



4200 Alabama Highway 79 South – P.O. Box 129
Guntersville, Alabama 35976

Proposed Policy

5.10.1 Work Attendance an Essential Job Function – Punctual, regular attendance is an essential job function of every job and position. Each employee is expected to report to work when scheduled to work and to remain at work each working day.

5.10.2 Absences – Except as otherwise authorized under Board policy, employees may be absent from work only in the following circumstances:

- a. Illness, injury or other qualifying reason for sick leave or on-the-job injury leave under state law or the Family Medical Leave Act;
- b. Personal leave;
- c. Vacation leave;
- d. Professional leave;
- e. Military leave;
- f. Court leave;
- g. Other unpaid leave that is specifically approved by the Board upon a showing of substantial hardship or extraordinary circumstances.

Employees who know in advance that they will be absent from work must notify their immediate supervisor. If the employee knows in advance that they will be absent for work for more than ten (10) days, they must notify the school system of the expected absence in accordance with procedures specified by the Superintendent or the Board. In the event of an emergency or incapacity that makes advance notice impractical, employees must notify the Board of their absence as early as possible. Except as otherwise provided or permitted, an employee who is absent from work without approved leave will be considered absent without leave in violation of Board

policy and subject to appropriate disciplinary measures. Employees who are approved for paid leave or absences will be paid at the regular daily rate of pay; however, a day of paid leave or absence will not be counted as a day worked for the purposes of computing overtime under the Fair Labor Standards Act. Pay will be reduced on a pro rata basis for leaves or absences not covered by sick, vacation, personal, or other appropriate form of paid leave. The continuation of benefits during an approved absence is subject to the provisions of the particular benefit policy, plan or law.

5.10.3 Paid Sick Leave-

- a. *Persons Eligible for Paid Sick Leave* – All regular full-time employees are eligible for paid sick leave.
- b. *Earning and Accumulation of Paid Sick Leave* – All eligible employees earn sick leave days at the rate provided for in state law (currently 1 sick leave day per month of employment). Eligible employees may accumulate sick leave as provided by state law.
- c. *Use of Sick Leave* – Eligible employees may only use paid sick leave for absences caused by the following:
 - 1. Personal illness;
 - 2. Incapacitating personal injury;
 - 3. Attendance upon an ill member of the employee's immediate family, defined as a spouse, parent, child, sibling or any person with a close personal tie;
 - 4. Death of a family member, including a spouse, parent, child, sibling, mother or father-in-law, son or daughter-in-law, brother or sister-in-law, nephew or niece, grandparent, grandchild, aunt or uncle;
 - 5. Death or care of an individual with whom unusually strong personal ties exist because of a relationship other than those listed above.
- d. *Certification* – Employees must certify that sick leave was used for one of the reasons provided in state law and specify the reason. If the employee's principal or department head has probable cause to believe that an employee has abused or misused sick leave, a physician's statement verifying the existence and nature of the illness or medical condition may be

required by the Board. Abuse of sick leave may subject the employee to disciplinary action.

[Reference: Ala. Code §16-1-18.1 (1975)]

5.10.4 On-The-Job Injury Leave – On-the-job injury includes an accident or injury to an employee that occurs in the course of performing job duties for the Board or when the employee is directed or requested by the employer to be on the property of employer and which prevents the employee from working or returning to the job. Employees who are accidentally injured on the job may be approved for paid “on-the-job injury” leave without using sick days, provided that:

- a. The injured employee submits written medical certification from the attending licensed physician stating that the employee was injured and cannot return to work due to a specified injury, if there is a reasonable expectation that the employee will return to work and, if so, the expected date of that return. The Board may require a second opinion from a Board specified physician, at its expense.
- b. The employee submits a signed written account of the accident attested by a principal or department head within twenty-four (24) hours after the injury occurred. If the injured employee is not able to notify the Board, another person reasonably knowledgeable about the employee’s condition and circumstances leading to the injury may provide the required notification.

Upon a determination that the employee has been injured on the job and cannot return to work, the Board may maintain the employee’s salary and benefits for the period of incapacity caused by the injury, not to exceed ninety (90) days. An employee who is injured on the job may file a request for unreimbursed medical expenses and costs with the State Board of Adjustment. The Board will provide such reasonable assistance to the employee in filing the Board of Adjustment claim as is required by law, but assumes and will have no responsibility or liability for processing the claim or directly reimbursing the employee any unreimbursed medical expenses and costs. On-the-job injury leave will be administered in accordance with and subject to the requirements and limitations imposed by state law regarding such leave.

[Reference: Ala. Code §16-1-18.1 (1975)]

5.10.5 Personal Leave

1. All regular, full-time employees are granted five (5) days of personal leave each scholastic year. Two (2) of the five (5) personal days are state-funded personal leave days without loss of pay. Such employees are also eligible for additional employee or Board-funded personal leave days without loss of pay each scholastic year based on the employee's years of service with Guntersville City Schools as follows:

Years of Service	Days Paid by Board/State	Paid by Employee
0-2	2	3
3-9	3	2
10-14	4	1
15+	5	0

2. Days paid by the employee will be charged at the daily rate of a substitute for the employees' classification and duty, whether or not a substitute is required for that employee.

3. Personal leave must be requested in accordance with such procedures as may be established by the Superintendent of the Board. Personal leave should not be taken immediately before or after a school holiday or in the first or last ten days of school. The principal or Superintendent may deny a personal leave request if the educational environment would be negatively affected by the number of employees requesting personal leave on the same day.

4. Employees who request in writing to be compensated for any unused personal leave they are entitled to receive (employee is only entitled to receive compensation for days they are entitled to that are paid by State or the Board of Education) by June 15th will be paid for any unused personal days at the same daily rate of pay as is paid to the employee's substitute. Otherwise, all other unused personal leave converts to sick leave. (Amendment Board Approved: October 25, 2021)

5. Employees hired with an effective date of January 1 or later will receive 2 days of paid personal leave and are not eligible for employee paid personal days during their initial partial year of employment.

[Reference: Ala. Code §16-8-26 (1975)]

5.10.6 Vacation-

- a. *Eligible Employees* – Twelve-month full-time employees are eligible for paid vacation.
- b. *Vacation Benefits*– Eligible employees will earn vacation benefits as follows:
 1. Eligible employees will earn twelve (12) paid vacation days a year at the rate of one (1) day per month.
 2. Only consecutive service with the Board will be considered in establishing the length of service for purposes of determining vacation.
- c. *Accrual and Accumulation of Vacation Time*- Except for eligible employees with less than one year of consecutive service as of July 1st in any year, vacation time fully accrues at the beginning of the employee's appointment. No more than twenty (20) vacation days may be carried over beyond July 1st. Vacation days may not be bought, sold, or donated. An employee who resigns or retires in good standing shall be compensated for up to twenty (20) accumulated, unused vacation days at the employee's then effective rate of pay. Employees who are terminated for misconduct or who are not in good standing at the time of their separation from employment with the Board may not convert accumulated and unused vacation days to monetary compensation.

Scheduling– Vacations must be scheduled with the knowledge and approval of the employee's department head.

5.10.7 Professional Leave – The Superintendent is authorized to grant professional leave with pay to Board employees to engage in educational activities which in the judgment of the Superintendent, serve the needs and interests of the school system. The number of days approved for such leave will be at the discretion of the Superintendent. Employees are required to request leave in accordance with such procedures as may be established by the Superintendent of the Board. This request must be approved prior to the leave.

5.10.8 Military Leave – Military leave is available to all eligible employees in

accordance with state and federal law. Employees are required to provide the payroll department with a copy of their military orders prior to taking leave.

5.10.9 Court Leave – Permanent and full-time employees are entitled to regular compensation while performing jury duty (Ala. Code §12-16-8) or when the employee is summoned for school-related purposes under subpoena or other legal requirement to testify at trial in a court of law or in an administrative proceeding constituted under the statutory authority of the agency conducting the proceedings. Employees are required to submit a copy of the original jury summons or the original verified court subpoena. Paid leave is not authorized for employees to meet with attorneys, to attend depositions, or to otherwise prepare for legal proceedings unless the presence of the employee is requested or required by the Board.

5.10.10 Unpaid Study Leave – Upon written application by the employee, the Board may provide an unpaid leave of absence for up to one year to pursue study or professional growth opportunities. Such leave is available to non-probationary certified personnel only. Except as provided to the contrary by applicable law, the employee shall not be entitled to return to the same position held before the commencement of leave, and may be assigned to a different work location or position upon return from leave at the discretion of the Board.

5.10.11 Bereavement Leave- An employee is entitled to up to three paid days of bereavement leave not to be counted against the employee's available sick leave, personal leave, or vacation leave upon the death of an employee's spouse, child, spouse's child, step child, parent, spouse's parent, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, spouse's sibling, grandparents, spouse's grandparents. Employees may be required to provide reasonable verification of the need for bereavement leave.

5.10.12 Flex Day

Guntersville City Schools offers certified educators “flexibility” with professional development opportunities during the summer. **Full-time certified** educators may elect to attend professional development sessions during the summer months that may be used in lieu of certain predetermined school calendar dates designated for Flex Day usage. Flex days serve as paid employment days to fulfill the employees required contract days; therefore, the Professional Development Flex Days must meet criteria set by the Superintendent of Education.

