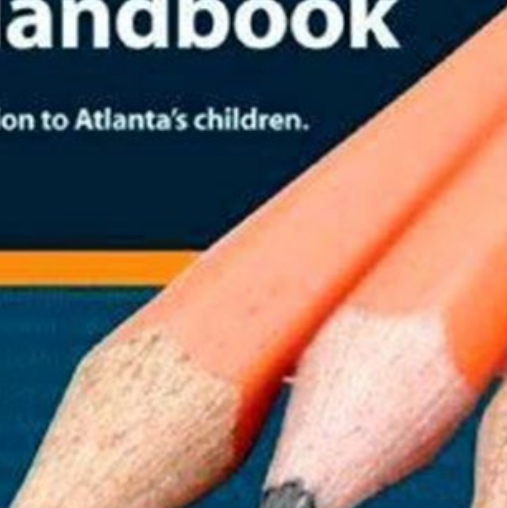


2022 -2023

Employee Handbook

Thank you for your service and dedication to Atlanta's children.



Welcome

Welcome to the 2022-2023 school year with Atlanta Public Schools!

Thank you in advance for your service and dedication to Atlanta's children and Atlanta Public Schools. We are continuing our journey toward becoming a system that is one of the nation's top-performing urban school districts in which all students will become lifelong learners equipped with the appropriate skills and competencies to be contributing members of society.

Whether your contribution is in the classroom, in transporting or feeding students so they are ready to learn, in ensuring clean and safe learning environments, or in managing District resources, *your* efforts are critical to achieving our shared goal. Although our job descriptions may vary, our focus is the same: student success.

With your continued dedication and support, we will move closer to the goal of excellence in all that we do for students every day in every classroom throughout the district.

UPDATES FOR 2022-2023

Online Mandatory Ethics Training for All Employees

All full-time active daily, active hourly and seasonal employees are required to complete the annual online training on ethics and professional standards at APS. The course, *"Ethics Elite Squad: Spreading Core Values throughout the Galaxy"* is presented with a space cadet theme. **Training must be completed within thirty (30) calendar days for all new hires. All other employees must complete their annual Ethics Training by Friday, December 2, 2022, as a condition of employment.**

Employees will be automatically enrolled for this course and should check their APS email for a link to access the course. Failure to complete the training by the deadline will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. Please submit any questions about the Ethics training to Ethicstraining@atlanta.k12.ga.us.

Professional Learning Update

The district has expanded My Professional Learning Center (MyPLC), creating a new way for employees to access and register for professional learning within the district.

For more details, please visit the section entitled ['Professional Learning and Development'](#).

Table of Contents

Table of Contents

Welcome	1
UPDATES FOR 2022-2023.....	1
Professional Learning Update	1
Introduction	5
About This Handbook.....	5
About APS	6
Administration	6
Atlanta Board of Education.....	6
Equal Employment Opportunity	8
Our Shared Values	8
Ethics	8
Reporting Violations and Whistleblower Protection	9
The Center for Equity and Social Justice is made up of four (4) offices:	9
Corporal Punishment	10
Drug-free Workplace	10
Smoking.....	10
Falsification of Records	11
Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation	11
Sexual Misconduct & Harassment	11
Child Abuse and Neglect	13
Supervision of Students	14
Employee Organizations	14
Complaints & Due Process.....	14
Complaint Policy Purpose	14
What is a Complaint/Grievance?	14
Before Filing a Formal Complaint/Grievance.....	14
Policy Exclusions	15

Atlanta Public Schools Employee Handbook 2022-23

Beginning Employment at APS.....	15
Required Documents	15
E-mail	15
Working at APS	16
Work Year	16
Workday Schedules & Punctuality	16
Remote Work for Central Office (“CLL”) Staff.....	16
Emergency Closings	17
Dress Code	17
Records Management/Retention	17
Retention Schedule	17
Access to Records - Open Records and Parents’ Bill of Rights.....	18
Subpoenas.....	18
Legal Holds	19
Electronic Media Usage	19
Social Media Usage	19
Unauthorized Tape Recordings.....	20
Infectious Diseases.....	20
Weapons	20
Care of Your APS Work Environment.....	20
Arrests and Convictions	21
Pay & Benefits.....	21
Pay Dates.....	21
Paid Holidays.....	21
Direct Deposit	21
Payroll Deductions	22
Salary Level	22
Summer Salary	22
Enrollment of Your Children in APS	22
Credit Unions	23

Atlanta Public Schools Employee Handbook 2022-23

Supplemental Retirement Savings	23
Annual Open Enrollment	23
Employee Assistance Program (EAP)	23
Flex Plan	23
Insurance and Fringe Benefit Choices.....	24
Workers' Compensation	24
Retirement	24
APS Communicable Diseases Mitigation Strategies.....	24
Leaves of Absence.....	26
COVID-19 Paid Leave Incentive.....	26
Sick Leave	27
Timeshare Sick Leave Bank	28
Family and Medical Leave (FMLA)	28
Paid Parental Leave.....	29
Workplace Accommodations	30
Personal Leave	30
Annual Leave/Vacation	31
Bereavement Leave	31
Educational Leave	31
Military, Government Service & Political Campaign Leave	32
Jury Duty	32
Leave for Employee Peer Advisory Representatives	33
Disputes Regarding Leave Balances.....	33
Your Personnel Records.....	33
Annual Evaluation	33
Teacher Evaluation Appeals.....	33
Change in Job Status	35
Change in Personal Status.....	36
Reduction in Force	36
Records to Retain after Separation.....	36

Atlanta Public Schools Employee Handbook 2022-23

Confidentiality and Access to Personnel Records.....	36
Employment Verification	36
Ending Employment with APS.....	37
Retirement	37
Resignation	38
Separation Process.....	38
Separation Steps	38

Introduction

About This Handbook

The Atlanta Public Schools Employee Handbook is designed to communicate the Atlanta Public Schools' (APS) major policies and procedures. The most current version of the Atlanta Public Schools Employee Handbook can be found in PDF format on the district website. This Employee Handbook supersedes any and all previous handbooks and is current as of the date noted in the lower left-hand corner of each page.

THIS EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK IS PROVIDED FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY AND IS NOT A CONTRACT BETWEEN APS AND ITS EMPLOYEES, AND ITS CONTENTS SHALL NOT BE CONSTRUED AS PROMISES FROM APS TO ITS EMPLOYEES OR AS OTHERWISE CREATING BINDING LEGAL OBLIGATIONS OWED BY APS TO ITS EMPLOYEES.

APS may change or withdraw any policy or procedure referred to, described, or summarized in this Employee Handbook as well as any other condition of employment (including wages and benefits) without any employee's agreement and with or without any advance notice to employees.

APS uses several resources to create this handbook. Resources include federal and state laws, Georgia Board of Education rules, Atlanta Board of Education policies and the administrative regulations of the APS superintendent. Throughout this document, you will find blue, underlined hyperlinks to the [online policy manual](#) and other useful information sources. Follow the links to learn more.

If you have questions:

- Ask your immediate supervisor.
- Follow the hyperlinks to the online policy manual throughout this handbook.
- Visit [Policy Listing \(eboardsolutions.com\)](https://policylisting.eboardsolutions.com) for the online policy manual.
- Contact the Office of Employee Relations at (404) 802-2345 or Erica Long, Senior Policy and Government Affairs Advisor, at Erica.Long@atlanta.k12.ga.us or (404) 802-2874.

The Employee Handbook does not cover every aspect of APS policy or procedure that may apply to employees. No handbook can include or anticipate every issue, question, or concern that may arise. Each employee is required to be knowledgeable about the policies and regulations of APS and implement them

Last revised January 2023

in a spirit of good faith. When in doubt, please ask *before* you make a decision that could violate a law or policy and endanger your employment with the district.

The contents of this handbook are intended to provide a brief overview of the most referenced policies—it may not include every piece of information you need to know. APS reserves the right to revise, expand, or discontinue this information at any time. Only the superintendent and the Board may approve changes to Atlanta Public Schools policies and administrative regulations.

If there is a conflict between the information in this handbook and any law, rule, policy, or regulation of the United States, State of Georgia, Georgia Board of Education, Atlanta Board of Education or Atlanta Public Schools, the law, rule, policy, or regulation shall be the controlling authority.

About APS

Established by ordinance of the Atlanta City Council, the Atlanta Public Schools (APS) opened three grammar schools and two high schools in 1872 to educate the youth of the city. These openings brought the total number of schools offering free education to the city's children to seven, as the Freedman's Bureau had established two schools for "Negro" children in 1866.

The primary objective of the district has not changed from those early days. In the 21st century, APS has a renewed focus on student success and strives to prepare every child for the future through effective and innovative teaching. Families, teachers, students, and the community are encouraged to fully participate in the educational process that offers rigorous academics and relevance to everyday life, and builds strong relationships among students, peers, and adults.

APS will operate over 90 learning sites and programs in 2022-2023. The district employs roughly 3,500 teachers and some 3,000 support staff in administrative, civil service, transportation, food service, leadership, and other roles.

Administration

The superintendent is the APS chief executive officer and implements the policies and vision set by the Atlanta Board of Education. The senior leadership team of the district provides strategic direction for each division of the district.

The senior leadership team is as follows:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| ▪ Chief of Schools | ▪ Chief Operations Officer |
| ▪ Chief of Staff | ▪ General Counsel |
| ▪ Chief of Academics | ▪ Chief Financial Officer |
| ▪ Chief Performance Officer | ▪ Chief Human Resources Officer |
| ▪ Chief Strategy Officer | ▪ Chief Equity & Social Justice Officer |

The superintendent and senior leadership team are in the Alonzo A. Crim Center for Learning and Leadership (CLL) at 130 Trinity Ave SW, Atlanta, GA 30303.

Atlanta Board of Education

The [Atlanta Board of Education](#) is an elected, nine-member body charged with overseeing the

management of the Atlanta Public Schools. The Board has many responsibilities; however, its main functions are to approve the budget, adopt policy, and hire and evaluate the performance of the superintendent.

Six members are elected to represent the six educational districts of the city of Atlanta. Three additional at-large members are elected citywide. Board members are:

District 1: [Katie Howard](#)
District 2: [Aretta Baldon](#) (Vice Chair)
District 3: [Michelle Olympiadis](#)
District 4: [Jennifer McDonald](#)
District 5: [Erika Mitchell](#)
District 6: [Eshé P. Collins](#) (Chair)
At-large Seat 7: [Tamara Jones](#)
At-large Seat 8: [Cynthia Briscoe Brown](#)
At-large Seat 9: [Jason Estev](#)

The Board meets on a regular basis throughout the year on a [schedule available on the Web site](#). Board meetings and the Board office are in the Alonzo A. Crim Center for Learning and Leadership at 130 Trinity Ave SW, Atlanta, GA 30303. The monthly legislative meetings of the Board are no [PBA 30](#), a broadcast service of the Atlanta Public Schools.

Equal Employment Opportunity

APS does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, citizenship, ethnic or national origin, age, disability, medical status, military status, veteran status, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic information, ancestry, or any legally protected status in any of its employment practices, educational programs, services, or activities. For details, please refer to [policy GAAA Equal Employment Opportunity](#).

Our Shared Values

Ethics

An effective school system requires employees of integrity, high ideals and expectations, and sensitivity to others in the school environment. Employees are responsible for understanding APS' ethical standards and applying them in daily activities. All employees are expected to—

- Make decisions based on what is best for students in all cases.
- Maintain honest, equitable, professional relationships with students, parents, and other staff members.
- Observe local, state, and federal laws, policies, rules, and regulations.
- Demonstrate knowledge of research and competence in state-of-the-art practices in your field of expertise.
- Maintain confidentiality of privileged information.
- Support cooperation between the school and the community.
- Avoid conflicts of interest (see [policy GAG Staff Conflict of Interest](#)).
- Avoid giving and receiving improper gifts (see [policy GAG Staff Conflict of Interest](#)).
- Refrain from using school contacts and privileges to promote partisan politics, sectarian religious views or propaganda of any kind.
- Safeguard school property, equipment, and materials.
- Implement board policies in a spirit of good faith.
- Comply with appropriate professional ethical standards.

See [policy GAGC Employee Ethics](#) for more details. Educators and other certificated employees should also refer to the Code of Ethics for Georgia Educators from the [Professional Standards Commission](#) for additional ethical expectations.

Reporting Violations and Whistleblower Protection

If a potential ethical violation arises, notify your immediate supervisor, the Office of Employee Relations at (404) 802-2345, the Executive Director in the Office of Internal Compliance at (404) 802-2732 and/or visit the APS Organizational Ombuds Office at: <http://tinyAPS.com/?Ombuds>. You will not suffer any punishment if you make a report in good faith.

You can also anonymously report ethical or policy violations, as well as suspected instances of fraud, waste, and abuse through the APS independent hotline: **1-877-801-7754** or via <https://www.tnwgrc.com/AtlantaPublicSchools/>.

See [policy GAGC Employee Ethics](#) and [BAC: Equity](#) for more details.

Center for Equity & Social Justice

The APS Center for Equity and Social Justice (APS CESJ) was established as the district's first office devoted solely to advancing equity in education. The APS CESJ supports the implementation of equity-focused, evidence-based practices for entities throughout the district, and supports staff in ensuring that educational equity is a primary consideration in our problem solving, decision-making, planning and implementation processes. CESJ also examines current policies and practices and works to interrupt and eliminate inequitable practices to create inclusive and just conditions for all staff and students. The Center for Equity + Social Justice (CESJ) is here to provide support that involves:

- **Collaborating** with district leaders, who are responsible for ensuring educational equity, as thought partners in tackling equity challenges and ensuring that equity is fully embedded into their deliberation and decision-making processes.

Thought partnership includes sharing research on best practices, sharing resources for creating or expanding equity, evaluating equity impact, and elevating equity considerations, and providing tools and professional learning to build the equity lens and stamina required to advance equity.

- **Engaging** district leaders in shared conversations around equity-focused data, developing goals to define success and action plans to translate intent into action, offering feedback on equity impacts and considerations inherent in key initiatives, and supporting with the development of mitigation plans to minimize any unintended impact.
- **Supporting** district leaders in measuring progress toward achieving equity and illuminating district strengths and areas for growth via equity audits, conducting root cause analyses for any patterns of disadvantage and disparate impact, and in authentically engaging diverse stakeholders in the decision and deliberation making process.

The Center for Equity and Social Justice is made up of four (4) offices:

- The **Office of Equitable Learning Environments (ELE)*** provides technical support and develops programming for the Schools, Academics, and Performance Divisions. Also, the office provides technical support and programming for school-based staff and personnel.

- The **Office of Equity Strategy & Coherence (ESAC)*** provides technical support and develops programming for the Finance, Operations, Talent, and Strategy Divisions. Also supports equity-focused communications, public engagement, and data analysis.
- The **Office of Federal Programs** builds the district's capacity to support the needs of our most vulnerable student populations. The office provides technical assistance, program monitoring and financial resources to district offices and schools to ensure that all children have an opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and to achieve proficiency.
- The **Office of the Organizational Ombuds*** provides a neutral and informal platform for grievance resolution, resource sharing, stakeholder advocacy, and collaborative discussion. The Ombuds Office also examines current APS policies and practices and works to interrupt and eliminate inequitable practices and create inclusive and just conditions for all students.

Corporal Punishment

APS prohibits the use of corporal punishment by all employees. Corporal punishment includes any consequence that results in physical pain or harm to students. On rare occasions, physical force may be necessary to restrain a person or to prevent injury in accordance with [policy JGF \(2\) Seclusion or Restraint of Students](#) and related administrative regulations. When such force is used, it should be applied without anger and as a restraint rather than retaliation. Employees who find it necessary to use physical force with students should immediately provide a written report of the details to the principal of the school.

For details, please refer to policies [JCDA Student Behavior Code](#) & [JGF \(2\) Seclusion or Restraint of Students](#).

Drug-free Workplace

APS is a drug-free environment. Drugs, other than prescription medications in their original containers are prohibited on District property.

In accordance with the federal Drug-Free School and Communities Act Amendments of 1989 and Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988, it is unlawful for any APS employee to manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess, or use alcohol or a controlled substance, marijuana, or dangerous drug in the workplace at any time. Additionally, employees who seek treatment for a work-related injury through the district's workers' compensation insurance will be subject to a drug and alcohol test.

You have a duty to report to your immediate supervisor anyone who possesses or uses a controlled substance in violation of policy GAMA. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

For details, please refer to [policy GAMA Safe and Drug-free Workplace](#).

Smoking

Smoking is prohibited on any property owned or leased by the Atlanta Public Schools as well as in any

vehicle owned or insured by APS. All employees, students, and visitors are prohibited from smoking on District property and in District vehicles. APS discourages using tobacco or nicotine in any form.

For details, please refer to [policy GAMA Safe and Drug-free Workplace](#).

Falsification of Records

As with your job application, if you willfully submit false information on any records including, but not limited to, attendance records for an employee or student, records related to leave or workers' compensation, experience verification forms, and registration/enrollment records for your child or another student, you will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation

Atlanta Public Schools prohibits discrimination, including harassment, based on an individual's race, color, religion, sex, citizenship, ethnic or national origin, age, disability, medical status, military status, veteran status, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic information, ancestry, or any legally protected status. Acts of discrimination or harassment committed by any APS employees are violations of this policy and will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Atlanta Public Schools prohibits retaliation against any person who has reported in good faith and/or cooperated with an investigation of discrimination or harassment. Acts of retaliation in violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action being taken against any offending employee up to and including termination.

For details, please refer to [policy GAEB Harassment](#).

Sexual Misconduct & Harassment

Everyone should learn and work in an environment that is free of all forms of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, including sexual harassment and sexual or sex-based misconduct.

APS does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its education program and activities. Such requirements to not discriminate extend to admission and employment. APS prohibits all unlawful discrimination, harassment, and retaliation on the basis of sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation in any employment decision, admissions determination, education program or educational activity.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 provides that "no person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."

Title IX is applicable to schools, local and state agencies, and other institutions that receive federal assistance from the United States Department of Education.

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination that further violates [Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964](#).

No person may intimidate, threaten, coerce, or discriminate against any individual for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX, its regulation, or the formal grievance process, or because the individual has made a report or complaint, testified, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner in an investigation or proceeding. “Intimidation, threats, coercion, or discrimination, including charges against an individual for code of conduct violations that do not involve sex discrimination or sexual harassment, but arise out of the same facts or circumstances as a report or complaint of sex discrimination, or a report or formal complaint of sexual harassment, for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX or this formal grievance process, constitutes retaliation.”

Sexual Misconduct is any unlawful sexual act, any solicitation of any unlawful sexual act, whether written, verbal or physical; any act of child abuse based on sex, as defined by law; any solicitation, encouragement or consummation of a romantic or physical relationship with a student; or any sexual contact with a student. “Romantic relationship” includes dating a student or otherwise being involved in an inappropriate social relationship or any act of unlawful sexual harassment as the law defines.

Sexual Harassment is a specific form of sexual misconduct and is defined in policy GAEB as conduct that involves unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other physical, verbal, or graphic behavior or comments of a sexual nature, when:

- a. The person who is the subject of the harassment believes that he or she must accept the advances, favors or behavior to keep his/her job or access an educational program or activity; to receive a reward such as a raise, transfer, selection for training, performance evaluation, benefit, a promotion; or, in the case of students, to receive a grade, award, position or access to an educational program or activity; or
- b. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for decisions about employment, promotion, transfer, selection for training, performance evaluations, benefits, or other terms and conditions of employment; or
- c. The harassing conduct creates or is intended to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment; or
- d. The harassing conduct unreasonably interferes with an employee's work performance or a student's educational performance.

Examples of sexual harassment may include but are not limited to the following:

- Engaging in or threatening any act of sexual violence, including any act of aggression or intimidation of a sexual or sexually suggestive nature.
- Unwanted, intentional physical contact of a sexual or sexually suggestive nature, including stroking, patting or similar physical contact.
- Offensive sexual comments, sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, lewd or sexually suggestive comments, gestures or actions; off-color language or jokes of a sexual nature; graphic or degrading comments or gestures about an individual's body.
- Displaying offensive writings, pictures, drawings, posters, reading materials, calendars, photographs, or other physical objects, that are pornographic, sexual in nature, sexually suggestive, or sexually demeaning.
- Punishing or threatening to punish an individual for refusing to consent to requests for sexual

favors.

- Disciplining or retaliating against any individual in any way because he or she has resisted, reported or complained about sexual harassment.
- Preferential treatment or the promise of preferential treatment for engaging in sexual conduct.

In compliance with Title IX, the APS Title IX Grievance Process defines “sexual harassment” as conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following: 1. An APS employee conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service on an individual’s participation in unwelcome sexual conduct; 2. Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to APS’ education program or activity; or 3. Sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking. A. “Sexual assault” has the same definition contained in is 20 U.S.C. § 1092(f)(6)(A)(v). 1 B. “Dating violence” has the same definition contained in 34 U.S.C. § 12291(a)(10).2 C. “Domestic violence” has the same definition contained in 34 U.S.C. § 12291(a)(8).3 D. “Stalking” has the same definition contained in 34 U.S.C. § 12291(a)(30).4

Such conduct is unacceptable in APS, violating Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Any employee, contractor, or consultant who believes that he or she has been exposed to unwelcome sexual or sex-based misconduct should report the alleged act immediately to a principal, assistant principal, director, executive director, and another senior level administrator or directly to the director of the Office of Employee Relations.

Any employee receiving a report of possible sexual misconduct or harassment must *immediately* report the offenses to the Office of Employee Relations at 404-802-2345. Employee Relations will review concerns appropriately and recommend appropriate disciplinary or corrective action for sexual harassment incidents, consistent with law and policy. Retaliation against a complainant for reporting a sexual harassment incident is prohibited.

If a school district has actual knowledge of sexual harassment in an education program or activity of the school district against a person, it must respond promptly in a manner that is not deliberately indifferent.

For details, please refer to [policy GAEB Harassment](#).

Additionally, every APS employee has important reporting responsibilities under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Both employees and students may be victims (or perpetrators) of sexual harassment. Any APS employees who are aware of “sexual harassment,” as that term is defined by Title IX, and as set forth above, **MUST** report it. You may report it directly to the APS Title IX Coordinator or to your supervisor, who will ensure that it is reported to the Title IX Coordinator. To learn more about Title IX and its requirements, you can review policy GAEB Harassment, policy JCAC Harassment, and the APS Title IX Grievance Process, all available on the APS Title IX webpage.

Child Abuse and Neglect

APS strictly prohibits all forms of child abuse by employees, contractors, consultants, volunteers, or partners in connection with the performance of their duties for the district. To protect the welfare for all APS students, all employees and other persons working with students on behalf of the Atlanta Public Schools, *including contractors, consultants, volunteers and partners* must promptly report all cases of suspected child abuse and neglect on behalf of children under age 18. You are immune from any civil or

criminal liability that might result when you report these cases. Your school social worker or school principal can help you file a report.

For more information, see [policy JGI Child Abuse or Neglect](#).

Supervision of Students

Students should be under assigned adult responsibility when they are in school, traveling under school auspices or engaging in school-sponsored activities. Employees assigned to students are expected to make decisions based on what is best for students, including providing for the safety of students in their charge.

For more information, see [policy GAGC Employee Ethics](#).

Employee Organizations

All employees have the right to freely organize, join and participate in any professional association or labor organization of the employees' choice. The district does not discriminate against employees with respect to wages, hours, or any terms and conditions of employment because of participation in any professional association or labor organization. The Board also does not discriminate against any institution for participation in any grievance, complaint or proceeding.

For details, refer to [policy GBS Professional Organizations](#).

Complaints & Due Process

Complaint Policy Purpose

APS has a [complaints and grievance policy \(GAE\)](#) to help resolve work-related concerns that may arise.

Taking prompt action to resolve the concern improves employee morale, enhances job performance, and improves overall service to students and staff.

This section only includes general information about this policy. Please contact your school's main office or call the APS Office of Employee Relations at **(404) 802-2345** for complaint forms and other details.

What is a Complaint/Grievance?

A complaint is any claim by an employee of the school system who is affected in his or her employment relationship by an alleged violation, misinterpretation, or misapplication of laws, policies, rules, regulations or written agreements with which the school system is required to comply.

A grievance is a complaint that can be resolved at the lowest possible administrative level through APS' grievance process.

Before Filing a Formal Complaint/Grievance

Consider discussing any concern with your immediate supervisor before filing a formal complaint or grievance. Grievances must be filed in writing within 10 days of the alleged act or from the date of the most recent incident.

If this is not feasible, contact the APS Office of Employee Relations at **(404) 802-2345** with your on-the-job concern and details about filing a complaint or grievance.

Policy Exclusions

Policies [GAE Complaints and Grievances](#) and [GCB Classified Personnel Positions](#) do not cover complaints regarding:

- Performance ratings contained in personnel evaluations.
- Professional development plans or work improvement plans.
- Adverse personnel actions against employees, such as termination, non-renewal, demotion, suspension without pay, or written reprimand from the superintendent.
- Allegations of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation under policy GAEB, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation.
- Allegations of sexual misconduct under [policy GAEB, Harassment](#).
- Allegations of retaliation or violations of whistleblower protections.
- Allegations under investigation by the Office of Internal Compliance.
- Matters of local school law or controversy appealed directly to the board under O.C.G.A. §20-2-1160.

As noted above, policy GAEB Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation follows a separate grievance procedure.

Beginning Employment at APS

Required Documents

The Office of Human Resources (HR) requires the following documents from all employees prior to the first date of employment:

- An Employment Eligibility Verification Form from Human Resources to establish your right to work in the U.S. based on the [Department of Homeland Security](#) Employment Eligibility Verification process.
- A photo ID.
- A medical checklist (HR provides this form).
- Appropriate certificates/licenses; and
- A signed loyalty oath, pledged once during your career. Human Resources provides this form during onboarding.

If you are assigned to a position that requires certification or licensure, you must secure and maintain a valid certificate or license from the appropriate authority. For details, please contact the [Georgia Professional Standards Commission](#) at www.gapsc.com or **(404) 232-2500**.

E-mail

All APS employees are assigned an e-mail account. It is each employee's responsibility to check e-mail on a regular basis and to maintain and archive e-mail records as required by the [APS Records Retention Schedule](#).

See Records Management/Retention, p. 14-15.

For details, please contact Client Support at clientsupport@atlantapublicschools.us or (404) 802-1000.

Working at APS

Work Year

All regular, full-time APS employees work either 201 days, 202 days, 211 days, 231 days or annual duty (252/261 days). The official, contractual academic year (or work year) and payroll schedule for each of these schedules is as follows:

201 Days, 202 Days, 211 Days, and 231 Days

The required working dates for each work year are based on the board-approved student calendar and are posted each year on the [Compensation website](#). The annual salary for each of these work calendars is divided evenly into 24 payments over 12 months. The first paycheck is deposited on or before August 31.

Annual Duty (252/261 Days)

The work year begins July 1 and goes through June 30 of the following year. This schedule coincides with the Board's fiscal year. The annual salary is divided evenly into 24 payments over 12 months. The first pay period is July 1 – 15, and the first paycheck is deposited on or before July 31.

Workday Schedules & Punctuality

The *minimum* on-premises workday for all full-time employees is 7.5 hours. The 7.5-hour workday for teachers and paraprofessionals include lunch. The 7.5-hour workday for all other employees does *not* include lunch. Each employee's work schedule is set by the supervisor based on the needs of the work site.

It is expected that every employee arrives to work on time and is ready to start work upon arrival. Being on time is critical to the safety and success of students and for the smooth operations of the school district.

See [policy GARB Employee Time Schedules](#) and [regulation GARB-R\(1\)](#) for details.

Remote Work for Central Office ("CLL") Staff

APS Central Office ("CLL") staff that are employed at the district office in an office-based position are allowed to work one (1) day per week remotely. Remote work is not an entitlement or district-wide benefit. Not all employees and positions are suitable for remote work. Suitability for remote work is based upon the individual employee's position and is determined by the employee's supervisor and/or manager and is approved by the superintendent and/or her designee. Remote work is a voluntary work arrangement managed by an employee's immediate supervisor in which eligible employees fulfill their job responsibilities at a site other than their onsite work location in the State of Georgia during regularly scheduled work hours. Flexible hybrid work models can be for short-term, long term or occur on a recurring basis at the supervisor/manager's discretion that are determined on a case by case scenario based on the specific needs of the department and/or division and would require the completion of the APS Remote Work Agreement.

Emergency Closings

APS cooperates fully with local emergency management preparedness authorities for natural and man-made disasters. The superintendent may close individual schools or all schools in the event of abnormal conditions, hazardous weather or other emergencies that threaten the safety, welfare, or health of students or employees. In cases of emergency closures, some critical employees, primarily in the Operations Division, may be required to report to work.

Tune in to [WSB-TV \(Channel 2\)](#), [WSB-AM 750](#) and [WABE-FM 90.1](#) or access the [APS Web site](#), [Twitter @apsupdate](#) or [APS Facebook page](#) for news about emergency closings.

Dress Code

All employees must dress in a professional manner that is appropriate for their job responsibilities and adhere to the established dress code rules. Your supervisor determines appropriate and inappropriate dress for your work activities and work site. For details, please refer to [regulation GBRL-R Employee Dress Code](#).

Records Management/Retention

Each employee is responsible for maintaining, managing, and producing public records related to his/her work according to state and federal laws and APS policy. Records may be maintained electronically or in hard copy. When no longer needed, you must destroy records in an appropriate manner—records containing sensitive information must be shredded, and we encourage recycling whenever possible. Records destruction must be logged, and these logs must be maintained according to the retention schedule.

Retention Schedule

APS generally follows the rules designated by the Georgia Secretary of State for the retention and destruction of records. In a few instances, APS retains records for longer than the state required period. For example, APS retains leave status records of separated employees through retirement to ensure that former employees receive full benefits from the Teachers' Retirement System. See the table below for some common records in APS.

Type of Record	Retention Period
E-mail	Retention period is determined based on the <i>content</i> , not the format of records. Many emails need only be maintained for the useful life of the information contained, but if the email documents a decision or other type of record that must be retained, it must be kept according to the schedule.
General correspondence	5 years
Visitors logs and sign-in sheets	2 years
Accident reports (student or	5 years

visitor)	
Class rolls	3 years
Teacher lesson plans	2 years
Employee work schedules, time records and leave records	3 years
Daily/monthly activity reports	2 years
Publications (newsletters, handbooks, brochures, etc.)	Permanent
Travel authorizations and reimbursements	3 years
Records documenting the destruction of records	7 years

See the [APS Retention Schedule](#) for full details about what must be retained and for how long.

Access to Records - Open Records and Parents' Bill of Rights

The Georgia Open Records Act requires that most public records be subject to inspection by the public upon request. The Parents' Bill of Rights provides parents the right to review certain instructional and student information. In general, we must produce all available records within a three-day time frame. If you receive a request from a member of the public or parent, contact [Open Records](#) at **(404) 802-2811** *immediately*. If you receive a request for records from the Open Records office, follow all instructions and produce all records by the deadline. The Open Records office will determine if portions of the records should not be released and communicate with the requester on behalf of the district.

Subpoenas

A subpoena is an enforceable court order requiring a person to appear at a certain time and place to provide testimony in court or by deposition. Some subpoenas require the production of records and other tangible things. *If you fail to comply with a proper subpoena, you could be held in contempt of court: if you receive a subpoena, you should make it a top priority.* If you receive a subpoena related to APS business (e.g., students, personnel, etc.), you should immediately inform your building or worksite administrator and work with the administrator to determine (1) what information is being sought by the subpoena, (2) whether any student/family or employee privacy rights are at issue, and (3) the type and duration of leave that may be required to comply with the subpoena. Contact the Legal Department at **(404) 802-2801** with questions.

Legal Holds

When APS receives a notice from certain governmental agencies (e.g., Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Office for Civil Rights) and when it involves a litigation matter, we are required to preserve records associated with the matter until final disposition. If this applies to you, you will receive a notice from the Office of the General Counsel detailing the records that must be preserved. If you receive this notice, it is important that you not destroy any records, even if those records would not be required to be maintained under the district's record retention schedule. "Records" means all paper and electronic files including Microsoft Word documents, Excel spreadsheets, PowerPoint presentations, memoranda, letters, emails, charts, handwritten notes, notebooks, meeting notes, logs and agendas, appointment books, telephone notepads and logs, notes of conversations, existing drafts, files inherited from other employees, archives, calendars, file folders and jackets in which documents are contained, information contained in a mobile phone, personal digital assistant (PDA), smart phone or any other external hard drive, USB drive, thumb drive, flash drive, memory stick, DVD or CD. When in doubt, preserve and direct all questions to **the Legal Department at (404) 802-2801**.

Electronic Media Usage

Any electronic activity conducted via the APS network or using APS computers—including the APS e-mail account—is subject to inspection and monitoring. There should not be any expectation of privacy. Electronic systems should primarily be used for instruction and to administer the business of the district. **Limited** personal use is permitted. Use of APS Internet and technology resources is a privilege that may be revoked at any time.

All data accessed, stored, or transmitted via APS electronic resources shall be used in a responsible, ethical, and lawful manner. Any unauthorized use or any failure to comply with applicable law, policy and rules relating to the use of electronic resources will result in the loss of electronic network access and/or the imposition of disciplinary actions. Unauthorized use includes but is not limited to programming vandalism or "hacking" activities; access, transmission, storage, or display of offensive materials or messages including, but not limited to, those that contain sexually explicit information; ethnic/racial slurs; defamatory, abusive, obscene, profane or threatening language; encouragement of the use of controlled substances; or illegal material.

For details, please refer to [policy IFBG Internet Acceptable Use](#).

Social Media Usage

Social media is a useful tool for effectively communicating with stakeholders about the work of the district. "Social Media" is defined as all social media activities by district employees, including but not limited to the use of blogs, forums, social networking sites and any other web-based communications on publicly available sites. Social media activities related to the work of the district are encouraged to take place in a classroom or district office setting so long as such activities do not detract from the employee's effectiveness or other job duties.

The use of social media, even off duty and off premises, must not violate any Board policies or otherwise interfere with the employee's performance of duties. The Board expects all employees to exercise professionalism and good judgment in any social media activities, district related as well as non-district related. Furthermore, any social media activities must comply with all applicable laws including, but not

limited to, anti-discrimination, anti-harassment, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), copyright, trademark, defamation, privacy, securities, and any other applicable laws and regulations.

Any communication which is unprofessional or prohibited in any other form is also unprofessional or prohibited on social media. Employees should be mindful that any social media post, even from an employee's personal, non-district account, may be interpreted as being made on behalf of the district. For details, please refer to [Policy GAHC Social Media](#).

Unauthorized Tape Recordings

Conversations and communications generally should be free and open among employees. You and/or anyone acting on your behalf are prohibited from recording or reproducing, via any audio or video means, any conversation between employees while on APS premises and/or while conducting APS business without the expressed, written consent of all persons engaged in the conversation or communication. APS may record public presentations, board meetings, hearings, grievances, procurement activities and official investigations.

Violation of this policy may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of your employment.

For details, please refer to [policy GAGC Employee Ethics](#).

Infectious Diseases

If you have a medical condition that poses a substantial health or safety threat to your school or workplace, you must leave the premises until your attendance on duty no longer poses such a threat. APS relies upon public health and medical experts' advice to determine when to require your removal and permit your return to work.

For details, please refer to [policy GARA Employee Health Examinations](#).

Weapons

The Board prohibits the possession of weapons on APS property, in the school safety zone, and at school-sponsored activities. The Board shall act forcefully to control anyone who possesses weapons of any kind to school or school/APS-sponsored activities, while traveling on a school bus or any other APS vehicle, at school bus stops, in any APS facility, or in any school safety zone. Anyone who unlawfully brings weapons to school or school sponsored functions shall be subject to prosecution under the provisions of state and federal laws. APS employees who violate this policy are also subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

For details, please refer to [policy GAMA Safe and Drug-Free Workplace](#).

Care of Your APS Work Environment

Please follow these guidelines from the Facilities Services department to help maintain the cleanliness and safety of your workspace.

- Refrain from dragging furniture and file cabinets across floors. Please request assistance or use dollies.

- Use only wall mounting tape and tabs to affix materials to the walls. Avoid using masking, packing or duct tape, staples, and glue in direct contact with all wall surfaces.
- Windows in classrooms should only be opened in emergency situations.
- Exterior doors should never be propped or left open.
- Breakfast in the classroom: ensure that all debris is placed in the appropriate container and placed in the hallway after breakfast. Custodians will not enter the classroom once the school day has begun to discard breakfast trash.
- Refrain from storing food items and/or food containers in desks and closets. This reduces the need for pest control services in the building.
- Refrain from disposing of any food items in classroom sinks.
- Recycling: separate all debris from paper and cardboard and place in the appropriate containers. Break down all empty boxes and place them in the designated recycle areas.

If you have questions, please contact your immediate supervisor.

Arrests and Convictions

Any APS employee who is arrested for any offense must report the arrest to their immediate supervisor and the Office of Employee Relations, within twenty-four (24) hours or the next business day, whichever is sooner. This self-disclosure is required and failure to do so could result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination based on the nature of the offense.

An APS employee must report any conviction, finding of guilt, withholding of adjudication, commitment to pre-trial diversion intervention program, or entering a plea of guilty or Nolo Contendere for any criminal offense, other than a minor traffic violation (driving under the influence (DUI) is not minor and must be reported).

Failure to appropriately report any arrest or conviction will lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Pay & Benefits

Pay Dates

All APS employees are paid on the 15th and the last day of each month. If the 15th or the last day of the month fall on a weekend, employees are paid on the Friday prior to the weekend.

Paid Holidays

As a benefit of employment, all full-time employees of APS receive holiday pay. 201-day, 202-day, 211-day and 231-day employees receive 11 paid holidays each year. Annual duty employees receive 13 paid holidays per year. Duty (work) days and paid holidays are provided annually on the work schedule posted on the [APS Human Resources Compensation Webpage](#).

Direct Deposit

All payroll checks are directly deposited into employees' bank accounts. APS does not issue paper checks

or pay stubs. Payment information is delivered electronically through the [e-APS employee portal](#) under “Employee Self Service.” Log in using your Employee (Lawson) ID number and your APS password.

Payroll Deductions

The Payroll Department must deduct the following items from your paycheck:

- Federal and state income taxes.
- Medicare tax of 1.45 percent of your earnings if APS hired you after March 31, 1986, or if you work part time (daily or hourly); and
- Pension contributions, depending upon your employment status.

Other deductions that have been approved by the Board may be taken directly from your paycheck, such as a parking fee for employees with assigned spaces in the Alonzo A. Crim Center for Learning and Leadership deck and any voluntary contributions you choose to make to the APS Employee Consolidated Giving Campaign.

Salary Level

Employees will be placed on the appropriate salary schedule based on their years of creditable and verified experience and degree level where applicable. Please refer to the [APS Human Resources Compensation Webpage](#) for information about salary schedules, job descriptions, and compensation guidelines.

Summer Salary

The pay for full-time employees on 201, 202, 211, and 231 day schedules who are present for the full work year is divided into 24 installments paid throughout the year including the summer months. Summer pay will be prorated for 201, 202, 211, and 231 day employees who are present for at least one-quarter of the school year if they are:

- Employed after the beginning of the regular school year.
- Separated from the school system after the regular school year ends; or
- Absent from duty without pay during any part of the required period of employment.

Enrollment of Your Children in APS

All regular, full-time employees may enroll their children in APS tuition-free as a benefit of their employment. All enrollment of APS employees’ children in APS schools must be processed through the [Office of Student Assignment & Records](#) *unless* you are a bona fide resident of the city of Atlanta *and* you are enrolling your child in your zoned school.

School-based employees with children in grades and programs available at their schools may apply for a work site transfer (for their children), regardless of available transfer spaces at your school. For a transfer to any other school besides your work site and for all transfers for employees who are not based at a single school/site campus, you must apply for a transfer to a school with space available through the.

Contact [Office of Student Assignment & Records](#) at ceedwards@apsk12.org or 404-802-2233 for details.

Credit Unions

Credit unions are members-only, not-for-profit financial institutions that use their earnings to pay dividends to their members and to offer them lower loan rates, higher savings rates, and fewer service fees than for-profit banks. As an APS employee, you are eligible to join these credit unions:

- [Family First Credit Union](https://www.ffcuga.org) – 3604 Atlanta Avenue, Hapeville, GA 30354 **(404) 768-4980**,
<https://www.ffcuga.org>
- [Pinnacle Credit Union](http://www.pinnaclecu.org) – 536 North Ave. NE Atlanta, GA 30308 **(404) 888-1648**,
<http://www.pinnaclecu.org>
- [Credit Union of Atlanta](https://www.cuatlanta.org) – 245 Pryor St SW, Atlanta, GA 30303 **(404) 671-4020**
<https://www.cuatlanta.org>

Supplemental Retirement Savings

APS encourages employees to save for retirement. We provide a variety of options for 403(b) savings accounts and IRAs through the Lincoln Financial Group. For details, please contact the Employee Benefits department [via the Web site](#) or by calling **(404) 802-2327** or **(404) 802-2442**.

Annual Open Enrollment

Each employee must re-enroll in the flexible benefits program annually. *You will lose your benefits for the following calendar year if you fail to complete open enrollment every year.* Please monitor your APS e-mail account in October of each year for instructions on how to enroll. The Employee Benefits Department will provide assistance with open enrollment.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

EAP's confidential assessment and referral services address personal and workplace challenges, such as poor physical health, emotional disorders, stress, alcohol/drug addiction, family/marital discord, grief management, and emergency support needs. If you are having personal problems that affect your job performance, well-being, or overall productivity, EAP can help. Please note that APS does not receive information regarding individual employee use of EAP—your privacy is protected!

- EAP counselors are available to you 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year for assessment and referral.
- Website access at www.deeroakseap.com; login & password: **aps**
- Toll-free number: **1-888-993-7650**
- Emory Urgent Behavioral Health – 404-727-WELL (9355), available Monday through Friday, 7:00 AM to 5:00 PM EST
- Legal services: one telephonic consultation/or 30-minute in person legal consultation per legal matter
- Financial services: one telephonic consultation per financial matter

For details, please see [the EAP section of the Web site](#) or contact the Program Director, Wellbeing at **(404) 802-2370**.

Flex Plan

If you work full time, you can pay for certain employee health plan benefits on a tax-free basis. This is

called the Flexible Benefit Plan or Flex Plan. APS announces open enrollment for the Flex Plan each school year. Your participation with Flex Plan is voluntary. The plan lets you reduce your taxable income by the amount of premiums you pay for certain benefits such as:

- Health insurance
- Dental insurance
- Vision insurance

If you have a tax-deferred supplemental retirement plan, your maximum payroll deduction for your tax-deferred retirement savings may be reduced. Please contact your Lincoln Financial Group representative for details.

For details, please contact the Employee Benefits department [via the Web site](#) or at **(404) 802-2400**.

Insurance and Fringe Benefit Choices

APS currently provides various insurance options, including health insurance, dental insurance, life insurance, dependent life insurance, vision care insurance, disability insurance, additional voluntary disability insurance, supplemental plans, dependent daycare accounts and medical spending accounts.

Workers' Compensation

If you are injured on the job, you must report the injury immediately to your immediate supervisor. The supervisor will file a detailed injury report. Risk Management must receive this report within forty-eight (48) hours of the injury.

If the State Workers' Compensation Act covers your injury, you are eligible for income benefits if the injury causes you to miss seven (7) or more calendar days. If you are disabled for 21 consecutive days following an injury, compensation shall be paid for the first seven days of incapacity. You can use your earned sick days or annual leave during your seven-day absence. Whenever workers' compensation income benefits are payable, the amount will meet the state workers' compensation guidelines.

For details, please refer to [policy EGAA Workers' Compensation](#) and [regulation EGAA-R \(1\) Workers' Compensation: On-the-job Injuries](#).

Retirement

Please reference "Ending Employment with APS" on page 32 for more information.

APS Communicable Diseases Mitigation Strategies

Monkeypox

- Employees diagnosed with monkeypox:
 - Employees who are instructed to isolate due to a monkeypox diagnosis, are required to provide documentation from public health or their healthcare provider.

- Employees must adhere to isolation guidelines provided by the Georgia Department of Public Health: <https://dph.georgia.gov/document/document/home-isolation-guidance-monkeypox/download>
- Employees with monkeypox should ideally isolate until the rash has fully resolved, the scabs have fallen off, and a fresh layer of intact skin has formed. This can take up to 2 to 4 weeks in most cases.
- Employees must provide a clearance letter from public health or their healthcare provider prior to reporting back to work in person
- Employees exposed to a person with monkeypox:
 - Employees with a recent exposure to a person with monkeypox do NOT need to quarantine if they remain without symptoms. They should, however, monitor for symptoms for 21 days after the last day of exposure.
 - Employees who develop a rash or other monkeypox symptoms are required to stay home and call their medical provider. If they do not have a medical provider, they should contact their local health department for additional guidance: <https://dph.georgia.gov/document/document/short-district-office-directory-and-map/download>

There is no paid leave incentive for Monkeypox. When an employee is required to isolate for two (2) to four (4) weeks they will need to contact Absence Management at LeaveRequests@atlanta.k12.ga.us to utilize their accrued sick leave and will then be placed in an FML leave status. If an employee does not have the requisite accrued leave, the employee will be placed in an unpaid FML leave status. In order to return to work after a Monkeypox isolation, the employee must provide a letter of release to return to work from public health.

IF AN EMPLOYEE IS ASYMPTOMATIC

If an employee tests positive for Monkeypox and is asymptomatic (not exhibiting symptoms) they are unable to work remotely during this period. The employee is to remain on an approved FML status utilizing accrued sick leave until such time they receive a letter of release to return to work from public health. If an employee does not have the requisite accrued leave, the employee will be placed in an unpaid FML leave status.

COVID-19

- Masks will remain optional in all APS facilities and school buses.
- APS will continue offering COVID-19 testing twice per week. Staff are required to test once weekly, while student testing will remain optional.
- APS will continue to follow DPH Isolation and Close Contact guidelines. APS isolation and quarantine guidelines can be found here: <https://www.atlantapublicschools.us/Page/66450>

- Individuals who test positive for a Communicable Disease will need to follow isolation guidelines.
- Individuals exposed to a positive Communicable Disease do not need to quarantine at home. Individuals may continue to report to work or school if they remain without symptoms. Please reference the Close Contact guidelines for more information.

Students and staff who test positive or have a Communicable Disease exposure must complete a self-report form found at the following link: <https://www.atlantapublicschools.us/Page/64958>.

Supervisors should use the link for Communicable Diseases Supervisor Guidance: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1JVFP86VfPUSI3k0h4NxEO16JW6jUFj8Q>

Please help APS Health Services maintain a healthy and safe environment for students, staff, and our expanded APS community as we welcome the 2022-23 school year and continue to focus on academic success.

Should you have any questions about APS COVID-19 guidance, please do not hesitate to contact me directly at Valencia.hildreth@atlanta.k12.ga.us. For COVID-19 updates and alerts, please visit this link: <https://www.atlantapublicschools.us/covid>. For general health services questions, you may email HealthServices@atlanta.k12.ga.us, and a team member will address your concern within 24 hours.

Leaves of Absence

COVID-19 Paid Leave Incentive

DETERMINING ELIGIBILITY

For any full-time employee that tests positive they may be deemed eligible for the COVID-19 Paid Leave Incentive if they **meet all** of the below eligibility requirements:

- Has been testing once (1) per week in the mandatory surveillance testing through Viral Solutions;
- Has submitted their COVID-19 vaccination card and;
- Provide a test from a lab provider (*Home test results are **not** acceptable*)

PROCESS FOR REQUESTING PAID LEAVE INCENTIVE

In order to request the paid leave incentive, the employee is required to notify Health Services by completing the Staff Self- Report form that is located on the APS COVID Dashboard at: <https://www.atlantapublicschools.us/Page/64958> **AND** send an email to: leaverequests@atlanta.k12.ga.us stating that they wish to request the paid leave incentive. Health Services will provide Absence Management with the information on the length of the employee's

quarantine and that is how Absence Management determines how many paid leave incentive days are approved.

IF AN EMPLOYEE IS ASYMPTOMATIC

If an employee tests positive and is asymptomatic (not exhibiting symptoms) and chooses to continue working during their Communicable Disease Paid Leave status, it is within their discretion to do so but supervisors/managers cannot require the employee to do so.

Sick Leave

All full-time employees earn sick leave. Details about the amount of leave you currently have accrued can be found in the [e-APS employee portal](#) in the “Personal Information” section under “Employee Self Service.” Information about the amount of time you accrue each pay period and the total amount you can accrue is found on the [Absence Management website](#).

See policy [GARH](#) and [GARH-R\(1\)](#) for further explanation of rights and responsibilities related to Sick Leave.

You may use sick leave when you miss work due to

1. Personal illness
2. Pregnancy and maternity/paternity leave
3. Adoption of a child or placement of a foster child
4. Incapacity because of bodily injury
5. Exposure to infectious disease that might endanger the health of others
6. Illness or death in the immediate family that necessitates your supervision and care. Immediate family includes your spouse, father, mother, brother, sister, child, or any other relative by blood, marriage, or adoption who lives with you.
7. Medical or dental appointments when it is not possible to arrange such appointments during non-working hours
8. Absences that are covered by the Family and Medical Leave Act

See [regulation GARH-R \(3\) Leaves and Absences: Family and Medical Leave Act \(FMLA\)](#)

You must inform your supervisor as soon as possible when you know that you need to be absent for one of the above reasons. In situations of three (3) or more consecutive sick leave absences, a doctor’s note or bereavement related documents will be required upon your return from leave. Sick leaves of more than five (5) consecutive days should be referred to the Employee Benefits Department and may be approved under the Family and Medical Leave Act (see below). *Failure to follow your worksite’s reporting procedures may result in unauthorized, unpaid absences and discipline, up to and including termination.* Calling in sick excessively, without physician certification and/or without proper cause may also result in discipline, up to and including termination.

See [regulation GARH-R \(2\) Progressive Discipline for Absenteeism and Tardiness](#) for details.

If you have been employed by the district for at least a year and have worked a minimum of 1,250 hours in the preceding year, you may qualify for the federal Family and Medical Leave Act for extended absences of up to 12 weeks for personal illness/injury, the birth or placement of a child for adoption or

Last revised January 2023

foster care (Both mothers and fathers qualify), or to care for a sick spouse, parent, or child. For leaves in the first year of a child's life, in cases where both parents are APS employees, the parents may use a total of twelve (12) weeks of FMLA leave combined.

Accrued sick leave must be used for the duration of your Family and Medical Leave. If you experience unpaid leave during the school year for 20 days or more, your salary for the remainder of the year will be recalculated based on the number of days you will work until the end of the school year. *This means that your salary after returning from unpaid leave will be less per pay period than before your leave began.* The Compensation Team will notify you of the change once you return to active duty.

For details about FMLA, see [regulation GARH-R \(3\) Leaves and Absences: Family and Medical Leave Act \(FMLA\)](#) or contact the Absence Management department [via the Web site](#) or at **(404) 802-2365** or **(404) 802-2330**.

Timeshare Sick Leave Bank

The Timeshare Sick Leave Bank allows eligible employees to donate two (2) days of sick leave to the bank. This sick leave can be withdrawn by any member of the sick leave bank if they experience a catastrophic illness or injury and have exhausted all other accrued sick leave. A member of the sick leave bank must have the Sick Leave Bank Withdrawal Application completed by their physician then submitted to Absence Management. To receive a copy of the Sick Leave Bank Withdrawal Application, the employee should contact the Absence Management Office to request an application. Once Absence Management receives the withdrawal application, the Sick Leave Bank Committee will meet and review the application. The committee will then vote to either approve or deny the withdrawal request.

To be eligible to receive sick leave from the Timeshare Sick Leave Bank the following eligibility criteria must be met:

- The employee must be a member of the bank.
- Must have exhausted all accrued leave.
- Cannot be receiving any benefits from worker's compensation and/or short- and long-term disability.
- Their illness/injury must qualify as catastrophic. "Catastrophic" defined for the Timeshare Sick Leave Bank, is a mental or physical illness or injury which results in the inability to engage in any substantial gainful employment as confirmed by a medical professional, which has lasted or can be expected to last for a continuous period of not less than 12 weeks or result in death.

A member may request a maximum of thirty (30) days of leave per fiscal year and a lifetime maximum of sixty (60) days.

Family and Medical Leave (FMLA)

The FMLA gives eligible employees the right to take up to 12 weeks of job-protected leave (or up to 26 weeks in the case of military caregiver leave) with continued benefits for immediate family or medical reasons.

APS employees who work at a qualifying site, have been employed continuously for at least 12 months and who have worked at least 1250 hours during the 12-month period immediately prior to requesting

leave are eligible to take up to 12 work weeks of unpaid leave during any 12-month period under the FMLA. Employees are required to use any accrued paid leave (sick, personal and/or annual leave) while on approved FMLA leave. When paid leave is exhausted, the leave becomes unpaid.

Eligible employees may take reasonable leaves of absence for the birth, adoption, or placement of a foster child (both parents qualify); for the care of a spouse, son, daughter, or parent who has a serious health condition or a covered service member with an injury or illness; or because the employee is unable to perform the functions of his/her position due to a serious health condition. For leaves in the first year of a child's life, in cases where both parents are APS employees, the parents may use a total of twelve (12) weeks of FMLA leave combined.

For details about FMLA, see [regulation GARH-R \(3\) Leaves and Absences: Family and Medical Leave Act \(FMLA\)](#) or contact the Absence Management department [via the Web site](#) or at **(404) 802-2365** or **(404) 802-2330**.

Paid Parental Leave

Paid Parental Leave (PPL) gives eligible full-time employees the right to take up to 120 hours of paid parental leave over a twelve (12) month period. An employee of the Board of Education shall be eligible for paid parental leave (PPL) qualifying life events upon satisfying the following criteria:

- The employee is classified as full-time by the district and is eligible to participate in the TRS (Teacher Retirement System of Georgia) or the PSERS (Public School Employees Retirement System); and
- The employee has six (6) continuous months of employment with the Board, regardless of whether the employee is eligible for paid or unpaid leave under federal law. An employee paid on an hourly basis must have also worked a minimum of 700 hours over the six-month period immediately preceding the requested paid parental leave date.

A qualifying life event means:

- a. The birth of a child of an eligible employee.
- b. The placement of a minor child for adoption with an eligible employee; or
- c. The placement of a minor child for foster care with an eligible employee.

Period of Leave

The maximum amount of PPL that may be taken by an eligible employee during a rolling twelve (12) month period is 120 hours, regardless of the number of qualifying life events that occur during such period.

- a. The rolling twelve (12) month period shall be measured backward from the date an eligible employee first uses parental leave.

- b. PPL may be taken as needed and may be taken in increments of less than seven and a half hours per day. The smallest increment of parental leave that may be taken is four (4) hours in a workday.
- c. Any unused PPL that remains twelve (12) months after the qualifying event shall not carry over for future use.
- d. Unused PPL shall have no cash value at any time of the eligible employee's separation from employment with the Board of Education.

PPL under state law shall run concurrently with any other leave provided under federal law, such as FMLA.

- e. Parents who work for the district are entitled equally to parental leave. Shared parental leave is not required under state law, and as such, PPL shall be equally available for all eligible employees.

See regulation [GAHR-R\(11\)](#): Employee Leaves and Absences -Paid Parental Leave

Workplace Accommodations

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as applicable, this District will not discriminate against applicants and individuals on the basis of disabilities, and when needed, will provide reasonable workplace accommodations to employees and applicants who are qualified for a job, with or without reasonable accommodation, so that they may perform the essential duties of the position as long as the reasonable accommodation does not create a hardship to the District. When an employee with a qualified disability requests an accommodation and can be reasonably accommodated without creating an undue hardship or causing a direct threat to workplace safety, the individual and the district will engage in the interactive accommodation process to determine what, if any, accommodations may be provided.

The employee should contact the Office of Employee Relations to request the appropriate forms to complete.

Please see regulation [GARA-R \(2\) Employee Health Examinations – Reasonable Accommodations](#).

Personal Leave

In July of every school year, up to three (3) days of your accumulated sick leave will be transferred into your personal leave accrual. You must have more than three (3) days of accumulated sick leave on June 30 to be able to transfer sick leave into personal leave. You may use this leave to be absent from duties for personal reasons. There is a three (3) day maximum accrual/usage of personal leave each school year.

For planned absences, you must complete and submit your time off request through Kronos to your Principal or supervisor as soon as possible. Keep in mind that if your leave coincides with a critical workday, your supervisor may deny the leave request. For unplanned emergencies, such as car trouble or

Last revised January 2023

a burst pipe at home, you must inform your supervisor as soon as possible when you know that you need to be tardy or absent. Your supervisor may ask for documentation of your emergency upon your return. *Failure to follow your worksite's reporting procedures may result in unauthorized, unpaid absences and disciplinary action, up to termination.*

Please see [regulation GARH-R \(9\) Leaves and Absences: Personal and Annual Leave](#) for details.

Annual Leave/Vacation

Annual duty (252/261-day) employees and employees who worked a 220-day assignment before May 13, 1986, and continue to do so without interruption, are eligible to accrue annual leave up to 30 days. School-based employees may have restricted times when annual leave will be approved due to school schedules. Non-school-based employees may use annual leave at any time during the year if your supervisor and division or department head approves it. You must complete and submit your time off request through Kronos to your principal or supervisor as soon as possible. Keep in mind that if your leave request coincides with a critical workday, your supervisor may deny the leave request.

Information about the amount of annual leave you accrue each pay period can be found in [regulation GARH-R \(9\) Leaves and Absences: Personal and Annual Leave](#). Details about the amount of leave you currently have accrued can be found in the [e-APS employee portal](#) in the "Personal Information" section under "Employee Self Service."

Upon your separation from APS employment, APS will pay you for your accumulated, unused annual leave. See [policy GAO Employee Resignation](#). APS will also pay you for your accumulated leave when you change from a position earning annual leave to a position ineligible to earn or use annual leave.

Bereavement Leave

If an immediate family member or a relative who lives with you dies, your principal or Supervisor may authorize the use of sick leave for a maximum of three (3) accumulated sick leave days per bereavement episode. Immediate family means a spouse, father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, grandparent, grandchild and corresponding step and in-law relations. If you wish to be absent for more than the allowed sick leave, you must request personal or annual leave.

To request sick leave for bereavement, you must submit your time off request through Kronos to your principal or supervisor for approval and follow normal leave protocol. Written bereavement documentation is necessary, as prescribed by sick leave regulation, when the absence is three (3) or more consecutive workdays. Documentation is provided to your supervisor.

For more information, see [regulation GARH-R \(4\) Leaves and Absences: Bereavement Leave](#) or contact the Absence Management department [via the Web site](#) or at **(404) 802-2365** or **(404) 802-2330**.

Educational Leave

To take an unpaid leave of absence for work-related or other study, you must meet the following conditions:

- Be a regular, full-time employee with at least three years of continuous service.
- Request the leave in writing to the Absence Management team with an explanation of the manner

in which the study will enhance your work with the district.

- Provide proof of enrollment from the accredited postsecondary institution.
- Provide proof of successful completion for each term you are on approved educational leave.

When you return from educational leave, the superintendent may assign you to a similar, but not necessarily identical, position and status as your previously held position if a position is available. *Reemployment is not guaranteed if no similar position is available.* If you go on an unpaid leave during the school year for 20 days or more, your salary for the remainder of the year will be recalculated based on the number of days you will work until the end of the school year. *This means that your salary after returning from unpaid leave will be less per pay period than before your leave began.* The HR Compensation team will notify you of the change once you return to active duty.

For more information, see [regulation GARH-R \(8\) Leaves and Absences: Educational Leave](#) or contact the Absence Management department [via the Web site](#) or at **(404) 802-2365** or **(404) 802-2330**.

Military, Government Service & Political Campaign Leave

Military Service

Employees ordered to annual tours of duty for the reserves or National Guard during their work year are granted paid leaves up to 18 days per year. Longer military leaves without pay are granted any time the service of an employee is required by the U.S. Armed Forces for an extended period. Upon satisfactory completion of the military service, the employee will be restored to a similar position and status as the previously held position, if the employee applies to return within 90 days of being relieved from duty. Proper evidence of official orders must be presented to the Absence Management team at least two (2) weeks in advance of the requested leave.

Government Service

Government service leave allows you to serve up to 12 months at one time, without loss of status, in the governments of the city of Atlanta, the state of Georgia or the federal government. When you return from government service leave, the superintendent may assign you to a similar, but not necessarily identical, position and status as your previously held position.

For employees who have been with APS for at least three (3) years, unpaid leaves of one semester or one year may be granted to qualify and campaign for a public office.

For details, see [regulation GARH-R \(5\) Leaves and Absences: Government and Military Service Leave](#) or contact the Absence Management department [via the Web site](#) or at **(404) 802-2365** or **(404) 802-2330**.

Jury Duty

APS encourages all employees to serve when called for jury duty. APS will not excuse employees from jury duty under normal circumstances. You must complete and submit your time off request through Kronos to your principal or supervisor as soon as possible.

When you are summoned for jury duty, APS will—

- Pay your regular salary for the days served. You lose no pay due to jury duty.
- Consider your jury duty pay as payment for extra expenses incurred.

If the court subpoenas you as a witness for personal reasons (e.g., divorce, personal injury, etc.), you must use your personal or annual leave and you must request through Kronos to your supervisor for approved leave for the day(s) involved. If the subpoena is related to official APS business; you may be granted administrative leave to appear before the court.

For details, please refer to [regulation GARH-R \(6\) Leaves and Absences: Jury Duty/Legal Leave](#).

Leave for Employee Peer Advisory Representatives

Employees may act as Peer Advisory representatives of other employees during the grievance process. An employee may be absent with regular pay for the purpose of processing grievances and attending grievance meetings and formal disciplinary hearings for himself/herself and/or for others for a maximum of four (4) hours in any one-week period. An employee representative may be granted permission for an additional absence in the same week without pay. If permission is denied, the supervisor must state the reason in writing to the employee. An employee representative who misses work without first obtaining permission will not be paid for the absence.

For details, see [policy GAE Complaints and Grievances](#).

Disputes Regarding Leave Balances

An employee who believes his/her leave balances contain an error must submit a written request for review to the Payroll Office. Requests must be made within one calendar year of the pay period(s) in question. The Executive Director of Payroll, Benefits, and Risk Management or his/her designee shall issue all final determinations regarding corrections. Contact Payroll at **(404) 802-2209**.

Your Personnel Records

Annual Evaluation

APS annually evaluates all employees' job performance. Your supervisor should also share your annual evaluation with you. Your evaluation is considered confidential under Georgia state statute and will not be released without appropriate approval or legal authority.

See policy [GARI: Employee Evaluation](#)

Teacher Evaluation Appeals

In accordance with state law, teachers who have accepted a full-time, full school year contract with the Atlanta Independent School System for the fourth or subsequent consecutive school year and who are evaluated by the state-mandated evaluation tool, Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES) shall have the right to appeal (1) summative performance ratings of "Unsatisfactory" or "Ineffective", (2) procedural deficiencies on the part of the District in conducting an evaluation pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-210, and (3) job performance.

Level One: Within five (5) business days after the summative evaluation conference, a teacher shall provide a **written** notice of appeal to the responsible evaluator detailing the evaluation record and their statement of appeal.

The principal as the responsible evaluator shall respond in writing within ten (10) business days after the receipt of appeal.

Level Two: If the teacher is dissatisfied with the principal's response, within seven (7) business days after service of the Level One decision, a Level Two review via the District's appeal form may be filed with the Office of Employee Relations, Executive Director, who will then assign the review to a TKES certified and trained administrator in the central office, or in the discretion of the superintendent, by an independent third party appointed to hear the teacher's Level Two appeal.

A written response shall be provided to the teacher within ten (10) business days after receipt by the designated administrator. The Level Two decision will be final.

A teacher shall not be the subject of any reprisal as a result of filing an appeal under this regulation.

See regulation [GARI-R\(1\)](#) Employee Evaluation - Teacher Evaluation Appeals.

Professional Learning & Development

My Professional Learning Center (MyPLC) is the bridge to access district-wide professional learning opportunities and employee performance evaluations.



During the onboarding process, new employees are given access to the following systems:

SYSTEM NAME	PURPOSE	HOW TO LOGIN
-------------	---------	--------------

MyPLC My Evaluations	Full-time APS Employees complete performance evaluations in this system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Username: Your 6-digit Employee ID Number (begins with a “1”; no leading zeros) ● Password: Your APS Network Password
ELiS, also known as the district’s E-Lectronic Information System	Used to complete self-paced training such as the Mandatory Ethics Course & Health Requirements courses. The system also houses other reference and training materials.	Single Sign-On (SSO) – If you are already signed into the APS network, visit the My Professional Learning Center and click on the ELiS button to login automatically.
KickUp	Search and register for professional learning opportunities. The district’s Professional Learning Day catalogs can be found here.	Single Sign-On (SSO) – If you are already signed into the APS network, visit the My Professional Learning Center and click on the KickUp button to login automatically.

APS Board Policy: Professional Learning Opportunities - Professional Learning Program, [GAD-R \(1\)](#) provides further guidance on the expectations for the use of resources within My Professional Learning Center.

Change in Job Status

Your job status can change for many reasons: a promotion, probation, transfer, demotion, reassignment, or re-employment. General information about each status follows:

- Promotions/Probations – Most promotions require a six-month probationary period when you are a new or re-employed employee. It can be longer if the superintendent grants your supervisor’s request.
- Transfers – You may voluntarily or involuntarily transfer within a department, among different departments, to another location or to a new work shift. However, the transfer must be in APS’ best interest and with approval from your supervisor and other authorities.
- Reassignments – When you switch to a similar job and pay as your previous position, this is a reassignment. This change can result with approval from the division head and other authorities.
- Re-employment – If you voluntarily left your job and are in good standing, you are eligible for re-employment in a similar position. However, you must meet certain job requirements and be on probation. Your salary will be based on verified prior work experience.
- Demotions – You may voluntarily take a lower ranking position. However, you must request it in writing, there must be a vacancy, you must meet the job’s minimum qualifications and the proper

authorities must grant approval. Employees will be placed on their newly assigned salary scale at the appropriate step based on verified experience, with an annual salary that does not exceed the maximum amount on the scale.

Change in Personal Status

To keep your file current and to ensure seamless, accurate delivery of critical employment information, promptly report changes in your personal status via [e-APS \(Global HR\)](#) under “(Internal Use).”

Reduction in Force

Reductions in force may be necessary as a result of consequence, including but not limited to declining student enrollment, cancellation of programs, reductions or shortfalls in funding, closing or mergers of schools, or district-wide reorganization.

For more details about how APS creates plans for reductions in force, when necessary, please refer to [policy GAKA Reduction in Force](#).

Records to Retain after Separation

Upon separation, you should retain a record of your final leave balance. If you leave the district for another employer and return to APS at a later date, your accrued sick leave may be reinstated. Similarly, if you leave the district and eventually retire from the Teacher Retirement System of Georgia, your sick leave accrued with APS may be applied toward your retirement benefits. You must retain evidence of your leave balance in case any dispute arises.

Confidentiality and Access to Personnel Records

Human Resources and your local worksite maintain both publicly available and confidential files about each employee. Some information about your employment with APS is subject to release to the public if requested under the Georgia Open Records Act, such as your application for employment, salary information and disciplinary records. Confidential information is not released, such as social security numbers, home addresses, phone numbers, transcripts, medical forms, and evaluations.

Only *you* may view your entire file unless a court order or other legal mandate requires. The law protects certain information, including pre-employment information, letters of recommendations and medical records. Therefore, these items are not available for review.

You may request a copy of your personnel file by sending an e-mail to productionofdocuments@atlanta.k12.ga.us. *In the subject line, please include your employee number and current department/campus.*

For information about the Georgia Open Records Act, contact Open Records [via the Website](#) or at **(404) 802-2811**. Visit <http://www.atlanta.k12.ga.us/Page/48967> for more details.

Employment Verification

Atlanta Public Schools (APS) Human Resources Department will use **The Work Number** to provide employment verifications for mortgage lenders, banks, apartment complexes, and others who may need proof of your employment or income. The service is easy to use and available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week both online and by phone.

Last revised January 2023

APS' Employer Code is 17322.

If you are requesting verification of Prior Years of Experience with Atlanta Public Schools or completion of a Student Loan Forgiveness Form, submit your request via email to experienceverifications@atlanta.k12.ga.us. Requests will be returned to the requestor within 3-5 business days.

All experience verifications will provide information as of the date it is prepared. If you are requesting an experience verification form before your last day of work at Atlanta Public Schools, please know that APS will not provide a future end date based on your planned resignation. Most school districts require an employment end date, and we will not be able to report your employment end date until after that date has occurred and you have officially separated. Please wait until after your last day of employment to request your experience verification.

When submitting your request for prior years of service or Student Loan Forgiveness Form to the experience verification email address (experienceverifications@atlanta.k12.ga.us), please provide the following:

1. Attach the electronic form (verification or loan forgiveness) to your email.
2. On the subject line of the email please include,
 - Your first name
 - Your last name
 - The last school, location, or site you reported to work
3. In the body of the email please include:
 - Approximate dates you were employed with APS
 - Your former last names, if applicable
 - Your employee identification number (Lawson number), if known
 - The last 4 digits of your social security number
 - An email address or mailing address to send the requested information
 - A contact phone number where we can reach you
 - Any additional information that may help us in completing your request (Additional instructions, email or mailing addresses, additional school or work site information, etc.)

Ending Employment with APS

Retirement

The [Teacher Retirement System \(TRS\) of Georgia](#) and the city of Atlanta provide retirement plans for all employees. If you are a certified employee who retires from your position, APS will—

- Pay you for your accumulated, unused annual leave.
- Pay you for your accumulated, unused sick leave, as set out in [GARH-R\(1\): Employee Leaves and Absences – Sick Leave](#).

For details, please call the Employee Benefits department at **(404) 802-2400**.

Resignation

The Atlanta Board of Education authorizes the superintendent or his/her designee to accept, on behalf of the Board, resignation from employment by any employee. The Board shall be notified of the action no later than the regular legislative meeting in the month after the resignation has been tendered and accepted in writing. Written resignations shall be tendered as soon as possible prior to the proposed effective date. Failure to provide adequate notice of separation or resignation may constitute ineligibility for rehire with APS.

A resignation request submitted with less than two weeks' notice is considered inadequate notice and may constitute ineligibility for rehire. Additionally, contracted employees may be subject to liquidated damages and Professional Standards Commission sanctions in cases of breach of contract. Contracted employees may seek approval for resignation requests during a contract period for medical reasons, promotion, or spouse relocation for employment. For annual-duty employees, upon your departure, APS will pay you for your accumulated, unused annual leave.

See [policy GAO Employee Resignation](#).

The district also reserves the right to designate employees as ineligible for rehire, based on resignation in lieu of termination, termination for cause, or other extenuating circumstances. Employees are expected to physically work on their last day unless prior approval from Human Resources is provided. After employees give notice, they must still follow the districts leave policy and the last day work must be a workday (i.e., last day worked cannot be a weekend, paid holiday, non-workday for less than annual employees.

Separation Process

If you separate from APS employment, you should follow the formal separation process or risk having your final paycheck delayed. Emailed resignations to Human Resources may also be accepted in certain circumstances. Your official separation request must be tendered through the [e-APS employee portal](#) under "Employee Self Service." The steps in this process may vary, depending on your reason for resignation. The steps include, but are not limited to the following:

- An online or option for an in-person exit survey with the Office of Employee Relations.
- The return of all APS property and equipment.
- Repayment of all monies owed to APS.

Separation Steps

Go to <http://www.atlanta.k12.ga.us>, then:

1. Quick Links: "Employee." Click at the top right side of the page.
2. Click e-APS and login, if necessary.
3. Click on the globe icon, which displays "Lawson" when hovered over.
4. Click on Menu on the left-hand side of the screen
5. Click on Bookmarks.
6. Go to "Employee Self Service" in drop down menu.
7. Select Employee Separation (a new tab/window will open).
8. Follow the on-screen instructions.

Atlanta Public Schools is **educating**
today's students for tomorrow's world.
We are **committed to ensuring** that
all students graduate from our schools
ready for success in college and life.



ATLANTA
PUBLIC
SCHOOLS

Human Resource Services
130 Trinity Avenue, S.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30303
404.802.2300

www.atlantapublicschools.us