Fort Thomas Avenue
Fort Thomas, KY 41075

Phone (859) 781-3333 • FAX (859) 442-4015

WEB SITE: www.fortthomas.kyschools.us

As required by law, the Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, age, religion, sex (including sexual orientation or gender identity), genetic information, disability, or limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions in its programs and activities and provides equal access to its facilities to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	i
Introduction	4
WELCOME	4
DISTRICT MISSION	5
FUTURE POLICY CHANGES	5
CENTRAL OFFICE ORGANIZATIONAL CHART	6
SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR	7
General Terms of Employment	8
EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYMENT	8
HARASSMENT/DISCRIMINATION/TITLE IX SEXUAL HARASSMENT	8
HIRING	10
CONTRACT	10
CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK AND TESTING	10
MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS	10
PERSONNEL RECORDS	11
RETENTION OF RECORDINGS	11
CERTIFICATION	11
TRANSFER OF TENURE	11
JOB RESPONSIBILITIES	11
CONFIDENTIALITY	12
INFORMATION SECURITY BREACH	12
COURSE OF STUDY/SYLLABUS REQUIREMENT	13
TEACHER-PARENT COMMUNICATIONS	13
GRADING	14
SUPERVISION RESPONSIBILITIES	14
STUDENT ACTIVITIES	15
BULLYING/HAZING	15
SCHOOL-RELATED STUDENT TRIPS	15
HOURS OF DUTY	16
MOMENT OF SILENCE OR REFLECTION	16
STUDENT TELECOMMUNICATION DEVICES	17
PLANNING	17
SALARIES AND PAYROLL DISTRIBUTION	17
REDUCTION IN SALARY AND RESPONSIBILITIES	18
PURCHASING	18
Benefits and Leaves	20

INSURANCE	20
SALARY DEDUCTIONS	20
DEFERRED COMPENSATION	21
CAFETERIA PLAN	21
EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT	21
HOLIDAYS	22
CARRY OVER	22
VACATIONS	22
LEAVE POLICIES	23
PERSONAL LEAVE	23
SICK LEAVE	24
SICK LEAVE DONATION PROGRAM	24
SICK LEAVE BANK	24
FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE	25
FML BASIC LEAVE ENTITLEMENT	26
QUARANTINE LEAVE	27
MATERNITY LEAVE	27
EXTENDED DISABILITY LEAVE	28
EDUCATIONAL LEAVE	28
EMERGENCY LEAVE	29
JURY LEAVE	29
MILITARY/DISASTER SERVICES LEAVE	29
UNPAID LEAVE	29
Personnel Management	30
TRANSFER	30
EMPLOYEE DISCIPLINE	30
EMPLOYEE SEPARATION	30
RESIGNATION/TERMINATION OF CONTRACT BY EMPLOYEE	31
RETIREMENT	31
EVALUATIONS	31
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	31
DISTRICT TRAINING	32
EDUCATIONAL STUDY SEMINARS	32
ABSENTEEISM/TARDINESS/SUBSTITUTES	33
STAFF MEETINGS	33
FUND-RAISING ACTIVITIES	33
DISRUPTING THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS	33
RESTRICTIONS ON INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS	34
CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES	34
POLITICAL ACTIVITIES	34
EMPLOYEE RELIGIOUS EXPRESSION	35
DRUG-FREE/ALCOHOL-FREE SCHOOLS	35

FEDERAL MOTOR CARRIER SAFETY ADMINISTRATION (FMCSA)	
DRUG AND ALCOHOL CLEARINGHOUSE FOR CDL/CLP	
OPERATORS	36
WEAPONS	36
TOBACCO, ALTERNATIVE NICOTINE PRODUCT, OR VAPOR	
PRODUCT	37
USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES	37
USE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY	37
USE OF SCHOOL VEHICLES	38
USE OF PERSONAL CELL PHONES/TELECOMMUNICATION	
DEVICES	38
MATERIALS USED WITH STUDENTS	39
COPYRIGHTED MATERIALS	39
FILM/VIDEOS	39
HEALTH, SAFETY AND SECURITY	39
AUTOMATED EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATORS (AEDS)	40
ACCEPTABLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY	40
RESPONSIBLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY	40
TRACEABLE COMMUNICATIONS	48
ASSAULTS AND THREATS OF VIOLENCE	49
SEARCH AND SEIZURE	50
CHILD ABUSE	50
CORPORAL PUNISHMENT	51
USE OF PHYSICAL RESTRAINT AND SECLUSION	51
CIVILITY	51
COMPLAINTS/COMMUNICATIONS	51
GIFTS	52
SOLICITATIONS	52
ADVERTISING IN THE SCHOOLS	52
OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT OR ACTIVITIES	53
REQUIRED REPORTS	54
CODE OF ETHICS FOR TEACHERS	58
DRESS AND APPEARANCE MEMO FROM SUPERINTENDENT	60

Introduction

Welcome

Welcome to Fort Thomas Schools.

The purpose of the handbook is to acquaint you with general policies and procedures of the Fort Thomas Independent Schools that govern and affect your employment and to outline the benefits available to you as a certified employee of the District.

Because this handbook is a general source of information, it is not intended to be, and should not be interpreted as, a contract. It is **not** an all-encompassing document and may not cover every possible situation or unusual circumstance. If a conflict exists between information in this handbook and Board policy or administrative procedures, the policies and procedures govern.

Some policies refer to specific forms that are available in the Fort Thomas Administrative Procedures Manual. It is the employee's responsibility to refer to the actual policies and/or administrative procedures for further information. Complete copies of those documents are available at the Central Office, in the Principal's office and on the District's web site. Policies and procedures also are available on line via the District's web site or through this Internet address: <http://policy.ksba.or/f05/>. Any employee is free to review official policies and procedures and is expected to be familiar with those related to his/her job responsibilities. Employees and students who fail to comply with Board policies may be subject to disciplinary action. **01.5**

School council policies, which are also available from the Principal, may also apply in some instances. **02.4241**

In this handbook, **bolded policy codes** indicate related Board of Education policies. If an employee has questions, s/he should contact his/her immediate supervisor or any Central Office administrator.

District Mission

Rich in tradition and focused on the future, the Fort Thomas Independent School District provides engaging and challenging learning experiences which foster creativity, curiosity and innovation, while inspiring all students to pursue lifelong learning and become productive members of the global community.

Future Policy Changes

Although every effort will be made to update the handbook on a timely basis, the Fort Thomas Independent Schools reserve the right, and has the sole discretion, to change any policies, procedures, benefits, and terms of employment without notice, consultation, or publication, except as may be required by contractual agreements and law. The District reserves the right, and has the sole discretion, to modify or change any portion of this handbook at any time.

Central Office Organizational Chart



School Year Calendar

FORT THOMAS INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS
2026-27 SCHOOL CALENDAR – Amended & Approved 04/13/2026

July						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

August						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

September						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

October						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

November						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

December						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Legend						
 	No School	 	Holiday	 	Open/Close	
 	Prof. Dev.	 	Make-up Days			
 	First/Last Students					
 	Late Arrival					

8/13 Opening Day
8/14, 8/17 Professional Development
8/18 First Day for Students

9/7 **September**
Holiday – Labor Day

10/2 **October**
Professional Development
10/5 No School

11/3 **November**
Election Day – No School
11/25 Professional Development
11/26 Holiday - Thanksgiving
11/27 No School - Thanksgiving

12/18 **December**
Last School Day Before
Winter Break
Winter Vacation
December 21 – January 1

1/1 **January**
Holiday – New Year's Day
1/4 Schools Open
1/18 Holiday – MLK Day

2/15 **February**
No School

4/2 **April**
Professional Development
4/5-4/9 Spring Break
4/12 Schools Open

5/26 **May**
Last Student Day
5/27, 5/28 Make-Up Days
5/31 No School - Memorial Day

6/1 **June**
Closing Day*

*CLOSING DAY WILL BE
ADJUSTED IF MAKE-UP/SNOW
DAYS ARE NOT NEEDED

Semester 1 82
Semester 2 95

January						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

February						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

March						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

April						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

May						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

June						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

Student Days 177
Teacher Days 188

Make-up/Snow Days:
May 27 and May 28

Section

1

General Terms of Employment

Equal Opportunity Employment

As required by Title IX, the District does not discriminate on the basis of sex regarding admission to the District or in the educational programs or activities operated by the District. Inquiries regarding Title IX Sexual Harassment may be referred to the District Title IX Coordinator (TIXC), the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, or both.

Fort Thomas Independent Schools is an Equal Opportunity Employer. The District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including sexual orientation or gender identity), genetic information, national or ethnic origin, political affiliation, age, disabling condition, or limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions.

Reasonable accommodation for individuals with disabilities or limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions will be provided as required by law.

If considerations of sex, age or disability have a bona fide relationship to the unique requirements of a particular job or if there are federal or state legal requirements that apply, then sex, age or disability may be taken into account as a bona fide occupational qualification, provided such consideration is consistent with governing law.

If you have questions concerning District compliance with state and federal equal opportunity employment laws, contact Jamee Flaherty at the Central Office. **03.113**

Harassment/Discrimination/Title IX Sexual Harassment

Fort Thomas Independent Schools intend that employees have a safe and orderly work environment in which to do their jobs. Therefore, the Board does not condone and will not tolerate harassment of or discrimination against employees, students, or visitors to the school or District, any act prohibited by Board policy that disrupts the work place or the educational process and/or keeps employees from doing their jobs.

GENERAL TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT

Any employee who believes that he or she, or any other employee, student, or visitor to the school or District, is being or has been subjected to harassment or discrimination shall bring the matter to the attention of his/her Principal/immediate supervisor or the District's Title IX/Equity Coordinator as required by Board policy. The District will investigate any such concerns promptly and confidentially.

No employee will be subject to any form of reprisal or retaliation for having made a good-faith complaint under this policy. For complete information concerning the District's position prohibiting harassment/discrimination, assistance in reporting and responding to alleged incidents, and examples of prohibited behaviors, employees should refer to the District's policies and related procedures. **03.162**

The following have been designated to handle inquiries regarding nondiscrimination under Title IX and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title IX Sexual Harassment/Discrimination: **01.1**

Title IX Coordinator (TIXC):	Jamee Flaherty
Office Address:	28 N. Fort Thomas Ave., Fort Thomas, KY 41075
Office Email:	Jamee.Flaherty@fortthomas.kyschools.us
Office Phone:	859.815.2011
504 Coordinator:	Jamee Flaherty
Office Address:	28 N. Fort Thomas Ave., Fort Thomas, KY 41075
Office Email:	Jamee.Flaherty@fortthomas.kyschools.us
Office Phone:	859.815.2011

Any person may report sex discrimination, including sexual harassment (whether or not the person reporting is the person alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sex discrimination or sexual harassment), in person, by mail, by telephone, or by electronic mail, using the contact information listed for the TIXC, or by any other means that results in the TIXC receiving the person's verbal or written report. Such a report may be made at any time (including during non-business hours) by using the telephone number or electronic mail address, or by mail to the office address, listed for the TIXC. **09.428111**

Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedures are located on the District Website.

Employees wishing to initiate a complaint concerning discrimination in the delivery of benefits or services in the District's school nutrition program should go to the link below or mail a written complaint to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington D.C. 20250-9410, or email, program.intake@usda.gov.

http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html

07.1

Hiring

Except for noncontracted substitute teachers, all certified personnel are required to sign a written contract with the District.

A list of all District job openings is available at the Central Office and on the District web site.

For further information on hiring of certified personnel, refer to policy **03.11**.

Contract

Each teacher shall be provided access to a copy of his or her employment contract upon request. **03.114**

Criminal Background Check and Testing

New certified hires and student teachers assigned within the District must have both a state and a federal criminal history background check and a letter (CA/N check) from the Cabinet for Health and Family Services documenting the individual does not have an administrative finding of child abuse or neglect in records maintained by the Cabinet.

An employee shall report to the Superintendent if the employee has been found by the Cabinet for Health and Family Services to have abused or neglected a child, and if the employee has waived the right to appeal such a substantiated finding or the finding has been upheld upon appeal. **03.11**

The form for requesting a CA/N check is available on the Cabinet for Health and Family Services website.

Medical Examinations

All newly employed certified personnel, including substitute teachers, shall present documentation of a medical examination performed by a licensed physician, physician assistant (PA), or advanced registered nurse practitioner or by a licensed medical practitioner of the employee's choice. Medical examinations performed within a ninety (90)-day period prior to initial employment will be accepted. Unless otherwise provided in Board policy, the cost of the medical examination must be borne by the employee.

The initial medical examination shall include a risk assessment for tuberculosis as required by Kentucky Administrative Regulation. Individual identified by that assessment as being at high risk for TB shall be required to undergo a tuberculin skin test or a blood test for Mycobacterium tuberculosis (BAMT) as required by 702 KAR 001:160. **03.111**

Personnel Records

One (1) master personnel file is maintained in the Central Office for each employee. Employees may inspect their personnel files. The Principal/supervisor may maintain a personnel folder for each person under his/her supervision. Employees may inspect their personnel files. **03.15**

Retention of Recordings

Employees shall comply with the statutory requirement that school officials are to retain any digital, video, or audio recording as required by law. **01.61**

Certification

It shall be the responsibility of the employee to see that the required certification is on file in the Central Office and is kept current at all times. **03.112**

Transfer of Tenure

The continuing service contract status of a teacher shall not be terminated when the teacher leaves employment, all provisions of KRS 161.720 to KRS 161.810 to the contrary notwithstanding, and the continuing service contract status shall be transferred to the next school district, for a period of up to seven (7) months from the time employment in the first school district has terminated.

All teachers who have attained continuing-contract status from another Kentucky district serve a one (1)-year probationary period before being considered for continuing-contract status in the District. **03.115**

Job Responsibilities

Every certified employee is assigned an immediate supervisor. All employees receive a copy of their job description and responsibilities for review. Immediate supervisors may assign other duties as needed. Employees should ask their supervisor if they have questions regarding their assigned duties and/or responsibilities. **03.11, 03.132**

All employees are expected to use sound judgment in the performance of their duties and take reasonable and commonly accepted measures to protect the health, safety, and well-being of others, as well as District property. In addition, employees shall cooperate fully with all investigations conducted by the District as authorized by policy or law. **03.133**

Certified Employees: All teachers in the District shall review records of assigned students to determine whether an IEP or 504 plan is in place.

Confidentiality

In certain circumstances employees will receive confidential information regarding students' or employees' medical, educational or court records. Employees are required to keep student and personnel information in the strictest confidence and are legally prohibited from passing confidential information along to any unauthorized individual. Employees with whom juvenile court information is shared as permitted by law shall be asked sign a statement indicating they understand the information is to be held in strictest confidence.

Employees shall follow Policy 09.14 and related procedures concerning release of student record information.

Except as noted in Policy 09.14 or as otherwise permitted by law, employees may only share confidential, personally identifiable student record information with the following:

- The student;
- The student's parent/guardian; or
- Other individuals with a legitimate educational interest. (If there are questions concerning such requests, certified employees are to confirm with the Principal/designee concerning any requests they receive regarding release of student record information.)

This shall include information transmitted by the substitute by any means, including oral, written, or electronic. Examples of protected information include, but are not limited, to a student's grades, disciplinary or attendance records, and health/medical information.

Access to be Limited

Employees may only access student record information in which they have a legitimate educational interest. **03.111/09.14/09.213/09.43**

Both federal law and Board policy prohibit employees from making unauthorized disclosure, use or dissemination of personal information regarding minors over the Internet. **08.2323**

Information Security Breach

Information security breaches shall be handled in accordance with KRS 61.931, KRS 61.932, and KRS 61.933 including, but not limited to, investigations and notifications.

Within seventy-two (72) hours of the discovery or notification of a security breach, the District shall notify the Commissioner of the Kentucky State Police, the Auditor of Public Accounts, the Attorney General, and the Education Commissioner. **01.61**

Course of Study/Syllabus Requirement

The Superintendent shall develop and disseminate to the schools a curriculum guide that reflects the District's course of study for primary school through twelfth grade and that will include minimum statutory and regulatory requirements and additional requirements as specified by the Board. ~~Each school council may adopt the curriculum guide for implementation, or the school may design its own curriculum guide, provided it is aligned with the Kentucky Program of Studies and the Core Content for assessment. If the school chooses to design its own curriculum guide, the Principal shall provide a copy to the Central Office each year.~~

Teachers at all levels (preschool through adult education) shall develop a syllabus for each course, grade/level or subject (single and/or interdisciplinary area) they teach to communicate to students and parents the following information:

1. Prerequisites for the course
2. Topics to be covered
3. Order of material to be covered
4. Resources to be used
5. Planned testing points
6. Performance standards and expectations

Each year teachers shall distribute a current syllabus to their students and the students' parents/guardians.

The Principal/designee shall make pertinent student achievement data available to each teacher and, in keeping with policies set by the council, monitor the process of reviewing and updating syllabi in response to such data. **08.11**

Teacher-Parent Communications

To demonstrate the District's commitment to productive school-home communications, teachers are expected to respond to requests from parents via phone calls, e-mail messages, and written requests within forty-eight (48) hours of receipt of the message unless extraordinary circumstances prevail.

If the message is received on Friday or the day before a break in the school calendar, every reasonable effort shall be made to respond that day, but certainly no later than the next school day.

Grading

Teachers shall maintain detailed, systematic records of the achievement of each student. The grading standards established in Board policy shall be followed. A student's grade shall not be lowered as a disciplinary action. **08.221**

Teachers will maintain the computerized grade book and grade reporting program to report student progress to parents. Grades should be updated weekly.

Because there occasionally may be a question about the basis for a grade, unless a test is under an outstanding request to inspect or review under FERPA, teachers shall retain semester tests and finals for thirty (30) calendar days following the end of the semester. They shall retain all end-of-unit and grading period tests for thirty (30) calendar days following the date a graded test is returned to the entire class.

Exceptions:

- Teachers may maintain tests for a longer period than required by this policy and shall maintain such records as long as may be required by the student's IEP or 504 plan.
- Teachers are not required to maintain copies of tests that are returned for students to keep.

Supervision Responsibilities

While at school or during school-related or school-sponsored activities, students must be under the supervision of a qualified adult at all times. All District employees are required to assist in providing appropriate supervision and correction of students. Employees shall not send students on errands off school property. **09.221**

Employees are expected to take reasonable and prudent action in situations involving student welfare and safety, including following District policy requirements for intervening and reporting to the Principal or to their immediate supervisor those situations that threaten, harass, or endanger the safety of students, other staff members, or visitors to the school or District. Such instances shall include, but are not limited to, bullying or hazing of students and harassment/discrimination of staff, students or visitors by any party, on school premises, on school-sponsored transportation (per policies 06.34 and 09.2261), or at school sponsored events.

The Code of Acceptable Behavior and Discipline shall specify to whom reports of alleged instances of bullying shall be made. **03.162/06.34/09.2261/09.422/ 09.42811**

In fulfilling their supervision responsibilities, teachers are required to enforce the Student Discipline Code adopted by the Board of Education and discipline policies adopted by the school council. **09.43/09.438**

Student Activities

An expelled student shall not participate in any school-sponsored extracurricular or interscholastic activity while the student is expelled. 09.3

Bullying/Hazing

"Bullying" is defined as any unwanted verbal, physical, or social behavior among students that involves a real or perceived power imbalance and is repeated or has the potential to be repeated:

1. That occurs on school premises, on school-sponsored transportation, or at a school-sponsored event; or
2. That disrupts the education process.

"Hazing" is defined as a direct action which substantially endangers the physical health of a minor or student for the purpose of recruitment, initiation into, affiliation with, or enhancing or maintaining membership or status within any organization, including but not limited to actions which coerce or force a minor or a student to:

- a) Violate federal or state criminal law;
- b) Consume any food, liquid, alcoholic liquid, drug, tobacco product, or other controlled substance which subjects the minor or student to a risk of serious physical injury;
- c) Endure brutality of a physical nature, including whipping, beating or paddling, branding, or exposure to the elements;
- d) Endure brutality of a sexual nature; or
- e) Endure any other activity that creates a reasonable likelihood of serious physical injury to the minor or student.

"Organization" is defined as a number of persons who are associated with a school or postsecondary education institution and each other, including a student organization, fraternity, sorority, association, corporation, order, society, corps, club, or similar group and includes any student organization registered pursuant to policies of the school or postsecondary education institution at any time during the previous five (5) years. **09.422**

School-Related Student Trips

The Board encourages school-related trips that are of significant educational value. Such trips are to be an extension of the regular classroom work and an integral part of the educational program. School-related student trips shall include all trips, excursions and events under the sponsorship of the school, including those during which a student represents the District.

GENERAL TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT

Prior approval of the Principal/designee is required for all trips. Any trip falling outside designated categories set out in Board policy shall require prior approval of both the Principal and Superintendent. Because of safety and liability concerns, it is imperative that trip sponsors review and comply with Board policy and applicable administrative procedures.

Adults who voluntarily contribute their time to serve as chaperones on field trips shall be under the direct supervision of school personnel assigned to the activity. Chaperones must be at least twenty-one (21) years old and those volunteering to assist with supervision for trips shall attend training designated by the Superintendent prior to serving as a chaperone.

Parents are to be informed of the nature of the trip, the approximate departure and return times, means of transportation, and any other relevant information. Parents must give prior written approval for students to participate in school-sponsored trips.

Prior to the student's or group's departure, the teacher/coach/sponsor supervising the trip shall file written parental permission slips with the Principal. The teacher also shall provide the Principal with a listing of participating students and a copy of the complete itinerary, including times and destinations.

On all trips, the teacher/coach/sponsor shall take a student roster that includes the names of all students, emergency contact information, and pertinent medical information. Athletics, teams, clubs, and organizations that have on-going events shall have one permission form on file that is obtained annually. **09.36**

Hours of Duty

Certified employees are not allowed to leave their job assignments during duty hours without the express permission of their immediate supervisor.

Teachers shall be on duty no later than fifteen (15) minutes before students are scheduled to arrive and shall remain in the building at least fifteen (15) minutes after the dismissal time for students. For complete information, refer to policy. **03.1332**

Employees shall attend meetings called by the Superintendent, building Principals, Supervisors or their designees. Absence from staff meetings must have approval of the administrator who called the meeting. **03.1335**

Moment of Silence or Reflection

At the commencement of the first class of each day, a moment of silence or reflection shall occur. Guidelines are listed in policy **08.1351**.

Student Telecommunication Devices

While on school property or while attending school-sponsored or school-related activities, whether on or off school property, students shall be permitted to possess personal telecommunications devices and other related electronic devices. Students are prohibited from using a personal telecommunication device during instructional time, except during an emergency, if directed to do so by a teacher for an instructional purpose, or if authorized by a teacher. Students shall not access social media unless authorized to do so by a teacher for an instructional purpose.

Students shall comply with any additional rules developed by the school concerning appropriate use of telecommunication or other electronic devices. When students violate prohibitions of this policy, they shall be subject to disciplinary action, including losing the privilege of bringing the device onto school property and being reported to their parent/guardian. A violation also may result in a report being made to law enforcement. In addition, an administrator may confiscate the device, which shall only be returned to the student's parent/guardian. 09.4261

Planning

Teachers shall devote their planning periods to the following activities:

1. Planning for the instructional program;
2. Conferring with parents, students, administrators, and supervisors;
3. Studying and maintaining student records; and
4. Other duties deemed appropriate by the Principal. **03.126**

Salaries and Payroll Distribution

Payroll will be issued according to a schedule approved annually by the Board. At the end of the school year, employees who have completed their duties may request to be paid their remaining salary before the end of the fiscal year (June 30). **03.121**

Salaries for certified personnel are based on a single-salary schedule reflecting the school term as approved by the Board in keeping with statutory requirements. Compensation for additional days of employment is prorated on the employee's base pay.

Determination of and changes to certified employees' rank and experience are determined in compliance with Policy 03.121. No later than forty-five (45) days before the first student attendance day of each year or June 15th, whichever comes first, the Superintendent will notify certified personnel of the best estimate of their salary for the coming year.

The salary schedule shall include provisions for teachers who qualify for the following ranks:

GENERAL TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT

Rank IV - Teachers holding emergency certificates and who have ninety-six (96) to one hundred twenty-eight (128) semester hours of approved college training or the equivalent.

Rank IVA - Teachers holding emergency certificates who have an approved four (4) year college degree, or a teaching certificate from another state, and who are teaching in their field.

Rank III - Teachers holding regular certificates and who have an approved four (4) year college degree or the equivalent.

Rank IIIA - Teachers with a Bachelor's Degree or its equivalent, plus fifteen (15) semester hours or more of graduate work.

Rank II - Teachers holding regular certificates and who have a master's degree in a subject field approved by the Education Professional Standards Board or equivalent continuing education.

Rank IIA – Teachers with a Master's Degree or its equivalent, plus fifteen (15) semester hours or more of graduate work, or the successful completion of two (2) of the four (4) required components of National Board Certification leading to a Rank I certificate.

Rank I - Teachers holding regular certifications and who have a master's degree in a subject field approved by the Education Professional Standards Board or equivalent continuing education and who have earned thirty (30) semester hours of approved graduate work or equivalent continuing education; and those teachers who have met the requirements for Rank II and hold current certification of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

Reduction in Salary and Responsibilities

Salaries for teachers shall not be less than the preceding year unless such reduction is part of a uniform plan affecting all teachers in the entire District or unless there is a reduction of responsibilities. Reduction of responsibility for teachers may be accompanied by a corresponding reduction in salary. Written notice that states the specific reason(s) for the reduction shall be furnished to teachers no later than ninety (90) days before the first student attendance day of the school year. **03.1212**

Purchasing

Employees are required to follow applicable state law and regulations and local policies and administrative procedures when making purchases on behalf of the District.

All purchases shall require the prior approval of the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee. Administrators designated by the Superintendent may initiate a purchase order, subject to the limits of their designated budgeted funds and approval by their supervisor.

The Board shall not be responsible for expenditures not properly authorized and not made according to the purchasing procedures developed by the Superintendent. **04.31**

GENERAL TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT

With the exception of recurring monthly payments such as utilities and fixed charges, no bill shall be paid without the following supportive information:

1. A properly issued purchase order initiated by the appropriate leadership team member and signed by the Superintendent or designated representative;
2. An invoice for goods or services received; and
3. Confirmation that invoiced materials were received in accurate quantity and in good order. **04.3111**

Internal school account purchases must be supported by a properly executed purchase request and authorization for payment by the Principal.

Because no school activity fund is permitted to end the fiscal year with a deficit balance, a school shall not expend or commit to expend any activity fund in excess of revenue received for the fiscal year. Should this occur, the employee(s) responsible shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, and the Superintendent may require the school/council to present for Board approval a plan for reimbursement for any amount. **04.312**

Section

2

Benefits and Leaves

Insurance

The Board provides unemployment insurance and workers' compensation for all certified employees. In accordance with 702 KAR 3:330, the District shall provide Certified Employee Liability Insurance in an amount not less than one (1) million dollars for the protection of the employee from liability arising in the course and scope of pursuing the duties of his or her employment. **03.124**

~~The Board provides unemployment insurance, workers' compensation, and liability insurance for all classified employees. **03.224**~~

In addition, the state of Kentucky provides group health and life insurance to employees who are eligible as determined by Kentucky Administrative Regulation. **03.124**

Salary Deductions

The Fort Thomas Independent School District makes all payroll deductions required by law. Employees may choose from the following optional payroll deductions:

- Health/life insurance program;
- Tax Sheltered Annuity program;
- Income protection insurance;
- Credit Union;
- State approved deferred compensation plan;
- United Way;
- State-designated Flexible Spending Account (FSA) and Health Reimbursement Account (HRA) plans; and
- KEPAC dues.

03.1211

Deferred Compensation

The District offers a matching contribution of up to \$500 per fiscal year for employee contributions made to a District approved deferred compensation provider/plan. To qualify for the matching funds, eligibility is contingent upon the employee's successful retirement or approved reemployment for the upcoming school year. Matching disbursements are processed and paid at the start of the new school year (August 30).

Cafeteria Plan

The Fort Thomas Independent School District offers employees a cafeteria plan of benefits, which offers the following types of insurance: health, dental, term life, cancer, in-hospital indemnity, and disability income protection. Employees eligible to participate are those who are employed to work for the District at least one-half (1/2) time during the school calendar year.

03.1213

Expense Reimbursement

Provided the Superintendent/designee has given prior approval to incur necessary and appropriate expenses school personnel are reimbursed for travel that is required as part of their duties or for school-related activities approved by the Superintendent/designee. Allowable expenses include mileage (based on state rate), gasoline used for Board vehicles, tolls and parking fees, car rental, fares charged for travel on common carriers (plane, bus, etc.), food (when District business requires an overnight stay), and lodging. Itemized receipts must accompany requests for reimbursement that exceed \$5.00.

FOOD PER DIEM

An overnight stay is required for reimbursement for meals. Actual monies spent for food while on out-of-District trips to Standard or Normal Rate locations shall be paid on a per diem basis for meals. The amount claimed for a meal shall not include any charges for alcoholic beverages. This amount may include a tip of no more than twenty percent (20%) of the total meal cost. The cost of meals consumed during such travel shall be reimbursed at a rate not to exceed fifty dollars (\$50.00) per twenty-four (24) hour day starting from the time of departure. Reimbursement for Standard or Normal Rate locations will be limited as follows:

- Breakfast \$10.00
- Lunch \$15.00
- Dinner \$25.00

For travel to Non-Standard or High Rate cities, meals will be reimbursed at the daily per diem rate established by the General Services Administration (GSA). (www.gsa.gov/perdiem)

Itemized receipts will be required to claim reimbursement for meals. Reimbursement shall not be made for food and/or beverages consumed outside of meal times (snacks, soft drinks, etc.).

Employees must submit travel vouchers within one (1) week of travel and will not be reimbursed without proper documentation. Should employees receive reimbursement based on incomplete or improper documentation, they may be required to reimburse the District. **03.125**

To receive reimbursement from the District, employees should only fill out a claim form for authorized travel expenses that were incurred by the employee or for perishable items that are needed for their classrooms. All other items should be purchased using the District's standard purchase order form. The purchase order will then be processed by central office and sent to the vendor so to be filled. (See Purchasing section.)

Holidays

Certified employees who are employed for 177 days or more shall be paid for four (4) holidays which shall be designated in the official school calendar. Employees who work 240 or more days per school year shall be paid for additional holidays as specified in policy ~~if they occur on days when school is not in session for students and/or staff members.~~ **03.122**

Carry Over

As of June 30, twelve-month employees may carry over up to five (5) days of unused vacation leave for use in future years. However, no employee shall accumulate more than twenty-five (25) days of vacation at any given time. **03.122**

With the approval from the Superintendent or their designee, certified employee on two hundred thirty (230) day or longer contracts may carry forward up to five (5) contracted workdays from the current school year to another school year to reduce their contracted days for the following school year. **03.114**

Vacations

Administrators who work 260 or more days per school year shall be eligible for twenty (20) vacation days with pay per year. Administrators who begin service with the District later than July 1 shall receive a pro-rata number of vacation days. All pro-rata calculations involving administrators working a full calendar year shall be based upon 260 days per contract year.

Use of vacation days must be approved in advance by the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee. Days when teachers are expected to work as designated in the official school calendar may not be used as vacation days for administrators. ~~As of June 30, twelve-month employees may carry over up to five (5) days of unused vacation leave for use in future years. However, no employee shall accumulate more than 25 days of vacation at any given time. **03.122**~~

Leave Policies

In order to provide the highest level of service, employees are expected to be at work and on time every day. However, when circumstances dictate, the Board provides various types of leaves under which absences may be authorized. Employees who must be absent or tardy should inform their immediate supervisor as soon as possible.

Staff members in positions requiring substitutes must notify their immediate supervisor of an impending absence. If the immediate supervisor cannot be reached within two (2) hours prior to the beginning of the work day, employees are to call the supervisor's secretary. If unable to reach either the Principal or the secretary, teachers may contact an approved substitute directly. **03.123**

Listed below is general information regarding several types of leave available to employees. Please note that in many cases (as specified in policy) a written request, submitted for approval before leave begins or after the employee returns, is required.

Employees on extended leave, including those on professional leave serving in charter schools, who plan to return the next school year must notify the Superintendent/designee in writing of their intention to return to work by April 1.

Authorization of leave and time taken off from one's job shall be in accordance with a specific leave policy. Absence from work that is not based on appropriate leave for which the employee is qualified may lead to disciplinary consequences, up to and including termination of employment.

Employee shall not experience loss of income or benefits, including sick leave, when they are assaulted while performing assigned duties and the resulting injuries qualify them for workers' compensation benefits. **03.123**

For complete information regarding leaves of absence, refer to the District's *Policy Manual*.

Personal Leave

Full-time certified employees are entitled to two (2) days of paid personal leave each school year. Part-time employees or employees who work for less than a full year are entitled to a prorata part of the authorized personal leave days. Unless prevented by circumstances beyond their control, employees must notify the building Principal or immediate supervisor at least three (3) school calendar days prior to a planned absence. The supervisor must approve the leave date, but no reasons will be required for the leave. Employees taking personal leave must file a personal statement stating that the leave was personal in nature.

Employees who must be away from school for personal reasons and who are unable to obtain the required prior approval, shall make written request for approval of the leave date within two (2) work days of returning to work.

Personal leave shall not be granted on a professional development day or on the day prior to or the day following any non-instructional day (e.g. Labor Day, NKEA, Spring Break) which falls in the school year calendar. **03.1231**

Personal leave days not taken during the school year shall accumulate up to four (4) days. Personal leave days accumulated in excess of four (4) days shall be credited to the employee as sick leave days.

Sick Leave

Full-time certified employees are entitled to ten (10) days of paid sick leave each school year. Part-time employees or employees hired after the opening day of school who work for less than a full year are entitled to a prorata part of the authorized sick leave days. Sick leave days not taken during the school year they were granted accumulate without limit.

At the end of each school year, employees who do not use any paid or unpaid leave, excluding professional leave, during the school year shall have one (1) additional day of sick leave added to their accumulated sick leave balance. An employee claiming sick leave must file a personal statement or a certificate of a physician stating that the employee was ill or that the employee was absent for the purpose of attending to a member of the immediate family who was ill. **03.1232**

See the “Retirement” section for information about reimbursement for unused sick leave at retirement.

Sick Leave Donation Program

Employees who have accumulated more than fifteen (15) days of sick leave may request to donate sick leave days to another employee authorized to receive the donation. Employees may not disrupt the workplace while asking for donations. Applications to donate sick leave should be returned to Mary Turner.

Any sick leave that is not used will be returned on a prorated basis to the employees who donated days. **03.1232**

Sick Leave Bank

Employees may choose to participate in the District’s Sick Leave Bank, which has been established for the purpose of providing voluntarily participating District employees who have exhausted all of their accumulated sick leave days and other available paid leave days, the means of obtaining additional sick leave days.

Sick Leave Bank days shall be used only for illness of, or an accident involving, a bank member. Days shall not be granted for a family member's illness or any circumstance other than personal illness or accident.

Upon receipt by the Superintendent of a signed statement of intent, any employee who receives sick leave benefits may contribute to the Sick Leave Bank.

Each employee who chooses to join the Sick Leave Bank shall initially contribute two (2) days of annual sick leave to the bank. Each year thereafter, s/he shall contribute one (1) sick day until a total of ten (10) days have been contributed. For complete information concerning administration of the Bank, eligibility for days, and appeals, please refer to policy. **03.12321**

Family and Medical Leave

Employees are eligible for up to twelve (12) workweeks of family and medical leave each school year, if they have been employed by the District for twelve (12) months, have worked at least 1,250 hours during the twelve (12) months preceding the start of the leave, and otherwise qualify for family and medical leave for one of the reasons below:

1. For the birth and care of an employee's newborn child or for placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care;
2. To care for the employee's spouse, child or parent who has a serious health condition, as defined by federal law;
3. For an employee's own serious health condition, as defined by federal law, that makes the employee unable to perform her/his job.
4. To address a qualifying exigency (need) defined by federal regulation arising out of the covered active duty or call to active duty involving deployment to a foreign country of the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent who serves in a reserve component or as an active or retired member of the Regular Armed Forces or Reserve in support of a contingency operation; and
5. To care for a covered service member (spouse, son, daughter, parent or next of kin) who has incurred or aggravated a serious injury or illness in the line of duty while on active duty in the Armed Forces that has rendered or may render the family member medically unfit to perform his/her duties or to care for a covered veteran with a serious injury or illness as defined by federal regulations.

When family and medical military caregiver leave is taken based on a serious illness or injury of a covered service member, an eligible employee may take up to twenty-six (26) workweeks of leave during a single twelve-month period.

Paid leave used under this policy will be subtracted from the twelve (12) workweeks to which the employee is entitled. Employees should contact their immediate supervisor as soon as they know they will need to use Family and Medical Leave. **03.12322**

On the following page is a summary of the major provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) provided by the United States Department of Labor.

FML Basic Leave Entitlement

FMLA requires covered employers to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to eligible employees for the following reasons:

- For incapacity due to pregnancy, prenatal medical care or child birth;
- To care for the employee's child after birth, or placement for adoption or foster care;
- To care for the employee's spouse, son, daughter or parent, who has a serious health condition; or
- For a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee's job.

Military Family Leave Entitlements - Eligible employees whose spouse, son, daughter or parent is on covered active duty or call to covered active duty status may use their 12-week leave entitlement to address certain qualifying exigencies. Qualifying exigencies may include attending certain military events, arranging for alternative childcare, addressing certain financial and legal arrangements, attending certain counseling sessions, and attending post-deployment reintegration briefings.

FMLA also includes a special leave entitlement that permits eligible employees to take up to 26 weeks of leave to care for a covered servicemember during a single 12-month period. A covered servicemember is: (1) a current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation or therapy, is otherwise in outpatient status, or is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list, for a serious injury or illness*; or (2) a veteran who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable at any time during the five-year period prior to the first date the eligible employee takes FMLA leave to care for the covered veteran, and who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy for a serious injury or illness.*

*The FMLA definitions of "serious injury or illness" for current servicemembers and veterans are distinct from the FMLA definition of "serious health condition".

Benefits and Protections - During FMLA leave, the employer must maintain the employee's health coverage under any "group health plan" on the same terms as if the employee had continued to work. Upon return from FMLA leave, most employees must be restored to their original or equivalent positions with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms.

Use of FMLA leave cannot result in the loss of any employment benefit that accrued prior to the start of an employee's leave.

Eligibility Requirements - Employees are eligible if they have worked for a covered employer for at least 12 months, have 1,250 hours of service in the previous 12 months*, and if at least 50 employees are employed by the employer within 75 miles.

*Special hours of service eligibility requirements apply to airline flight crew employees.

Definition of Serious Health Condition - A serious health condition is an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves either an overnight stay in a medical care facility, or continuing treatment by a health care provider for a condition that either prevents the employee from performing the functions of the employee's job, or prevents the qualified family member from participating in school or other daily activities.

Subject to certain conditions, the continuing treatment requirement may be met by a period of incapacity of more than 3 consecutive calendar days combined with at least two visits to a health care provider or one visit and a regimen of continuing treatment, or incapacity due to pregnancy, or incapacity due to a chronic condition. Other conditions may meet the definition of continuing treatment.

Use of Leave - An employee does not need to use this leave entitlement in one block. Leave can be taken intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule when medically necessary. Employees must make reasonable efforts to schedule leave for planned medical treatment so as not to unduly disrupt the employer's operations. Leave due to qualifying exigencies may also be taken on an intermittent basis.

Substitution of Paid Leave for Unpaid Leave - Employees may choose or employers may require use of accrued paid leave while taking FMLA leave. In order to use paid leave for FMLA leave, employees must comply with the employer's normal paid leave policies.

Employee Responsibilities - Employees must provide 30 days advance notice of the need to take FMLA leave when the need is foreseeable. When 30 days notice is not possible, the employee must provide notice as soon as practicable and generally must comply with an employer's normal call-in procedures.

Employees must provide sufficient information for the employer to determine if the leave may qualify for FMLA protection and the anticipated timing and duration of the leave. Sufficient information may include that the employee is unable to perform job functions, the family member is unable to perform daily activities, the need for hospitalization or continuing treatment by a health care provider, or circumstances supporting the need for military family leave.

Employees also must inform the employer if the requested leave is for a reason for which FMLA leave was previously taken or certified. Employees also may be required to provide a certification and periodic recertification supporting the need for leave.

Employer Responsibilities - Covered employers must inform employees requesting leave whether they are eligible under FMLA. If they are, the notice must specify any additional information required as well as the employees' rights and responsibilities. If they are not eligible, the employer must provide a reason for the ineligibility.

Covered employers must inform employees if leave will be designated as FMLA-protected and the amount of leave counted against the employee's leave entitlement. If the employer determines that the leave is not FMLA-protected, the employer must notify the employee.

Unlawful Acts by Employers - FMLA makes it unlawful for any employer to: interfere with, restrain, or deny the exercise of any right provided or to discharge or discriminate against any person for opposing any practice made unlawful by FMLA or for involvement in any proceeding under or relating to FMLA.

Enforcement - An employee may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Labor or may bring a private lawsuit against an employer. FMLA does not affect any Federal or State law prohibiting discrimination, or supersede any State or local law or collective bargaining agreement which provides greater family or medical leave rights.

Quarantine Leave

Employees may, per Board policy, be eligible to receive at least ten (10) days for quarantine due to exposure to a reportable infectious or contagious disease under 902 KAR 2:020 or any other infectious or contagious disease designated as reportable to a local health department or the Department for Public Health by a valid order or administrative regulation of the local health department serving the school District or the Department for Public Health.

Leave granted shall be on a day-by-day basis, as needed, and shall not accumulate or carry over year to year, and shall not be transferrable to any other classification of paid leave established by KRS 161.155, KRS 161.154, or Board policy. **03.12323**

Maternity Leave

Paid Maternity Leave

A teacher or employee who gives birth to a child may be provided up to thirty (30) paid maternity leave days. Paid maternity leave days may be used immediately following the birth of a child and shall be used within six calendar weeks of birth.

The maternity leave days shall be used without deduction of salary and shall be used prior to the teacher or employee using any other leave. Any maternity leave days unused by the teacher or employee beyond six calendar weeks following birth of a child shall not transfer into sick leave or be converted to any other leave type and shall expire upon return to work.

Additional sick leave days may be used when the need is verified by a physician's statement. Additional sick leave days, not to exceed thirty (30), may be used when the need is verified by a physician's statement and is within twelve (12) calendar weeks of the birth of a child.

Paid Sick Leave

Employees may use up to thirty (30) days of sick leave immediately following the birth or adoption of a child.

Unpaid Leave

The parent of a newborn or an employee who adopts a child may also request an unpaid leave of absence not to exceed ~~twelve (12) workweeks~~ ~~the remainder of the school year in which the birth or placement occurred.~~ ~~Thereafter, leave may be extended in increments of no more than one (1) year.~~

FMLA

Employees eligible for family and medical leave are entitled to up to twelve (12) workweeks of unpaid leave to care for the employee's child after birth or placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care.

Leave to care for an employee's healthy newborn baby or minor child who is adopted or accepted for foster care must be taken within twelve (12) months of the birth or placement of the child. **03.1233**

The Board may only request medical information necessary to decide whether to grant a leave of absence; shall not request or retain unnecessary medical information; and shall not disclose any medical information received, except as permitted by state and federal law.

Leave Limit

Maternity and parental leave following birth of a child shall be limited to twelve (12) workweeks per qualifying event. **03.1233**

Extended Disability Leave

Unpaid disability leave for the remainder of the school year is available to employees who need it. Thereafter, leave may be extended by the Board in increments of no more than one (1) year.

The Superintendent may require an employee to secure a medical practitioner's verification of a medical condition that will justify the need for disability leave. **03.1234**

The Board may only request medical information necessary to decide whether to grant a leave of absence; shall not request or retain unnecessary medical information; and shall not disclose any medical information received, except as permitted by state and federal law. **03.1234**

Educational Leave

The Board may grant certified employees unpaid leave for a period no longer than two (2) consecutive years for educational or professional purposes. Leave may be granted for full-time attendance at universities or other training or professional activities. Leave will not be granted for part-time educational activities. Nor shall certified employees be granted educational/ professional leave for the purpose of complying with statutory and regulatory requirements for completion of a planned fifth year program within a period of ten (10) years after a teaching certificate is issued initially.

The Board shall grant a two (2) year unpaid leave to employees under continuing service contracts who have been offered employment with a charter school.

A teacher with continuing status shall notify the District of the teacher's intent to work in a converted charter school.

A teacher working in a converted charter school shall notify the District of the teacher's intent to return to employment the next school year by April 15 of each year of the granted leave.

Written application for educational/professional leave must be made at least sixty (60) days before the leave is to begin. **03.1235**

Emergency Leave

Full-time certified employees are entitled to two (2) days of emergency leave with pay each school year. Part-time employees and employees who work for less than a full year are entitled to a prorata part of the authorized emergency leave days.

Approved reasons for taking emergency leave include: bereavement, personal disasters, legal/court appearances and others involving extreme hardships as specifically approved in advance by the Superintendent/designee. Persons taking emergency leave must file a personal statement stating the specific reasons for their absence. **03.1236**

Jury Leave

Any certified employee who serves on a jury in local, state or federal court will be granted paid leave (minus any jury pay, excluding expense reimbursement) for the period of her/his jury service.

Employees who will be absent from work to serve on a jury must notify their immediate supervisor in advance. **03.1237**

Military/Disaster Services Leave

Military leave is granted under the provisions and conditions specified in law. As soon as they are notified of an upcoming military-related absence, employees are responsible for notifying their immediate supervisor.

The Board may grant disaster services leave to requesting eligible employees. **03.1238**

Unpaid Leave

Leaves without pay may be granted upon written request to the Principal or Superintendent and approval of the Board provided the leave is for educational or professional purposes, or for illness, maternity, adoption of a child or children, or other disability. **03.123**

Section

3

Personnel Management

Transfer

Transfer or reassignment of certified personnel will be made no later than thirty (30) days before the first student attendance day of the school year except to fill vacancies created by illness, death, or resignations; to reduce or increase personnel because of a shift in school population; to make personnel adjustments after consolidation or merger; or to assign personnel according to their major or minor fields of training.

Notwithstanding any provision of the Kentucky Revised Statutes to the contrary, any employee of the District shall notify the Superintendent within seven (7) calendar days of being charged with any offense which is classified as a felony. The Superintendent may transfer the employee to a second position in accordance with KRS 160.380. Employees charged with a felony offense may be transferred to a second position with no change in pay until such time as they are found not guilty, the charges are dismissed, their employment is terminated, or the Superintendent determines that further personnel action is not required. **03.1311**

Employee Discipline

Disciplinary action, termination and nonrenewal of contracts are the responsibility of the Superintendent. **03.17**

Employee Separation

An employee who voluntarily leaves the District shall complete an exit survey that includes, but is not limited to the position vacated, the employee's years of service in the position and in the District, if the employee is taking a similar position in another district, and the reason(s) provided for leaving the District. This information shall be reported to the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) by the District in a system developed by KDE without providing personally identifiable information. **03.17/03.272**

Resignation/Termination of Contract by Employee

Certified employees who resign or terminate their contracts must do so in compliance with KRS 161.780. No teacher shall be permitted to terminate his or her contract within fifteen days prior to the first instructional day of the school term at a school to which a teacher is assigned or during the school term without the consent of the Superintendent. A teacher shall be permitted to terminate his or her contract at any other time when schools are not in session by giving two (2) weeks written notice to the employing superintendent. **03.17**

Retirement

Certified employees who decide to retire should give the Superintendent/designee notice as far in advance as possible, but no later than two (2) weeks before retirement. Retirement benefits are solely a matter of contract between the employee and the Teachers' Retirement System.

The Board compensates employees only upon initial retirement for each unused sick day at the rate of (30%) of the daily salary, based on the employee's last annual salary. For personnel who begin employment with a local school district on or after July 1, 2008, unused sick leave days to be recognized in calculating reimbursement under KRS 161.155 shall not exceed 300 days.

In order to receive this compensation, the employee must inform the Superintendent of the final decision to retire by April 15 of the year in which the retirement is to occur.

Upon death of an employee in active contributing status who was eligible to retire by reason of service, the District shall compensate the estate of the employee. **03.175**

Evaluations

All information regarding evaluation of certified personnel may be found in the Certified Staff Evaluation Handbook. **03.18**

Professional Development

For certified personnel, the professional development cycle shall run from the day following closing day up to the closing day of school for the next school year. District and school-based professional development must be conducted on days designated in the calendar. Flexible hours may be completed after school, on weekends or during the summer if activities are pre-approved by the professional development committee. Individuals may be excused from District and school-based professional development if they meet the requirements for claiming a sick day or an emergency day. Vacation and personal days may not be used on designated professional development days. All flexible hours must be completed.

It is the responsibility of the individual to provide appropriate documentation for all completed professional development. The professional development requirement must be fulfilled before the last day of school each year. If it is not, repayment for the appropriate hours will be deducted from the individual's paycheck. Unless an employee is granted leave, failure to complete and document required professional development during the academic year will result in a reduction in salary and may be reflected in the employee's evaluation.

All certified employees shall complete at least one (1) hour of each of the following trainings within twelve (12) months of initial hire and on even years thereafter: active shooter training, child abuse, suicide prevention, and seizure disorder. The District shall implement the professional development training from the Kentucky Department of Education.

By June 30, 2027, all employees shall complete training developed by the Kentucky Department of Education in collaboration with the Education Professional standards Board, related to appropriate relationships and communication with students, inappropriate relationships and communication with students, sexual grooming, and sexual misconduct.

Beginning with the 2027-2028 school year, all new employees shall be required to undergo the training listed above within ninety (90) days of the employee's initial hiring. Any new employee who has completed the training within the prior five (5) years with a previous employer shall be exempt from the training. **03.19**

District Training

Procedure **03.19 AP.23** may be used to track completion of local and state employee training requirements that apply across the District and maintain a record for the information of the Superintendent and Board.

Educational Study Seminars

All teachers must complete six (6) Educational Study Seminars within the first three (3) years of employment. During the two-year period, each teacher must complete a total of six (6) seminars. Completion of the program includes attendance at the required seminar session **and** completion of the applied project for each session. Completion of the Educational Study Seminars program is a condition of continued employment with the Fort Thomas Board of Education.

Section**4**

Employee Conduct

Absenteeism/Tardiness/Substitutes

Employees are expected to notify their immediate supervisor when they must be tardy or absent. (See section on Leave Policies.)

Staff Meetings

Unless they are on leave, staff members shall attend called meetings. **03.1335**

Fund-Raising Activities

All schoolwide fund-raising activities must be approved by the Board. Requests must be channeled through the Principal and Superintendent. All other fund raising activities, including those sponsored by school clubs or classes, shall be approved by the Principal.

No student shall be compelled to participate in or meet any kind of quota in a fund-raising activity.

School personnel shall not collect money from students for any non-school sponsored activity.

Disrupting the Educational Process

Any employee who participates in or encourages activities that disrupt the educational process may be subject to disciplinary action, including termination.

Behavior that disrupts the educational process includes, but is not limited to:

- conduct that threatens the health, safety or welfare of others;
- conduct that may damage public or private property (including the property of students or staff);
- illegal activity;

- conduct that interferes with a student's access to educational opportunities or programs, including ability to attend, participate in, and benefit from instructional and extracurricular activities; or
- conduct that disrupts delivery of instructional services or interferes with the orderly administration of the school and school-related activities or District operations. **03.1325**

Restrictions on Instructional Materials

A superintendent, teacher, or other official or employee of any institution supported wholly or in part by public funds shall not act, directly or indirectly, as agent for any person whose instructional materials are identified on the state-approved list. **03.1721/~~03.2721~~**

Controversial Issues

Teachers are expected to exercise reasonable and prudent judgment in the selection and use of materials and discussion of issues in their classrooms. All classroom materials shall be current, relevant, and significant to the instructional program. Materials shall be appropriate for and within the range of the knowledge, understanding, age and maturity of students.

Neither issues nor materials that have a potentially disruptive effect on the educational process shall be discussed or chosen. Teachers who suspect that materials or a given issue may be inconsistent with this policy shall confer with the Principal prior to the classroom use of the materials or discussion of the issue. If the Principal is in doubt, s/he shall confer with the Superintendent. **08.1353**

Political Activities

No District employee shall promote, organize, or engage in political activities while performing his/her duties or during the work day. Promoting or engaging in political activities shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. Encouraging students to adopt or support a particular political position, party, or candidate; or
2. Using school property or materials to advance the support of a particular political position, party, or candidate.

"Political positions" shall not be defined to include communications approved by the Superintendent to be distributed to students, parents or the community concerning District needs or proposed actions by the Board. Examples of such communications may include, but not be limited to, those addressing designation of attendance zones/areas and District facility and financial needs. **~~03.1324~~**

In addition, KRS 161.164 prohibits employees from taking part in the management of any political campaign for school board.

Local, state, and federal tax dollars and resources shall not be used to advocate for or against any public question that appears on the ballot. 03.1324

Employee Religious Expression

The District shall not punish or prohibit an employee from, or punish an employee for, engaging in private religious expression otherwise protected by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution absent a showing that the employee has engaged in actual coercion. ~~03.13241/03.23241~~

Drug-Free/Alcohol-Free Schools

Employees must not manufacture, distribute, dispense, be under the influence of, purchase, possess, use, or attempt to obtain, sell or transfer any of the following in the workplace or in the performance of duties:

1. Alcoholic beverages;
2. Controlled substances, prohibited drugs and substances, and drug paraphernalia; and or any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana or any other controlled substance as defined by federal regulation.
3. Substances that "look like" a controlled substance. In instances involving look-alike substances, there must be evidence of the employee's intent to pass off the item as a controlled substance.

In addition, employees shall not possess prescription drugs for the purpose of sale or distribution.

Any employee who violates the terms of the District's drug-free/alcohol-free policies may be suspended, nonrenewed or terminated. Violations may result in notification of appropriate legal officials.

Any employee charged with and/or convicted of violation of criminal drug statutes shall, within five (5) working days, provide notification of the charge or conviction to the Superintendent. Teachers are subject to random or periodic drug testing following reprimand or discipline for misconduct involving illegal use of controlled substances.

03.13251

Any school employee who knows or has reasonable cause to believe that a person has violated KRS 158.155 shall immediately report any use, possession, or sale of a controlled substance, or who receives information from a student or other person of conduct which is required to be reported, shall immediately cause a report to be made to the District's law enforcement agency and either the local law enforcement agency or the Kentucky State Police. **09.423**

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse for CDL/CLP Operators

Reporting of the following information on individual drivers to the federal Clearinghouse is required: verified positive, adulterated, or substituted test results; confirmed alcohol tests at .04 or higher; refusal to submit to required tests; the reporting of actual knowledge (as defined by federal regulation) of Department of Transportation (DOT) regulatory violations, including violations based on prohibited on duty, pre-duty, or post-accident alcohol use and controlled substance use; and regulatory return to duty and follow-up testing information as applicable.

The District shall not allow a driver to perform any safety-sensitive function if the results of a Clearinghouse query on the driver demonstrate a disqualification as provided by regulation and such driver may be subject to personnel action up to and including termination. **06.221**

Weapons

Except where expressly and specifically permitted by Kentucky Revised Statute, carrying, bringing, using or possessing any weapon or dangerous instrument in any school building, on school grounds, **or a bus stop**, in any school vehicle, or at any school-sponsored activity is prohibited. Except for School Resource Officers (SROs) as provided in KRS 158.4414, and authorized law enforcement officials, including peace officers and police as provided in KRS 527.070 and KRS 527.020, the Board prohibits carrying concealed weapons on school property. Staff members who violate this policy are subject to disciplinary action, including termination.

Employees who know or believe that this policy has been violated must promptly make a report to the local police department, sheriff, or Kentucky State Police. **05.48**

Tobacco, Alternative Nicotine Product, or Vapor Product

The use of any tobacco product, alternative nicotine product, or vapor product as defined in KRS 438.305 is prohibited for all persons and at all times on or in all property, including any vehicle, that is owned, operated, leased, or contracted for use by the Board and while attending or participating in any school-related student trip or student activity and is in the presence of a student or students.

School employees shall enforce the policy. A person in violation of this policy shall be subject to discipline or penalties as set forth by Board. **03.1327**

Students shall not be permitted to use or possess any tobacco product, alternative nicotine product, or vapor product as defined in KRS 438.305 on or in all Board property at all times, including any vehicle owned, operated, leased, or contracted for use by the Board and while participating in any school-related trip or student activity.

If a student under the age of twenty-one violates this policy, then the District will confiscate the alternative nicotine products, tobacco products, or vapor products. **09.4232**

Use of School Facilities

Activities that are sponsored by approved student organizations, faculty groups, or school-related parent groups may take place in school facilities or on school grounds without charge when approved by the Principal and, when required, supervised by school personnel. Use of facilities and grounds by non-school-related groups is governed by Board policies and related procedures. However, such use will not be permitted when it would interfere with educational purposes. Use of school facilities/grounds by outside groups must first be approved by the Principal.

Private, for profit tutoring is not permitted on school property. All lessons/classes conducted on District property MUST be related to District curricular programs and must be approved in advance by the Superintendent or designee.

Use of School Property

All personnel shall be responsible for the school equipment, supplies, books, furniture, and apparatus under their care and use. Any damaged, lost, stolen, or vandalized property shall be reported to the employee's immediate supervisor.

Local, state and federal tax dollars and resources shall not be used to advocate for or against any public question that appears on the ballot.

No employee shall perform personal services for themselves or for others for pay or profit during work time and/or using District property or facilities.

An employee shall not use any District facility, vehicle, electronic communication system, equipment or materials for personal or private use or gain. These items (including security codes and electronic records such as e-mail) are District property.

Employees may not use a code, access a file, or retrieve any stored communication unless they have been given authorization to do so. Employees cannot expect confidentiality or privacy of the information in their e-mail accounts. Authorized District personnel may monitor the use of electronic equipment from time to time. **03.1321**

~~Once an individual is no longer employed with the District, he/she no longer retains the rights to a District-owned network account (this includes both file storage and electronic mail). Employees who leave at the end of the school year will have account access through June 30. Employees who leave midyear will have account access for up to one (1) month. Back-up/transfer of data (including emails) is the responsibility of each individual employee. **08.2323**~~

Use of School Vehicles

Employees who drive any Board-owned vehicle and/or transport students must annually provide the Superintendent/designee with a copy of their driving record. Employees who receive a traffic citation during the year must report the citation to the Superintendent/designee before driving a Board-owned vehicle or transporting students.

Employees who are drive vehicles to transport students shall undergo a biennial physical examination at their own expense. **03.1321**

When students who are under eight (8) years old and between forty (40) and fifty-seven (57) inches in height are transported in District-owned or leased vehicles designed for ten (10) or fewer passengers, they shall be properly secured in a child booster seat. **06.2**

When employees choose to transport a student in their private vehicle, their personal insurance will provide primary liability coverage in case of an accident.

Use of Personal Cell Phones/Telecommunication Devices

Due to privacy concerns, and except for emergency situations, employees shall use discretion when using personally owned recording devices to create video or audio recordings or to take pictures while on duty or working with students except with prior permission from the Principal/designee.

For exceptions, see Board Policies **03.13214**.

Materials Used with Students

All materials presented for student use or viewing shall be reviewed by the teacher before use. Exceptions shall be current events programs and programs provided by Kentucky Educational Television.

Unless the Principal grants an exception based on documentation that the entire video is directly related to the content being taught, rather than showing an entire film, only clips of videos shall be used to highlight core content concepts. **08.234**

Copyrighted Materials

The use and duplication of copyrighted material for educational purposes shall be within the generally accepted uses delineated by applicable law and procedures developed by the Superintendent. In reference to copyrighted electronic materials, employees shall use such materials only in accordance with the license agreement under which the materials were purchased or otherwise procured. **08.2321**

Film/Videos

Use of copyrighted films and videos in the classroom shall have a direct link to one or more of the Kentucky Content areas or to a specific section of the Kentucky Program of Studies. Teachers shall reference such links in their lesson plans.

Appropriate licensing fees, as required by law, shall be paid by the school or by school-related groups that show copyrighted films and videos. **08.2321**

Health, Safety and Security

It is the intent of the Board to provide a safe and healthful working environment for all employees. Employees should report any security hazard or conditions they believe to be unsafe to their immediate supervisor.

In addition, employees are required to notify their supervisor immediately after sustaining a work-related injury or accident. A report should be made within 24-48 hours of the occurrence and prior to leaving the work premises, UNLESS the injury is a medical emergency, in which case the report can be filed following receipt of emergency medical care.

The District shall follow established timelines in policy when making oral reports to the Kentucky Labor Cabinet to report employee fatalities, amputations, hospitalizations, (including hospitalization resulting from a heart attack), or the loss of an eye.

File a Report	After Hours Hotline
(502)-564-3070	(800) 321-6742

For information on the District's plans for Hazard Communication, Bloodborne Pathogen Control, Lockout/Tagout, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), and Asbestos Management, contact your immediate supervisor or see the District's *Policy Manual* and related procedures.

In order to eliminate or minimize occupational exposure to bloodborne pathogens, employees must comply with the District's Bloodborne Pathogen Control Plan. When bodily fluid spills occur, employees shall follow procedures posted in each school building or worksite. Disposable gloves and plastic bags are available in elementary classrooms and, in each school, the Principal's office, food service office, or the custodian's storage area.

For additional information on the District's Hazard Communication Plan and Bloodborne Pathogen Control Plan, contact your immediate supervisor or see the District's *Policy Manual* and related procedures.

Employees should use their school/worksite two-way communication system to notify the Principal, supervisor or other administrator of an emergency. **03.14/05.4**

Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs)

The District shall maintain AEDs in designated locations throughout the District. An AED shall be used in emergency situations warranting its use in accordance with procedures established by the Superintendent/designee. Expected users documented as having completed required training shall be authorized to use a defibrillator. **05.4**

Acceptable Use of Technology

The Board supports reasonable access to various information formats for students, employees and the community and believes it is incumbent upon users to utilize this privilege in an appropriate and responsible manner as required by policy and related procedures, which apply to all parties who use District technology. Employees are required to follow Board policy and administrative procedures and guidelines designed to provide guidance for access to electronic media and authorized communication systems.

If you have questions about what constitutes acceptable use, please check with the Principal/designee. **08.2323/08.2324**

Responsible Use of Technology

The Board supports reasonable access to various information formats for students, employees and the community and believes it is incumbent upon users to utilize this privilege in an appropriate and responsible manner as required by Board policy and related procedures, which apply to all parties who use District technology.

Certified employees are required to follow Board policy and administrative procedures and guidelines designed to provide guidance for access to electronic media. In addition, all staff members are required to sign a written request/agreement prior to being granted independent access to electronic media involving District technological resources.

Individuals who refuse to sign required responsible use documents or who violate District rules governing the use of District technology shall be subject to loss or restriction of the privilege of using equipment, software, information access systems or other computing and telecommunications technologies.

Except in cases involving students who are at least eighteen (18) years of age and have no legal guardian, parents/guardians may request that the school/District:

- Provide access so that the parent may examine the contents of their child(ren)'s email files;
- Terminate their child(ren)'s individual email account and/or Internet access; and
- Provide alternative activities for their child(ren) that do not require Internet access.

Parents/guardians wishing to challenge information accessed via the District's technology resources should refer to Policy 08.2322/Review of Instructional Materials and any related procedures.

The Superintendent/designee has the right to access information stored in any user directory, on the current user screen, or in electronic mail. S/he may review files and communications to maintain system integrity and insure that individuals are using the system responsibly. Users should not expect files stored on District servers or through District provided or sponsored technology services, to be private.

The Board recognizes that as telecommunications and other new technologies shift the ways that information may be accessed, communicated, and transferred by members of the society, those changes may also alter instruction and student learning. The Board generally supports access by students to rich information resources along with the development by staff of appropriate skills to analyze and evaluate such resources. In a free and democratic society, access to information is a fundamental right of citizenship.

Telecommunications, electronic information sources and networked services significantly alter the information landscape for schools by opening classrooms to a broader array of resources. In the past, instructional and library media materials could usually be screened—prior to use—by committees of educators and community members intent on subjecting all such materials to reasonable selection criteria.

Board policy requires that all such materials be consistent with District-adopted guides, supporting and enriching the curriculum while taking into account the varied instructional needs, learning styles, abilities and developmental levels of the students. Telecommunications, because they may lead to any publicly available fileservers in the world, will open classrooms to electronic information resources, which have not been screened by educators for use by students of various ages.

Electronic information research skills are now fundamental to preparation of citizens and future employees during an Age of Information. The Board expects that staff will blend thoughtful use of such information throughout the curriculum and that the staff will provide guidance and instruction to students in the appropriate use of such resources. Staff will consult the guidelines for instructional materials contained in Board policy and will honor the goals for selection of instructional materials contained therein.

Students and staff are responsible for good behavior on school computer networks just as they are in a classroom or a school hallway. Communications on the network are often public in nature. General school rules for behavior and communications apply. The network is provided for students and staff to conduct research and communicate with others. Access to network services will be provided to students and staff who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner.

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Student and staff use of telecommunications and electronic information resources will be permitted upon submission of permission and/or agreement forms by staff, parents of minor students (under 18 years of age) and by students themselves. Regional networks require agreement by users to responsible use policies outlining standards for behavior and communication.

Access to telecommunications will enable students to explore thousands of libraries, databases, and bulletin boards while exchanging messages with people throughout the world. The Board believes that the benefits to students from access in the form of information resources and opportunities for collaboration exceed the disadvantages. But ultimately, parents and guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using media and information sources. To that end, the Fort Thomas Independent Schools support and respect each family's right to decide whether or not to apply for access to information resources.

The Board authorizes the Superintendent to prepare appropriate procedures for implementing this policy and for reviewing and evaluating its effect on instruction and student achievement.

THE NETWORK:

The Fort Thomas Independent School District provides students and staff with a service called the Network. The Network is a computer service, which includes the use of computers, servers, software, Internet and e-mail. These procedures also address the use of stand-alone computers, peripherals, telephone usage and other instructional technology equipment.

In addition to providing students and staff with the understanding and skills needed to use technology resources and telephone services in an appropriate manner, the Fort Thomas Independent School District:

- Reserves the right to monitor all activity on the Network, Internet and e-mail.
- Reserves the right to monitor computer use or lack of use.
- Reserves the right to deny access to the Network, Internet and e-mail to any individual.
- Shall establish procedures that will maximize the Network system security.
- Shall supervise student and staff use of the Network, Internet, e-mail, and telephones.

The standards for student and staff access to the Fort Thomas Independent School District Network are:

- Network access throughout the District is to be used for instruction, research, school administration and reasonable, non-work related communications. District access is not to be used for private business.
- Instructional staff will select and guide students on the appropriate use of Internet and instructional software on the Network.
- The District will be responsible for supervising network use. Auditing procedures are in place to monitor access to the network. However, the District cannot continually monitor every communication and network session for every student and staff member beyond the scope of supervision defined in the user agreement.
- Internet access and supervision from outside the District premises is the responsibility of the parents and guardians of students.
- Student users should not reveal their full name and personal information (address, phone number, financial information, social security number, etc.) or establish relationships with “strangers” on the network, unless instructional staff has coordinated the communication.

- Staff will not reveal a student's full name or post a picture of the student or the student's work on the Network with personally identifiable information unless the parent has given written consent.
- The content of any District web page is the responsibility of the sponsoring staff member who hosts the page.
- School-related clubs and organizations that wish to establish a web site must be a part of the school's web account.

TELEPHONE USAGE:

- Telephone service is available primarily to provide two-way communications with school offices and for contact with parents.
- Staff will refrain from using telephones during instructional time.
- Students may use the telephones under staff supervision when there is a legitimate need such as calling parents to arrange transportation, delivery of medicine or clothes, or similar rare circumstances.
- Instruction time will not be interrupted to transfer calls except in emergencies.

All guidelines governing inappropriate language apply to telephone usage and procedures governing telephone usage also apply to District cellular phones and other wireless telecommunication systems.

COMPUTER USE GUIDELINES:

When a student, teacher, or staff member at a Fort Thomas school accesses computers, computer systems, and computer networks owned or operated by the Fort Thomas Independent Schools, he or she assumes certain responsibilities and obligations. All access of this type is subject to school policies and to local, state, and federal laws. The school administration expects that student, faculty, and staff use of computers provided by the school will be ethical and will reflect academic honesty. Students, faculty and staff must demonstrate respect for intellectual property, ownership of data, system security mechanisms, and rights to privacy.

As a computer operator, you are expected to make appropriate use of computer resources provided by the Fort Thomas Independent Schools. You must:

- use computer resources only for authorized purposes following established procedures;
- be responsible for all activities on your assigned computer;

- access only files and data that are your own, which are publicly available, or to which you have been given authorized access;
- use only legal versions of copyrighted software;
- be considerate in your use of shared resources;
- abide by the Responsible Internet use policy.

Computer operators must not make inappropriate use of computer resources provided by the Fort Thomas Independent Schools. The following are nonexhaustive actions that are considered inappropriate:

- violating State and Federal legal requirements addressing student and employee rights to privacy, including unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal information;
- using another person's login name or password, "hacking" or gaining unauthorized access to computers or computer systems, or attempting to gain such unauthorized access;
- installing or using any unauthorized software or hardware on any District computer system or Network;
- using another person's files, system, or data without permission;
- using computer programs to decode passwords or to access control information;
- attempting to circumvent or subvert system security measures;
- engaging in any activity that might be harmful to systems or to any information stored thereon, such as creating viruses, damaging files, damaging systems, networks, school/District websites, or disrupting service;
- making or using illegal copies or copyrighted software, storing such copies on school systems, or sending them over networks;
- using mail service to harass or intimidate others;
- wasting computing resources, such as paper, by printing excessive copies or downloading of freeware or shareware programs;
- engaging in any activity that does not comply with the general principles listed at the beginning of this document;
- playing games across the network;

- violating the regulations of the Fort Thomas Independent Schools regarding appropriate use of the Internet.

The Fort Thomas Independent Schools considers any violation of appropriate use principles or guidelines to be a serious offense and reserves the right to copy and examine any files or information that may suggest that a person is using school computer systems inappropriately.

Violators are subject to disciplinary action by school officials that may include loss of computer privileges and in- or out- of school suspension. Offenders may also be prosecuted under laws including, but not limited to, the Privacy Protection Act of 1974, the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act of 1986, the Computer Virus Eradication Act of 1989, and the Electronic Communications Privacy Act.

INTERNET ACCESS:

The Fort Thomas Independent Schools provide access to the Internet for all students, faculty, and staff that is obtained through Kentucky's Public Education Network. Students must have permission from at least one of their parents or guardians to access the Internet at school.

The use of an Internet account is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in disciplinary action by school officials and/or cancellation of those privileges. A person's activities while using the Internet in any school must be in support of education and research, and consistent with the educational objectives of the Fort Thomas Independent Schools. In addition, anyone accessing the Internet from a school site is responsible for all on-line activities that take place through the use of his or her account. When using another organization's networks or computing resources, students must comply with the rules appropriate for that network.

The following is a nonexhaustive list of activities that constitute unacceptable use of the Internet, whether that use is initiated from school or any other site:

- using impolite, abusive, or otherwise objectionable language in either public or private messages, including profanity or obscenity;
- placing unlawful information on the Internet;
- using the Internet illegally in ways that violate federal, state, or local laws or statutes;
- using the Internet at school for non-school related activities;
- sending messages that are likely to result in the loss of the recipient's work or systems;

- sending chain letters or pyramid schemes to lists or individuals, and any other types of use that would cause congestion of the Internet or otherwise interfere with the work of others;
- using the Internet for commercial purposes, financial gain or any illegal activity;
- using the Internet for political lobbying;
- changing any computer file that does not belong to the user;
- sending or receiving copyrighted materials without permission;
- knowingly giving one's password to others;
- using Internet access for sending or retrieving pornographic material, inappropriate text files, or files dangerous to the integrity of the network;
- circumventing security measures on school or remote computers or networks;
- attempting to gain access to another's resources, programs, or data;
- vandalizing, which is any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data or another user on the Internet, and includes the uploading or creation of computer viruses;
- falsifying one's identity to others while using the Internet;
- changing any computer files that do not belong to the user;
- using technology resources to bully, threaten or attack a staff member or student or to access and/or set up unauthorized blogs and online journals, including, but not limited to MySpace.com, Facebook.com or Xanga.com.

STUDENT E-MAIL:

Fort Thomas Independent Schools is committed to providing educational opportunities to students that help extend its physical boundaries. In addition, the District is equipped to provide individual e-mail accounts for students. Therefore, students in grades 4-12 have the opportunity to receive a student e-mail account.

An e-mail account is offered to students in grades 4-12 who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner and who agree to use the e-mail account for educational purposes. Students may not use e-mail accounts for personal use.

System administrators will monitor all outgoing and incoming e-mail traffic and deem what is inappropriate and appropriate use. The administration and staff may revoke or suspend student e-mail accounts when RUP terms are violated.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION FOR INAPPROPRIATE USE:

- Student discipline for violation of any part of these procedures shall be based on the severity of the infraction.
- Student disciplinary action includes, but is not limited to, the loss of any or all computer privileges, termination of the user's account, removal from the class with a failing grade and/or suspension or expulsion. Privileges will be reinstated at the discretion of the District administrators.
- Discipline of staff may involve actions up to and including termination of employment.
- Parents, guardians and/or perpetrators may be billed for damages to technology resources.

Illegal/criminal activities will be referred to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

All students and staff are required to sign the Responsible Use Agreement Form. By signing the user agreement and/or parent permission form, the student or staff member has agreed to abide by Board policy governing access to technology resources. **08.2323 AP.21**

NOTE: Staff should refer to Policy **08.2323** and Procedure **08.2323 AP.21** for guidance concerning use of District social networking technology tools for instructional, administrative and communication purposes.

Traceable Communications

The Board shall designate a traceable communication system to be the exclusive means for District employees and qualified school volunteers to communicate electronically with students enrolled in the District. Employees and volunteers that violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action.

A District employee or qualified school volunteer, unless authorized, shall not engage in unauthorized electronic communication as defined in KRS 160.145. A District employee that violates this policy may be subject to disciplinary actions in accordance with, for certified employees, KRS 161.120 and 161.790, and for classified employees KRS 161.011. A qualified school volunteer that violates this policy may be prohibited by the District from future school volunteer opportunities. communicate electronically with a student.

- Outside of the traceable communication system designated by the Board; or
- Through an unauthorized electronic communication program or application.

This shall not restrict any electronic communications between a student and his or her family member who is a District employee or volunteer. **08.2324**

Assaults and Threats of Violence

Employees should immediately report any threats they receive (oral, written or electronic) to their immediate supervisor. A “threat” shall refer to a communication made by any means, including, but not limited to, electronic and/or online methods.

Under provisions of state law (KRS 158.150) and regulation (702 KAR 5:080), school personnel may remove threatening or violent students from a classroom or from the District’s transportation system pending further disciplinary action. However, before the need arises, employees should familiarize themselves with policy and procedures that are required.

Per KRS 158.155, any school employee who knows or has reasonable cause to believe that a person has made threats or plans of violence which are intended to target a school or students or who knows that a firearm is present on school property in violation of KRS 527.070, shall immediately cause a report to be made to the District’s law enforcement agency and either to the local law enforcement agency or to the Kentucky State Police.

Any school employee shall immediately report to the District’s law enforcement agency and to either the local law enforcement agency or to the Kentucky State Police any act which the employee has a reasonable cause to believe has occurred on school property or at a school-sponsored or sanctioned event involving:

a. Intentional physical injury, or intentional attempt to cause physical injury, as defined in KRS 500.080, to any school employee;

b. Intentional Assault resulting in serious physical injury as defined in KRS 500.080;

*c. A sexual offense;

a.d. Kidnapping;

b.e. Assault with the use of a weapon;

e.f. Possession of a firearm or deadly weapon in violation of the law;

e.g. The use, possession, or sale of a controlled substance in violation of the law; or

e.h. Intentional or wanton Damage to property causing a pecuniary loss of five hundred dollars (\$500) or more.

Any school employee who receives information from a student or other person of conduct which is required to be reported, shall report the conduct to the District’s law enforcement agency and to either the local law enforcement agency or to the Kentucky State Police unless the school employee has cause to believe a student’s disability interfered with his or her ability to conform to the Student Code of Conduct. 09.425

Search and Seizure

All searches of students must be conducted in compliance with Board Policy 09.436.

Administrative searches of school property jointly held by the school and the student, such as lockers, desks, and network systems, technology resources and accounts owned or supplied by the District, are permissible and shall be conducted at the direction of the Principal for the purpose of enforcing school policies and rules ensuring health, safety or educational order.

Unless otherwise permitted by policy 09.436, only those certified personnel directly responsible for the conduct of the pupil or the Principal of the school the student attends are authorized to search the student's person or his or her personal effects. Before a student's outer clothing, pockets, or personal effects (e.g., handbags, backpacks, etc.) are searched, there must be reasonable grounds to believe the search will reveal evidence that the student has violated or is violating either a school rule or the law or possesses an item harmful to the school and its students. Search of a pupil's person shall be conducted only with the express authority of the Principal.

Unless otherwise permitted by policy 09.436, no search of a pupil shall be conducted in the presence of other students. No strip searches of students shall be permitted. **09.436**

Child Abuse

Any school personnel who knows or has reasonable cause to believe that a child under eighteen (18) is dependent, abused or neglected, a victim of human trafficking, molested, or is a victim of female genital mutilation, in or out of school, shall **immediately** make an oral or written report, including but not limited to electronic submission, to a local law enforcement agency, the Kentucky State Police, the Cabinet for Health and Family Services or its designated representative, the Commonwealth's or County Attorney, and to the Principal (who shall also make a report to the proper authorities) and Superintendent.

After making that report, the employee shall then immediately notify the Principal of the suspected abuse. If the Principal is suspected of child abuse, the employee shall notify the Superintendent/designee.

Upon notification, the Principal or the Superintendent/designee shall facilitate the cooperation of the school with the investigation of the report. Any person who knowingly causes intimidation, retaliation, or obstruction in the investigation of the report shall be guilty of a Class A misdemeanor. **09.227**

Reporting telephone numbers:

Social Services	292-6550 292-6733
Fort Thomas Police	441-6562
State Police	428-1212
County Attorney	581-8015

Corporal Punishment

Employees shall not utilize corporal punishment as a penalty or punishment for student misbehavior. Corporal punishment shall refer to the deliberate infliction of physical pain on a student by any means. **09.433**

Use of Physical Restraint and Seclusion

Use of physical restraint and seclusion shall be in accordance with Board policy and procedure. **09.2212**

Civility

Employees should be polite and helpful while interacting with parents, visitors and members of the public. Individuals who come onto District property or contact employees on school business are expected to behave accordingly. Employees who fail to observe appropriate standards of behavior are subject to disciplinary measures, including dismissal.

In cases involving physical attack of an employee or immediate threat of harm, employees should take immediate action to protect themselves and others. In the absence of an immediate threat, employees should attempt to calmly and politely inform the individual of the provisions of Policy **10.21** or provide him/her with a copy. If the individual continues to be discourteous, the employee may respond as needed, including, but not limited to: hanging up on the caller; ending a meeting; asking the individual to leave the school; calling the site administrator/ designee for assistance; and/or calling the police.

As soon as possible after any such incident, employees should submit a written incident report to their immediate supervisor.

Complaints/Communications

The Superintendent/designee has developed specific procedures to assist employees in filing a complaint. For full information refer to Policy **03.16** and related procedures.

Complaints are individual in nature and must be brought by the individual employee. The Board shall not hear complaints concerning simple disagreement or dissatisfaction with a personnel action.

Gifts

No employee shall accept, for personal use, any gifts from current or potential suppliers or vendors. Personnel are also prohibited from accepting rebates in the form of gifts or gratuities from organizations or persons to whom they have referred or may refer parents and students. Exceptions may be made for those businesses that offer discounts to various employee groups.

Donations of technology to the District must comply with provisions of policy. **03.1322**

Solicitations

District employees shall not use the advantage of their position for personal gain through soliciting school patrons, pupils or fellow employees.

No school employee shall provide to any outside group or individual a list of parents, students, teachers or other employees for solicitation or other purposes without the prior approval of the Board or the Superintendent. **03.1323**

Advertising in the Schools

No advertising shall be allowed in the facilities or on the grounds of school property, except as expressly approved by the Board. However, this requirement does not prevent advertising in publications which are published by student organizations, PTA/PTO, booster club, or other parent groups.

Principals shall determine whether nonschool-related advertising materials are to be sent home with students, using the following standards:

1. Activities advertised for non-profit, civic, and charitable organizations must primarily support student or general community interests, rather than a special or “for profit” interest of a sponsoring nonschool group. For example:
 - a. Materials from not-for-profit groups that are not school-related, but are providing athletic and/or recreational opportunities for students shall be considered.
 - b. Materials from not-for-profit organizations that are not school-related, but are dedicated to providing services to children shall be considered.
2. Students shall not be used to carry home materials that are strictly commercial in nature.

Materials sent home with students shall not advertise or promote a particular political party or the candidacy of an individual for public office.

Salesmen, representatives, or agents shall not solicit or contact pupils, teachers, or other employees in the school during the school day without notice to and express prior approval of the Principal. **10.4**

Outside Employment or Activities

Employees may not perform any duties related to an outside job during their regular working hours. **03.1331**

Required Reports

Although you may be directed to make additional reports, the following reports are required by law and/or Board policy:

- Within seventy-two (72) hours of the discovery or notification of a security breach, the District shall notify the Commissioner of the Kentucky State Police, the Auditor of Public Accounts, the Attorney General, and the Education Commissioner. **01.61**
- An employee shall report to the Superintendent if the employee has been found by the Cabinet for Health and Family Services to have abused or neglected a child, and if the employee has waived the right to appeal such a substantiated finding or the finding has been upheld upon appeal. **03.11**

- If requested by a school district, public school, or nonpublic school regarding an applicant for a position, the district that employs or previously employed the applicant shall disclose any disciplinary action, and any resulting resignation or termination, related to abusive conduct while the applicant was employed by the district in accordance with KRS 160.380. This also applies to a school district, public school, or nonpublic school located in a member state of the Interstate Teacher Mobility Compact.

The District considering the applicant for employment shall, if the application is for a certified position, request information from the Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB) related to pending and resolved disciplinary action against the applicant involving abusive conduct. The EPSB shall provide the requested information, if applicable, within ten (10) working days.

If there is a finding of abusive conduct regarding an applicant, the applicant shall be:

1. Ineligible for hire by the District; and

1. Subject to dismissal or termination if the applicant is hired by the District or is a current employee of the District. **03.11**

- Report to the immediate supervisor damaged, lost, stolen, or vandalized school property if District property has been used for unauthorized purposes. **03.1321**
- Any school employee who knows or has reasonable cause to believe that a person has violated KRS 158.155 shall immediately report any use, possession, or sale of a controlled substance, or who receives information from a student or other person of conduct which is required to be reported, shall immediately cause a report to be made to the District's law enforcement agency and the local law enforcement agency or the Kentucky State Police **03.13251/09.423**

- Upon the request of a victim, school personnel shall report an act of domestic violence and abuse or dating violence and abuse to a law enforcement officer. School personnel shall discuss the report with the victim prior to contacting a law enforcement officer.

School personnel shall report to a law enforcement officer when s/he has a belief that the death of a victim with whom s/he has had a professional interaction is related to domestic violence and abuse or dating violence and abuse.

03.13253/09.425

- Report potential safety or security hazards to the Principal and notify your supervisor immediately after sustaining a work-related injury or accident. **03.14/05.4**
- Report to the Principal/immediate supervisor or the District's Title IX Coordinator if you, another employee, a student, or a visitor to the school or District is being or has been subjected to harassment or discrimination. **03.162/09.42811**
- Employees who believe or have been made aware that they or any other employee, student, or visitor has been subject to Title IX Sexual Harassment shall report it to the TIXC. Failure to make such a report shall be grounds for discipline up to and including termination. If the knowledge of the reporting party gives rise to reasonable cause to believe that the reported conduct constitutes child abuse Policy 09.227 or a reportable criminal offense Policy 09.221, notification of state officials shall be made as required by law. **03.1621/09.428111**
- If you suspect that financial fraud, impropriety or irregularity has occurred, immediately report those suspicions to Principal or the Superintendent. If the Superintendent is the alleged party, employees should address the complaint to the Board chairperson. **04.41**
- Report to the Principal any student who is missing during or after a fire/tornado/bomb threat drill or evacuation. **05.41 AP.1/05.42 AP.1/05.43 AP.1**
- When notified of a bomb threat, scan the area noting any items that appear to be out of place, and report same to Principal/designee. **05.43 AP.1**
- If you know or believe that the District's weapon policy has been violated, promptly make a report to the local police department, sheriff, or Kentucky State Police. This is required when you know or have reasonable cause to believe that conduct has occurred which constitutes the carrying, possession, or use of a deadly weapon on the school premises or within one thousand (1,000) feet of school premises, on a school bus, or at a school sponsored or sanctioned event. **05.48**
- District bus drivers taking medication either by prescription or without prescription shall report to their immediate supervisor and shall not drive if that medication may affect the driver's ability to safely drive a school bus or perform other driver responsibilities. **06.221**

- A District employee or qualified school volunteer that participated in unauthorized electronic communication subject to KRS 160.145 or reasonably believes receives a report alleging that another District employee or qualified school volunteer participated in unauthorized electronic communication that is subject to KRS 160.145 that has not been previously reported shall immediately notify the Principal or applicable supervisor. If the subject of the report is the Principal, or a District-wide employee, the reporting employee or volunteer shall immediately notify the Superintendent. If the subject of the report is the Superintendent, the employee or volunteer shall immediately notify the Commissioner of Education and the Chair of the Board of Education. **08.2324**
- Per KRS 158.155, any school employee who knows or has reasonable cause to believe that a person has made threats or plans of violence which are intended to target a school or students or who knows that a firearm is present on school property in violation of KRS 527.070, shall immediately cause a report to be made to the District's law enforcement agency and either to the local law enforcement agency or to the Kentucky State Police.

Any school employee shall immediately report to the District's law enforcement agency and to either the local law enforcement agency or to the Kentucky State Police any act that has occurred on school property or at a school-sponsored function involving intentional physical injury, or intentional attempt to cause physical injury, as defined in KRS 500.080, to any school employee; intentional assault resulting in serious physical injury as defined in KRS 500.800, a sexual offense, kidnapping, assault with the use of a weapon, possession of a firearm or deadly weapon in violation of the law, the use, possession, or sale of a controlled substance in violation of the law, or intentional or wanton damage to property causing a pecuniary loss of five hundred dollars (\$500) or more. **09.2211/09.425**

- District employees who know or have reasonable cause to believe that a student has been the victim of a violation of any felony offense specified in KRS Chapter 508 (assault and related offenses) committed by another student while on school premises, on school-sponsored transportation, or at a school-sponsored event shall immediately cause an oral or written report to be made to the Principal of the school attended by the victim unless the school employee has cause to believe a student's disability interfered with his or her ability to conform to the Student Code of Conduct.
- The Principal shall notify the parents, legal guardians, or other persons exercising custodial control or supervision of the student when the student is involved in such an incident.
- Within forty-eight (48) hours of the original report of the incident, the Principal also shall file with the Board and the local law enforcement agency or the Department of Kentucky State Police or the County Attorney a written report containing the statutorily required information. **09.2211**

- When an allegation of abusive conduct, as defined in KRS 160.380, is made against a District employee to another District employee, the District employee in receipt of the allegation, whether communicated in writing, electronically, or orally, shall report the allegation to the Principal and in accordance with KRS 620.030. The Principal shall document the allegation in writing and notify the Superintendent/designee. An investigation of the allegation shall be conducted by the District until it is completed and shall not end prior to completion due to the employee transferring positions within the District or leaving the District, unless directed by the Cabinet for Health and Family Services or law enforcement officials to cease the investigation.
09.2211/09.227

- If you have been authorized to use such measures, notify the Principal as soon as possible when you use seclusion or physical restraint with a student, but no later than the end of the school day on which it occurs, and document in writing the incident by the end of the next school day. **09.2212**
- If you know or have reasonable cause to believe that a child under eighteen (18) is dependent, abused or neglected, or a victim of human trafficking, or is a victim of female genital mutilation, **you shall immediately** make an oral or written report, including but not limited to electronic submission to a local law enforcement agency or the Kentucky State Police, the Cabinet for Health and Family Services or its designated representative, the Commonwealth's or County Attorney and then make a report to the Principal. (See **Child Abuse** section.) **09.227**
- District employees shall report to the Principal or to their immediate supervisor those situations that threaten, harass, or endanger the safety of students, other staff members, or visitors to the school or District.

Such instances shall include, but are not limited to, bullying or hazing of students and harassment/discrimination of staff, students or visitors by any party. In serious instances of peer-to-peer bullying/hazing/harassment, employees must report to the alleged victim's Principal, as directed by Board Policy **09.42811**.

In certain cases, employees must do the following:

1. Report bullying and hazing to appropriate law enforcement authorities as required by policy **09.2211**; and
 2. Investigate and complete documentation as required by policy **09.42811** covering federally protected areas. **09.422**
- Report to the Principal any threats you receive (oral, written or electronic). **09.425**

Code of Ethics for Teachers

16 KAR 1:020:

Section 1. Certified personnel in the Commonwealth:

- (1) Shall strive toward excellence, recognize the importance of the pursuit of truth, nurture democratic citizenship, and safeguard the freedom to learn and to teach;
- (2) Shall believe in the worth and dignity of each human being and in educational opportunities for all;
- (3) Shall strive to uphold the responsibilities of the education profession, including the following obligations to students, to parents, and to the education profession:

(a) To students:

1. Shall provide students with professional education services in a nondiscriminatory manner and in consonance with accepted best practice known to the educator;
2. Shall respect the constitutional rights of all students;
3. Shall take reasonable measures to protect the health, safety, and emotional well-being of students;
4. Shall not use professional relationships or authority with students for personal advantage;
5. Shall keep in confidence information about students which has been obtained in the course of professional service, unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law;
6. Shall not knowingly make false or malicious statements about students or colleagues;
7. Shall refrain from subjecting students to embarrassment or disparagement; and
8. Shall not engage in any sexually related behavior with a student with or without consent, but shall maintain a professional approach with students.

Sexually related behavior shall include such behaviors as sexual jokes; sexual remarks; sexual kidding or teasing; sexual innuendo; pressure for dates or sexual favors; inappropriate physical touching, kissing, or grabbing; rape; threats of physical harm; and sexual assault.

(b) To parents:

1. Shall make reasonable effort to communicate to parents information which should be revealed in the interest of the student;

2. Shall endeavor to understand community cultures and diverse home environments of students;
3. Shall not knowingly distort or misrepresent facts concerning educational issues;
4. Shall distinguish between personal views and the views of the employing educational agency;
5. Shall not interfere in the exercise of political and citizenship rights and responsibilities of others;
6. Shall not use institutional privileges for private gain, for the promotion of political candidates, or for partisan political activities; and
7. Shall not accept gratuities, gifts, or favors that might impair or appear to impair professional judgement, and shall not offer any of these to obtain special advantage.

(c) To the education profession;

1. Shall exemplify behaviors which maintain the dignity and integrity of the profession;
2. Shall accord just and equitable treatment to all members of the profession in the exercise of their professional rights and responsibilities;
3. Shall keep in confidence information acquired about colleagues in the course of employment, unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law;
4. Shall not use coercive means or give special treatment in order to influence professional decisions;
5. Shall apply for, accept, offer, or assign a position or responsibility only on the basis of professional preparation and legal qualifications; and
6. Shall not knowingly falsify or misrepresent records of facts relating to the educator's own qualifications or those of other professionals.

Section 2. Violation of this administrative regulation may result in cause to initiate proceedings for revocation or suspension of Kentucky certification as provided in KRS 161.120 and 704 KAR 20:585.

Dress and Appearance Memo from Superintendent

August, 2005

Fort Thomas Independent School District Employees:

An individual recently shared a memo to employees of a major local company which addresses the issue of appropriate dress. The memo handles that sensitive and important issue in a positive way. Appropriate dress has been a topic of discussion within the district for the last several years. Since we like the message given to those employees, we decided to share that message and the related Q & A with you, after making appropriate modifications to fit the school environment. That message is presented below.

This communication provides guidelines for appropriate attire for classrooms and school related travel. The Fort Thomas Independent Schools expectation is that we show respect for others, and reflect a professional image. This means dressing in a way that does not offend others or cause undue distraction.

We are addressing this topic in a principle-based manner, trusting employees to do the right thing as it relates to their attire and the business they conduct each day. The responsibility for appropriate attire lies with each of us; it is important to realize the impact it can have on our interaction with our students, parents, and peers.

Attached are Questions & Answers to provide additional information. I encourage you to discuss this with your principal or supervisor for clarification.

The Fort Thomas Independent School District values and embraces differences, and we want to maintain a work environment that enables people to achieve high expectations, standards and goals. Let's use this opportunity to bring our principles to life.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Q. What does "appropriate" mean?

A. We have chosen "business appropriate" as the preferred way of describing the dress standard. This acknowledges that the work you do should guide your choice of dress rather than having a formal dress code. Some individuals have incorrectly interpreted business appropriate as casual dress. (For example, wearing weekend attire to work.)

Q. How do I know what is appropriate dress if there are no specific guidelines?

A. We have not created an all-inclusive list of appropriate attire. Instead, we rely on employees to use common sense to wear what is appropriate for the type of work that they do. While jeans, tee shirts, shorts, mini-skirts, clothes that expose mid-sections, sweat suits, spandex (or other tight fitting clothing), flip flops, and tennis shoes are certainly responsible weekend casual wear, they do not convey a professional image and would not be appropriate to wear in most school situations.

Q. Who decides whether my dress is appropriate? How is it reinforced?

A. We expect employees to dress in a way that reflects a professional image, shows respect for others and is appropriate for the business they will do that day. So, as long as those principles are met, each individual will decide what appropriately meets those criteria. Most Fort Thomas Independent School District employees have a good sense of what is and is not appropriate for the work they do.

In rare situations when the principles are not adhered to or are in question, each employee's principal or supervisor is expected to address the inappropriate attire, just as he/she would any other type of inappropriate conduct. Since dress always involves a subjective element, principals and supervisors should use common sense in handling dress standard issues and talk things out in a professional, constructive way.

Q. Will it be seen as a performance issue if I wear clothes that are too casual (something I thought was appropriate, but my principal or supervisor does not)?

A. Use your best judgment on what to wear to convey a professional image. If there is an issue, your principal or supervisor should deal with it quickly, honestly and openly to help clarify what appropriate attire might look like for the work you do. This should not be seen as a long-term performance issue unless it happens repeatedly despite getting advice and counsel.

Q. Are there exceptions to the guidelines? Is casual attire ever appropriate?

A. There are a few exceptions, such as certain field trips. The appropriate attire for some teachers, such as P.E. teachers, will be more casual due to the nature of their jobs. Teachers of our very young may feel appropriate wearing casual slacks when they plan to be sitting on the floor with their student.