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Volusia County School District
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This handbook is produced and distributed by Human Resources, and can also be found on the employee only website, ePortal, under the Human Resources tab, HR Links.
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INTRODUCTION

Volusia County Schools believes in its vision statement, “Through the individual commitment of all, our students will graduate with the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to be successful contributors to our democratic society,” which was approved on April 14, 1992. The information in this handbook is presented to instructional, non-instructional support staff, professional and technical support staff, school-based administrators, and district administrators. These individuals are part of a team committed to helping each child achieve success. By accepting employment and becoming a team member, you have accepted the challenge of providing the best learning and educational environments for the students of Volusia County.

As members of “Team Volusia,” this handbook will serve as your reference guide. Please read it thoroughly and retain it for future reference. Any policies stated in this handbook are subject to change. Updated information concerning changes in policy will be provided to each work site and are available on the district’s website. Should you have questions regarding any policies, please consult with your supervisor.

This is not a contract guaranteeing employment or any specific term or condition of employment for any specific duration. However, it is our hope that your employment relationship with Volusia County Schools will be long-term. For your convenience, this handbook can be found on the district’s website. We wish you success in your new position and thank you for your assistance in helping students to achieve success.

Congratulations and welcome to the School District of Volusia County!
HISTORY OF VOLUSIA COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Volusia County’s history is full of names of men and women who pioneered public education. Between the years of 1854 and 1858, James H. Chandler and L. M. Richardson, Volusia County judges, both served as ex-officio superintendents for Volusia County Schools. By 1868, legislation was passed to provide the basis of a state school system, and the governor named John Milton Hawks, a local medical doctor, the “Superintendent of Common Schools.”

By 1881 there were nearly 600 students attending school. These schools were located in homes and small one or two room schoolhouses. Schools were often given the name of the small community that supported them, the families who donated the land for building a school, or for the person who donated the use of an existing building. The men and women who accepted positions as teachers for Volusia’s small schools were mostly community men and women or teachers who moved to the county and lived with local families earning a few dollars a month teaching students and maintaining the schoolhouse.

These early pioneers were followed by many other strong men and women with the pioneer spirit. This spirit is the foundation of our schools and it is the efforts of all employees past and present who make our school district successful. Our employees have set us apart from other school districts and keep us on the cutting edge. We know when people seek employment with Volusia County schools they do so because they, too, possess a pioneer spirit and want to make a difference for our students. Team Volusia supports today’s students in becoming tomorrow’s leaders.
COMMUNITY SUPPORT

We are encouraged to take an active voice in our community and in civic organizations and activities. We hope that each of you will do your part to make our school district a desirable place to live and work.

Through our community work, the community in turn supports us. Our schools enjoy the support of parents, businesses and other stakeholders. The following groups serve leading roles in the district’s community involvement efforts:

**FUTURES Foundation for Volusia County Schools** is a direct funding support group comprised of local businesses and civic leaders. FUTURES’ main goal is to raise money to support programs and recognition activities for students, teachers, and staff. FUTURES sponsors grants for innovative teacher projects, providing over $1,300,000 in classroom support, leadership training for high school students, college tuition scholarships, a drop-out prevention program, and staff recognition programs like Teacher of the Year, Principal of the Year, Superintendent’s Outstanding Achievement Award, and a New Teacher Breakfast. Employees can help FUTURES by purchasing the “License for Learning” auto tag, showing they support public education every time they get behind the wheel, or by signing up for FUTURES’ payroll deduction program where a small amount is deducted from each paycheck to help FUTURES fund its many programs. Refer to the FUTURES website at [www.FuturesVolusia.org](http://www.FuturesVolusia.org) for further information.

**District Advisory Committee** serves as a link between the community, the schools, the administration and the school board. The committee is composed of one School Advisory Council member from each school, as well as representatives from other organizations that support Volusia County Schools.
Volunteers in Public Schools (VIPS) serve in many aspects of school operations. They assist in the classroom, school office, and health room and provide one-on-one tutoring and mentoring to at-risk students. They also work with PTA/PTSA/PTO, School Advisory Councils, Extended Day Enrichment Programs, and extracurricular organizations. During the 2013-2014 school year, more than 23,495 volunteers documented over 846,350 hours of service, valued at over $17,976,474 million. (www.independentsector.org)

Youth Motivator Program provides one-on-one volunteers to mentor and promote the value of education. Mentors help students improve their social skills, attitude, attendance and behavior. They encourage students to set goals.

Volusia Partners Program encourages businesses and civic organizations to enhance educational programs by providing classroom speakers, financial contributions, sponsorships of clubs, or job shadowing opportunities.

POLICY MANUAL

Employees, parents, and other citizens have ready access to Volusia County School’s school board policies. The policy manual may be located throughout the county at all work sites and can be accessed on the district’s website. Employees and other citizens have ample opportunity to express their opinions and concerns before the school board acts upon proposed policies.
NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

The School Board of Volusia County does not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, marital status, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or age in its educational programs, services or activities, or in its hiring or employment practices. The district also provides equal access to its facilities to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups, as required by the Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act.

Questions, complaints, or requests for additional information regarding discrimination or harassment may be sent to:

For Employment Concerns:  
Anne Marie Wrenn, Assistant Director  
Human Resources/ Equity  
200 North Clara Avenue  
DeLand, Florida  32721  
(386) 734-7190, ext. 20313

For Student/Section 504 Concerns:  
Lindsey Granger, Assistant Director  
ESE & Student Services  
1290 Herbert Street  
Port Orange, Florida  32129  
(386) 734-7190, ext. 33246

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

The School Board recognizes the professionalism and diligence of the employees of Volusia County School District. Their continued dedication in carrying out their assigned tasks is essential to the education of the students of this school district. All employees are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner when carrying out their assigned responsibilities. Employees shall comply with the Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida, applicable law, School Board policies, and procedures established by the
Superintendent/designee. Any allegation that an employee has not complied with these standards shall be reported to the Superintendent/designee for investigation and review. Discipline or other actions, if found to be warranted, shall be administered in accordance with the law and any applicable collective bargaining agreement.

**CODE OF ETHICS**

**The Principles of Professional Conduct For The Education Profession in Florida State Board of Education Rule 6B-1.006, FAC**

1. The following disciplinary rule shall constitute the *Principles of Professional Conduct of the Education Profession in Florida*.

2. Violation of any of these principles shall subject the individual to revocation or suspension of the individual educator’s certificate, or the other penalties as provided by law.

3. Obligation to the student requires that the individual:
   a. Shall make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to learning and/or to the student’s mental and/or physical health and/or safety.
   b. Shall not unreasonably restrain a student from independent action in pursuit of learning.
   c. Shall not unreasonably deny a student access to diverse points of view.
   d. Shall not intentionally suppress or distort subject matter relevant to a student’s academic program.
   e. Shall not intentionally expose a student to unnecessary embarrassment or disparagement.
   f. Shall not intentionally violate or deny a student’s legal rights.
(g) Shall not harass or discriminate against any student on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, marital status, handicapping condition, sexual orientation, or social and family background and shall make reasonable effort to assure that each student is protected from harassment or discrimination.

(h) Shall not exploit a relationship with a student for personal gain or advantage.

(i) Shall keep in confidence personally identifiable information obtained in the course of professional service, unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law.

4. **Obligation to the public requires that the individual:**

   (a) Shall take reasonable precautions to distinguish between personal views and those of any educational institution or organization with which the individual is affiliated.

   (b) Shall not intentionally distort or misrepresent facts concerning an educational matter in direct or indirect public expression.

   (c) Shall not use institutional privileges for personal gain or advantage.

   (d) Shall accept no gratuity, gift, or favor that might influence professional judgement.

   (e) Shall offer no gratuity, gift, or favor to obtain special advantages.

5. **Obligation to the profession of education requires that the individual:**

   (a) Shall maintain honesty in all professional dealings.

   (b) Shall not on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, marital status, handicapping condition if otherwise qualified, or social and family background deny to a colleague professional benefits
or advantages or participation in any professional organization.
(c) Shall not interfere with a colleague’s exercise of political or civil rights and responsibilities.
(d) Shall not engage in harassment or discriminatory conduct which unreasonably interferes with an individual’s performance of professional or work responsibilities or with the orderly processes of education or which creates a hostile, intimidating, abusive, offensive, or oppressive environment; and further, shall make reasonable effort to assure that each individual is protected from such harassment or discrimination.
(e) Shall not make malicious or intentionally false statements about a colleague.
(f) Shall not use coercive means or promise special treatment to influence professional judgement of colleagues.
(g) Shall not misrepresent one’s own professional qualifications.
(h) Shall not submit fraudulent information on any document in connection with professional activities.
(i) Shall not make any fraudulent statement or fail to disclose a material fact in one’s own or another’s application for a professional position.
(j) Shall not withhold information regarding a position from an applicant or misrepresent an assignment or conditions of employment.
(k) Shall provide upon the request of the certificated individual, a written statement of specific reason for recommendations that lead to the denial of increments, significant changes in employment, or termination of employment.
(l) Shall not assist entry into or continuance in the profession of any person known to be unqualified in accordance with these Principles of Professional Conduct of the Education
Profession in Florida and other applicable Florida Statutes and State Board of Education Rules.

(m) Shall self-report within 48 hours to appropriate authorities (Office of Professional Standards and others as determined by district) any arrests/charges involving the abuse of a child or the sale and/or possession of a controlled substance. Such notice shall not be considered an admission of guilt nor shall such notice be admissible for any purpose in any proceeding, civil or criminal, administrative or judicial, investigatory or adjudicatory. In addition, shall self-report any conviction, finding of guilt, withholding of adjudication, commitment to a pretrial diversion program, or entering of a plea of guilty or Nolo Contendere for any criminal offense other than a minor traffic violation within 48 hours after the final judgment. When handling sealed and expunged records disclosed under this rule, school districts shall comply with the confidentiality provisions of Sections 943.0585(4)(c) and 943.059(4)(c), Florida Statutes.

(n) Shall report to appropriate authorities any known allegation of a violation of the Florida School Code or State Board of Education Rules as defined in Section 1012.795(1), Florida Statutes.

(o) Shall seek no reprisal against any individual who has reported any allegation of a violation of the Florida School Code or State Board of Education Rules as defined in Section 1012.795(1), Florida Statutes.

(p) Shall comply with the conditions of an order of the Education Practices Commission.

(q) Shall, as the supervising administrator, cooperate with the Education Practices Commission in monitoring the probation of a subordinate.
GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Employees who have a grievance with any aspect of contract interpretation have the right to file a grievance under the appropriate collective bargaining agreement applicable to the employee. Grievances based upon alleged violation of federal law, state law or board policy will be handled in accordance with the grievance procedures set out in Policy 508 which can be found on the district website.

DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE

As a condition of employment, the applicant must obtain and pass a substance screening test. The district reserves the right to require random substance screening at any time for employees. Substance screening must be obtained at a medical laboratory designated by the school system. For the purposes of administering this policy, the school district will not accept screening results from any facility other than the one designated. Anyone who refuses to submit to substance screening at the designated medical laboratory will not be authorized for employment.

An employee of the School Board of Volusia County shall not manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess or use alcoholic beverages on school grounds, on school board property, or at school board activities (on or off school board property) at which students are present, or illegal drugs at any time and place.

Under no circumstances will intoxicating beverages or illegal drugs be consumed on school property. Employees having possession of such beverages or drugs will be subject to discharge.
NEPOTISM

Volusia County Schools discourages the employment of immediate family members within the same organizational unit. Immediate family may include husband, wife, children, parents, and any relative or other resident in the same house.

Under special circumstances the superintendent may authorize employment of an immediate family member or close relative when it is deemed to be in the best interest of the school district. Written authorization including a justification statement shall be included in the employee’s official personnel file with approval of the superintendent and notification to the school board.

VACANCIES AND EMPLOYMENT PROCEDURE

Vacancies for positions are routinely advertised on the district website, other authorized websites, Volusia County libraries and is available at all worksites. Vacancies are advertised for two (2) to three (3) workdays for instructional positions and five (5) workdays for support positions, according to the corresponding collective bargaining agreements. The vacancy notices indicate the closing dates of the advertisements, the job locations, and a salary range of the position being advertised.

All applicants must meet the minimum requirements for the position for which they are applying. A site administrator selects applicants for interviewing purposes. When the site administrator makes a decision to recommend a candidate for employment, the person approved for the position must receive clearance from Human Resources, including a review of references, fingerprinting, substance screening, certification and qualifications before final board approval. All perspective employees should be citizens of the United States and/or have appropriate clearance to work in the
United States. Questions regarding qualifications should be referred to Human Resources.

**NEW HIRE ORIENTATION**

After accepting employment, attendance to a new hire orientation session is **required**. The scheduled orientation program is conducted by Human Resources. There will be documents to complete and must be submitted by the new employee during the session. Employees who are eligible for benefits will receive information regarding Insurance & Employee Benefits. Additional information will be shared regarding the Florida Retirement System, payroll, blood borne pathogens (as required), district policies, procedures, and beliefs.

NOTE: For insurance and benefits purposes, a newly hired employee will not be required to attend new hire orientation if he/she has attended within the last 365 days; however, will be required to return if there was a break in service beyond 365 days.

**VETERAN’S PREFERENCE**

Florida Statutes provide for preference in the hiring and retention of authorized veterans. Recent changes in this law give this preference in perpetuity. Current employees, who are qualified veterans, may also claim this preference when applying for district vacancies.

All qualified veterans, disabled veterans and spouses of disabled veterans must furnish a Department of Defense document (DD-214) to Human Resources for verification or military discharge papers or equivalent certification from the Veterans
Administration (VA) listing military status, dates of service and discharge type.

Procedurally, the school board uses a non-numeric selection process to determine the best qualified applicants. Consideration is given in the form of an interview, but veterans must meet the minimum qualifications for the position.

Questions regarding veterans’ preference eligibility should be directed to the applications department of Human Resources.

**PERSONNEL RECORDS**

The Division of Human Resources maintains personnel records for each employee. These records contain documentation regarding all aspects of the employee’s employment, including job application, high school diploma, college transcripts, performance appraisals, disciplinary notices, letters of commendation, beneficiary designation forms, letters of recommendation, notices of personnel action, Notice of Employment Termination (NET), scholastic achievements, emergency information, and other required documents. An employee may review his/her records by scheduling an appointment at least one day in advance with the Division of Human Resources.

It is the responsibility of the employee to provide updates to his/her personnel file in writing regarding name changes, marital status changes, insurance beneficiary changes, scholastic achievements, and emergency contact information.

A copy of the social security card with the correct name must accompany a request for a name change. Documentation of previous experience will be completed after a verification of
employment form is completed and returned by the previous employer(s).

CLASSIFICATION OF EMPLOYMENT

Full-Time Regular Employees

a. For instructional employees, “full time” shall be defined as being scheduled to work more than one-half of the hours in the workday based on the full-time equivalent for the employee’s position.

b. For educational support employees and administrative employees, “full time” shall be defined as being scheduled to work at least one-half of the hours in the workday based on the full-time equivalent for the employee’s position.

PAYROLL

Definitions

Non-exempt employees - are covered under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and must be paid at least the minimum wage for all hours worked and an overtime premium for hours worked over 40 in a work week. The work-week for Volusia County Schools is Monday through Sunday. Covered employees include those in non-teaching and non-administrative positions, most of which are covered under the AFSCME and VESA contracts. The status of exempt or non-exempt is listed on the official job description for the position.

Exempt employees - are those in positions exempt from minimum wage and overtime requirements. These are typically instructional, administrative, or other non-bargaining positions. The status of
exempt or non-exempt is listed on the official job description for the position.

Volunteer - Individuals shall be considered volunteers only when their services are offered freely and without pressure or coercion, direct or implied, from an employer. Non-exempt employees must be paid for all additional time performing duties that are similar to their regular job. They cannot be considered volunteers unless they are performing a service that is unrelated to their regular job duties. Verify eligibility with the Human Resources Department before volunteering for work.

Overtime - Hours worked over 40 in a given work week must either be paid or credited as compensatory time. Sick leave, personal leave, annual leave and paid holidays are considered hours worked for overtime purposes. The rate for overtime is 1-½ times the regular hourly rate of pay. Compensatory time would be earned at 1-½ times the number of overtime hours worked. The requirement that overtime must be paid (or compensatory time credited) after 40 hours may not be waived by agreement between the employer and employees. All overtime worked must be authorized in advance by your supervisor.

Double Time - Non-exempt employees are eligible to receive double time for all hours worked on a board approved paid holiday.

Compensatory Time (comp time) - Compensatory time off instead of cash overtime pay is granted at a rate of not less than 1-½ hours for each overtime hour worked.

Working Hours
The DeLand Administrative Building, Educational Development Center at Atlantic High School, Educational Development Center at Herbert Street Center, and Brewster Center share the same staggered work schedules. Staggered work times provide
personnel to be available by phone, computer, or in person to handle employee concerns.

*Starting Time 7:00 a.m.  *Starting Time 8:00 a.m.
*Ending Time 4:00 p.m.  *Ending Time 5:00 p.m.

*Other positions may require working hours to be staggered before and/or after the hours listed in this handbook. Please check with your supervisor for the required working hours of the position for which you have been hired.

**NOTE:** Although employees may be available by phone or on-line at 7:00 a.m., the buildings are not open for service until 8:00 a.m.

**Timekeeping Requirements**
All employees, exempt and non-exempt must, sign/clock in and out daily and are expected to arrive and depart at the time specified by the district or complete the appropriate leave request form for absences.

Time sheets or time clocks are available at all work centers. It is your responsibility to accurately record your sign-in and sign-out times. Each school or department has a person who is in charge of collecting and reporting employee time to the payroll department.

Check that your hours worked and leave time taken are recorded accurately. Falsification of a time record is subject to disciplinary action.

Signing in and/or out in advance is not permitted.

**Seven Minute Rule** – To simplify time keeping procedures and the calculation of overtime or compensatory time, employees using standard sign-in sheets may sign in or out on the nearest quarter hour using the seven minute rule. The seven minute rule means the
sign in or out time must be within seven minutes (no fractions) of the next quarter to round up. Employees should, however, make every effort to begin and end actual work at the appropriate times. The seven minute rule is not to be abused by employees or supervisors.

Sign-in sheets must be initialed by the employee at the end of his/her work week.

Leave forms must be signed within five (5) working days after your return to work. Scheduled work time that is not recorded on the sign-in sheet and is not covered by a signed approved leave form will be considered unpaid non-work time until hours worked are verified and recorded or an appropriate leave form is completed.

Non-exempt employees should sign out for time away from duties for uninterrupted lunch breaks of 30 minutes or more.

*Overtime*, Double time, or Compensatory -Hours must be approved in advance of actual time worked.

**Non-exempt (hourly) employees cannot volunteer or perform regular duties without compensation.**

Supervisors shall review and approve all time sheets, timecards, and leave requests for each pay period.

**Employee Pay Procedures**

Employees are paid by electronic deposit or paper check on a semi-monthly basis, usually on the fifteenth and on the last work day of each month. Pay dates may vary at the beginning and end of each school year and when the fifteenth falls on a non-work. Check with the payroll clerk at your site or the payroll website to confirm your start date and pay dates. The district offers a pay card for those employees who prefer direct deposit but do not have an
established bank account. Insurance premiums are deducted from 20 checks beginning with the first check in September of each fiscal year (July 1 through June 30). Review your paycheck for accuracy. If a mistake is found, report it to your supervisor immediately or call the payroll department. In the event a paycheck is lost or stolen, notify the payroll department immediately. If you are receiving payment by direct deposit, notify payroll before closing or changing accounts. Deposits to closed accounts may take up to a week to re-issue.

**Conditions for Compensatory Time Used and Accrual**

*Agreement before work* - In order to give compensatory time off instead of pay, there must be an agreement between you and your supervisor before any overtime work is performed. Employees are not permitted to accumulate more than 100 hours of compensatory time.

*Reasonable period of time to take time off* - you must be permitted to use accumulated compensatory time within a reasonable period of time considering the employer’s work schedule, emergency staffing requirements, available substitutes, or any other undo disruption.

*Employees are required to use compensatory time* - compensatory time must be used before using regular leave time for an approved absence, with the exception of mandatory close dates identified for annual leave usage. Compensatory time should be used within a reasonable period of time, preferably no later than the pay period immediately following when it was earned.

*Payment on termination* - If employment is terminated for any reason, you are entitled to payment for all accumulated compensatory time.

*Transfers* – *if you transfer to another location, be sure your compensatory time is transferred.*
Time off in the same work week - If, due to the additional time worked, you are given time off within the same work week, then the time off is one hour for each extra hour worked. This is permissible because it is within the same work week and you will not work over forty hours (40) during that week. If this arrangement (flex time) is to be used, you and your supervisor must agree in advance of additional time worked.

Holidays
The school board approves an annual yearly calendar which reflects the holidays recognized as release days for appropriate personnel.

Leave and Terminal Pay
Sick leave
Sick leave is accumulated for eligible positions from the start of employment with no maximum balance limitation.

A day of sick leave is earned for each month of employment. To qualify for the monthly accrual, you must be in an active eligible position on the last work day of the month and be on paid status one day over half of your work days for the month.

Sick leave may only be used for sick leave reasons as defined by state statute.

It is your responsibility to stay within the given number of accumulated days.

Paid Personal Leave
Each employee may use six (6) days each year of his or her sick leave for personal time. These days are not in addition to your sick leave and are not cumulative.
**Annual Leave**
Personnel employed on a 260-day contract and those positions reduced from 260 day to 250/255-day due to budget reduction measures will be granted paid vacations as follows:

- Employees with less than 5 years of continuous service will earn one (1) day at the end of each month.
- Employees with 5 to 9 years of continuous service will earn one and one-quarter (1-¼) day per month.
- Employees with 10 or more years of continuous service will earn one and one-half (1-½) day per month.

Annual leave may be carried over from one year to the next up to a maximum of 78 days. Balances are evaluated at the end of September for this maximum. The maximum amount of annual leave days paid at time of retirement or resignation is 60 days.

To qualify for the monthly annual accrual, an employee must be in:

- An active 12-month position the last day of the month
- A paid status one day over half the month

Annual leave may be paid upon request when transferring to a position that does not earn annual leave. This payment will be applied to the 60 day maximum allowed.

**Terminal Leave**
Terminal sick and annual leave will be paid into a tax deferral plan adopted by the school board and shall then be paid to the employee in accordance with the terms of such plan.

For further information regarding leave, please refer to your bargaining unit contract and school district policy 417.
Family and Medical Leave
Employees who have been employed by the district for at least twelve (12) months and have worked at least 1250 hours in the twelve (12) months prior to the leave request are eligible for FMLA leave for the following reasons:

- The birth and care of the employees child
- The placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care
- The employee is needed to care for a spouse, child or parent with a serious health condition
- The employee’s own serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the essential functions of their position
- Any qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that the employee’s spouse, son, daughter, or parent is on active duty or called to active duty status as a member of the National Guard or Reserves in support of a contingency operation.

Additionally, an eligible employee who is a spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin of a current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, with a serious injury or illness, may take up to a total of twenty-six (26) work weeks of unpaid leave during a “single 12-month period” to care for the covered service member.

Eligible employees must provide the district with not less than thirty (30) calendar days written notice, before the date the FMLA leave is to begin, if the leave is foreseeable.
For eligibility verification and to request FMLA leave, contact the Human Resources Department.

Other Types of Leave
Jury and Witness Duty Leave, Medical Leave, and Military Leave
These types of leave are available to school board employees and may be taken when necessary. They must be in compliance with the terms and conditions of school board policy and the applicable negotiated agreement.

INSURANCE AND BENEFITS PROGRAMS

For further detailed information about any of employee benefit topics go to the Insurance & Employee Benefits Department webpage. If you prefer you can visit us at (200 N. Clara Avenue, DeLand, FL 32721), call us at (386) 734-7190, Ext. 20305, or contact us via email at Insurance@volusia.k12.fl.us

Eligibility
Employees are eligible for coverage based on union contracts which can be found on the District website and in accordance with the Affordable Care Act.

Enrollment
New employees have thirty (30) days from their orientation date to elect coverage. If coverage is not elected, new employees are considered to have declined coverage and must wait until the next annual enrollment period.

Effective Date of Coverage
Insurance coverage is effective on the first (1st) of the month following forty-five (45) calendar days from the hire date.

Benefits Available
The School Board provides a wide array of employee benefit products. For more information about these products including rates and detailed plan descriptions, visit the Insurance & Employee Benefits Department webpage.
COBRA
Once you select and enroll in your benefits you will receive your initial COBRA (Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act) information by way of US Mail.

Internal Revenue Service – Section 125
Effective January 1, 1990, the School Board of Volusia County established an Internal Revenue Service Code Section 125 Cafeteria Plan. Section 125 permits employees to pay health, dental, vision and life insurance premiums with pre-tax dollars. This means the premiums are taken from gross pay before federal and social security taxes are computed. As a result you may have more take-home pay.

Enrollment in the Cafeteria Plan is automatic when you are hired. Therefore, unless you have ‘opted out’ of the program, you are currently enrolled and are receiving this tax advantage. Section 125 stipulates that you may make changes to a Cafeteria Plan benefit only during an annual enrollment period or within 30 days from the date of a qualifying event. Even if you “opt out” of the Section 125 you are still bound by the rules of the Volusia County School Board Section 125 plan.

Qualifying Events (Family Status Changes)
You have 30 days from the date of the qualifying event to request a change to your insurance. If you fail to request your change within 30 days of the qualifying event, your request will be denied.

Tax sheltered Annuities and Mutual Funds (403b)
The school board offers payroll deduction for 403(b) accounts. The employee must contact an agent approved by the school board to complete the necessary paperwork. A list of approved agents
can be found on the Insurance & Employee Benefits Department website.

**Workers’ Compensation**
The School Board abides by the State of Florida Workers’ Compensation Statute, Section 440.

**Florida Retirement System**
The Volusia County School District is an agency of the State of Florida and its employees subject to the state’s retirement guidelines. For questions regarding retirement, contact the Florida Retirement System at (866)446-9377 or visit [www.myfrs.com](http://www.myfrs.com) for up-to-date news and information. The MyFRS Financial Guidance Line experts can answer all of your personal questions as well as provide information on creditable years of service and eligibility with precise accuracy. You can also visit the MyFRS website to create a user ID and password for access to your personal retirement information.

[NOTE: The Volusia County School Board does not offer any type of financial planning services. Financial planning & counseling services are available through the Florida Retirement System. You may visit [www.myfrs.com](http://www.myfrs.com) for more information or contact a certified financial planner.]

**Employee Assistance Program**
The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) helps employees and their families resolve personal and work-related problems through professional assistance. EAP offers short-term counseling for all employees and members of their household, and provides guidance and referrals in securing quality care for long-term issues. **EAP is strictly confidential.** Only the individual receiving services can authorize the release of information. The cost of EAP is covered by the school district. Costs associated with referrals **may** be covered by medical insurance. To access these services, please contact Insurance and Employee Benefits or
EAP at (800) 272-7252, or visit www.mylifevalues.com. (Login: VCS, password: VCS)

PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS

To ensure that you perform all the duties listed on your job description, it is important to be recognized for good performance and receive feedback from the supervisor for improvement when necessary.

The Volusia County School District has an appraisal process for every employee. Please check with your supervisor for the evaluation materials, dates, and times when evaluations will occur.
DUE PROCESS

The School Board of Volusia County recognizes that a tenured teacher has a constitutional protected property right to continued employment as a teacher. No tenured teacher may be deprived of this right without due process of law which includes the right to notice and a fair hearing prior to a decision which might deprive him/her of a protected right.

Under Florida Law, a tenured teacher may be non-renewed or terminated only for cause as set forth in the Volusia County Teachers’ Tenure Law, Chapter 18964, Laws of Florida (1937) and later amendments, and after a due process hearing. Annual contract teachers are subject to the annual reappointment process and may be non-reappointed without cause or a due process hearing. If an annual contract teacher is terminated from employment during the term of an annual contract, the grounds must be based on just cause and the employee must be afforded a hearing.

In accordance with legislative action, teachers who have not earned tenure rights prior to July 1, 2011, shall only be eligible for annual contracts.

Support employees also have the opportunity to earn a right of continued employment. The terms for this right are provided in the applicable collective bargaining agreement. When a support employee has earned the right of continued employment, the employee may be non-renewed or terminated only for just cause. The due process available would also be set out in the applicable collective bargaining agreement.
MANDATORY REPORTING OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE, ABANDONMENT AND NEGLECT

FLORIDA STATE STATUTE 39.201 Mandatory reporting of suspected child abuse, abandonment, neglect to the DCF hotline – 1-800-96ABUSE (1-800-962-2873)

Scope of Responsibility:
Chapter 39 of the Florida Statutes mandates that any person who knows, or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is abused, abandoned, or neglected by a parent, legal custodian, caregiver, or other person responsible for the child’s welfare shall report immediately such knowledge or suspicion to the central abuse hotline of the Department of Children and Families:

If you are one of the following persons:

- Physician
- Osteopathic Physician
- Medical Examiner
- Chiropractor
- Nurse
- Hospital personnel engaged in the admission, examination, care, or treatment of children
- Health Professional
- Mental Health Professional
- Practitioner who relies solely on spiritual means for healing
- School Teacher
- School Official or Personnel
- Social Worker
- Day Care Center Worker
- Professional Child Care Worker
- Foster Care Worker
- Residential Care Worker
- Institutional Worker
You are required to provide your name to the hotline staff. The name of the reporter shall be entered into the record of the report but shall be held confidential as provided in s. 39.202, F.S.

**MANDATORY REPORTING OF SUSPECTED ABUSE, NEGLECT, OR EXPLOITATION OF A VULNERABLE ADULT**

**FLORIDA STATE STATUTE 415.1034, 415.111, Mandatory Reporting of Suspected Abuse, Neglect, or Exploitation of a Vulnerable Adult**

**Mandatory Reporting:**
Any person, who knows or has reasonable cause to suspect, that a vulnerable adult has been abused, neglected, or exploited shall immediately report such knowledge or suspicion to the central abuse hotline (1-800-962-2873). A “vulnerable adult” is a person 18 years of age or older whose ability to perform normal activities of daily living or to provide for his or her own care or protection is impaired due to mental, emotional, long-term physical, or developmental disability, dysfunction or brain damage, or the infirmities of aging.

A person who knowingly and willingly fails to report a case of known or suspected abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a vulnerable adult or who knowingly and willfully prevents another person from doing so, commits a misdemeanor of the second degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083.
PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

Office of Professional Development and Support (OPDS)
All employees have access to a wide range of professional learning opportunities coordinated through the Office of Professional Development and Support (OPDS). These opportunities include attendance at school-based and district activities as well as online courses. To access information about specific professional learning opportunities, individuals must have a VCS user id and log into MyPGS via the District homepage. Please refer to the (OPDS) K-12 Curriculum page on the district’s website, under Instructional Services, for more information.

Through participation and successful completion of the various in-service education programs, certificated staff may receive in-service credit for renewal of regular Florida educator certificates.

Pathways to the Principalship
Administrative opportunities are available through our district’s Human Resources management and development program, Pathways to the Principalship. This four-phase program offers support and training to teachers, district-based administrators, assistant principals, principal interns, and principals.

Phase I focuses on development and leadership skills of teachers and district level administrators. It requires self-assessment activities and competency acquisition. Core requirements, administrative application and the screening and selection process are completed after the applicant has obtained an advanced degree in Educational Leadership.

Phase II provides a leadership development support system for assistant principals. Programs include self-assessment and are
linked to the William Cecil Golden Educational Leadership Program. There are other workshops and online opportunities.

Phase III offers an in-depth, two year internship program for assistant principals and district level administrators. The program is based on the ten (10) Florida Principal Leadership Standards and other identified competencies. Successful completion of this program leads to Florida certification as a school principal.

Phase IV provides current principals with activities and training to support their position as instructional leader.

Please contact Human Resources’ Assessment and Development Department for more information.

**Volusia Leadership Academy**

Additional leadership growth opportunities are available through the district’s Human Resources management and development program, Volusia Leadership Academy. This two-year program will develop current employees’ leadership aptitude and knowledge of district policies and procedures through a competency based curriculum.

The Academy is geared towards development of emerging leaders. It is unnecessary for Principals, Directors, Superintendent’s Staff members and other employees at senior management levels to participate in the Academy.

Please contact Human Resources Division for more information.
OPPORTUNITIES FOR INVOLVEMENT

Volusia County Schools’ employees have numerous opportunities for involvement in school district activities and decision-making. A wide variety of school and district-based committees meet regularly to provide recommendations to the School Board and administration.

If you are interested in becoming involved with district-based committees or other activities, please make your supervisor aware of your interest.
School Board

District 1 — Dr. John Hill
District 2 — Mrs. Ida D. Wright
District 3 — Mrs. Linda Cuthbert
District 4 — Mrs. Linda Costello
District 5 — Mrs. Melody Johnson

Mr. James T. Russell
Superintendent of Schools

Ms. Dana J. Paige-Pender, SPHR
Chief Human Resources Officer

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