

New Superintendent Checklist and Guide

Important Contact Information of Key Educational Organizations in the State of Georgia/Nation

American Association of School Administrators (AASA).....	Dan Domenech, Executive Director
703.528.0700	Website: aasa.org
Georgia School Superintendents Association (GSSA).....	John Zauner Executive Director
404.413.8141	Website: gssanet.org
Georgia Association of Educational Leaders (GAEL).....	Jimmy Stokes, Executive Director
770. 967. 2050	Website: gael.org
Georgia School Boards Association (GSBA).....	Sis Henry, Executive Director
770.962.2985	Website: gsba.com
Georgia Department of Education (GDOE).....	John Barge, State Superintendent
404.656.2800	Website: doe.k12.ga.us

Code of Ethics for Educators

Introduction

The Code of Ethics for Educators defines the professional behavior of educators in Georgia and serves as a guide to ethical conduct. The Professional Standards Commission has adopted standards that represent the conduct generally accepted by the education profession. The code protects health, safety and general welfare of students and educators, ensures the citizens of Georgia a degree of accountability within the education profession, and defines unethical conduct justifying disciplinary sanction.

Standard 1: Criminal Acts – an educator should abide by federal, state, and local laws and statutes. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to the commission or conviction of a felony or of any crime involving moral turpitude. As used herein, conviction includes a finding or verdict guilty, or plea of nolo contendere, regardless of whether an appeal of conviction has been sought; a situation where first offender treatment without adjudication of guilt pursuant to the charge was granted; and a situation where an adjudication of guilt or sentence was otherwise withheld or not entered on the charge or the charge was otherwise disposed of in a similar manner in any jurisdiction.

Standard 2: Abuse of Students – An educator should always maintain a professional relationship with all students, both in and outside the classroom. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. Committing any act of child abuse, including physical and verbal abuse;
2. Committing any act of cruelty to children or any act of child endangerment
3. Committing or soliciting any unlawful sexual act;
4. Engaging in harassing behavior on the basis of race, gender, sex, national origin, religion or disability
5. Soliciting encouraging, or consummating an inappropriate written, verbal, or physical relationship with a student; and
6. Furnishing tobacco, alcohol, or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any student or allowing a student to consume alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs.

Standard 3 Alcohol or Drugs – An educator should refrain from the use of alcohol or illegal or unauthorized drugs during the course of professional practice. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. Being on school premises or at a school related activity involving students while under the influence of, possessing, using, or consuming illegal or unauthorized drugs; and
2. Being on school premises or at a school related activity involving students while documented as being under the influence of possessing consuming alcoholic beverages. A school related activity includes but is not limited to, any activity sponsored by the school or school system (booster clubs, parent-teacher organizations, or any activity designed to enhance the school curriculum i.e. Foreign Language trips, etc.)

Standard 4: Misrepresentation or Falsification – An educator should exemplify honesty and integrity in the course of professional practice. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting or erroneously reporting professional qualifications, criminal history, college or staff development credit and/or degrees, academic award, and employment history when applying for employment and/or certification or when recommending an individual for employment, promotion, or certification;
2. Falsifying, misrepresentation, omitting or erroneously reporting information submitted to federal, state, and other governmental agencies;
3. Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting or erroneously reporting information regarding the evaluation of students and /or personnel;
4. Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting or erroneously reporting reasons for absences or leaves; and
5. Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting or erroneously reporting information submitted in the course of an official inquiry/investigation.

Standard 5: Public Funds and Property – An educator entrusted with public funds and property should honor that trust with a high level of honesty, accuracy, and responsibility. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. Misusing public or related funds
2. Failing to account for funds collected from students or parents;
3. Submitting fraudulent requests for reimbursement of expenses for pay
4. Co-mingling public or school related funds with personal funds or checking accounts; and
5. Using school property without the approval of the local board of education/governing board.

Standard 6: Improper Remunerative Conduct – An educator should maintain integrity with students, colleagues, parents, patrons, or businesses when accepting gifts, gratuities, favors, and additional compensation. Unethical conduct includes but not limited to:

1. Soliciting students or parents of students to purchase equipment, supplies, or services from the educator or to participate in activities that financially benefit the educator unless approved by the local board of education/governing board;
2. Accepting gifts from vendors or potential vendors for personal use or gain where there may be the appearance of a conflict of interest;
3. Tutoring students assigned to the educator for remuneration unless approved by the local board of education/governing board or superintendent; and
4. Coaching, instructing, promoting athletic camps, summer leagues, etc. that involves students in an educator's school system and from whom the educator receives remuneration unless approved by the local board of education/governing board or the superintendent. These types of activities must be in compliance with all rules and regulations of the Georgia High School Association.

Standard 7: Confidential Information – An educator should comply with state and federal laws and local school board/governing board policies relating to the confidentiality of student records, standardized test material and other information covered by confidentiality agreements. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. Sharing of confidential information concerning student academic and disciplinary records, personal conferences, health and medical information, family status and/or income, assessment/ testing results unless disclosure is required or permitted by law;
2. Sharing of confidential information restricted by state or federal law;
3. Violation of confidentiality agreements related to standardized testing including copying or teaching identified test items, publishing or disturbing test items or answers, discussing test items, violating local school system or state directions for the use of tests or test items, etc.;
4. Violation of other confidentiality agreements required by state or local policy.

Standard 8: Abandonment of Contract – An educator should fulfill all of the terms and obligations detailed in the contract with the local board of education or education agency for the duration of the contract. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. Abandoning the contract for professional services without prior release from the contract by the employer, and
2. Willfully refusing to perform the services required by a contract.

Standard 9: Failure to Make a Required Report – An educator should file reports of a breach of one or more of the standards in the Code of Ethics for Educators, child abuse(**O.C.G.A. 19-7-5**), or any required report. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. Failure to report all requested information on documents required by the Commission when applying for or renewing any certificate with the Commission.
2. Failure to make a required report of a violation of one or more standards of the Code of Ethics for Educators of which they have personal knowledge as soon as possible but no later than ninety days from the date the educator became aware of an alleged breach unless the law or local procedures require reporting sooner.
3. Failure to make a required report of any violation of state federal law soon as possible but no later than ninety days from the date the educator became aware of an alleged breach unless the law or local procedures require reporting sooner. These reports include but are not limited to: murder, voluntary manslaughter, aggravated assault, aggravated battery, kidnapping, any sexual offense, and any sexual exploitation of a minor, any offense involving controlled substance and any abuse of a child if an educator has reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused.

Standard 10: Professional Conduct – An educator should demonstrate conduct that follows generally recognized professional standards. Unethical conduct is any conduct that impairs the certificate holder’s ability to function professionally in his/her employment position or a pattern of behavior or conduct that is detrimental to the health, discipline, or morals of students.

Reporting

Educators are required to report a breach of one or more of the Standards in the Code of Ethics for Educators as soon as possible but no later than ninety days from the date the educator became aware of an illegal breach unless the law or local procedures require reporting sooner. Educators should be aware of local policies and procedures and/or the chain of command for reporting unethical conduct. Complaints filed with the Professional Standards Commission must be in writing and must be signed by the complainant (parent, educator, personnel director, superintendent, etc.). The Commission notifies local and state officials of all disciplinary actions. In addition, suspensions and revocations are reported to national officials, including the NASDTEC Clearinghouse.

Disciplinary Action

The Professional Standards Commission is authorized to suspend, revoke, or deny certificates to issue a reprimand or warning, or to monitor the educator’s conduct and performance after an investigation is held and notice and opportunity for a hearing are provided to the certificate holder. Any of the following grounds shall be considered cause for disciplinary action against the holder of a certificate:

1. Unethical conduct as outlined in the Code of Ethics for Educators, Standards 1-10(PSC Rule 505-6-.01)
2. Disciplinary action against a certificate in another state on grounds consistent with those specified in the Code of Ethics for Educators, Standards 1-10(PSC Rule 505-6-.01)
3. Order from court of competent jurisdiction or a request from the Department of Human Resources that the certificate should be suspended or application for certification should be denied for non-payment of child support(O.C.G.A. 19-6-28.1 and 10-11-9.3);
4. Notification from the Georgia Higher Education Assistance Corporation(O.C.G.A.20-3-295)
5. Suspension or revocation of any professional license or certificate
6. Violation of any other laws and rules applicable to the profession(O.C.G.A.16-13-111); and
7. Any other good and sufficient cause that renders an educator unfit for employment as an educator.

An individual whose certificate has been revoked or denied or suspended may not serve as a volunteer or be employed as an educator, professional aide, substitute teacher or in any other position during the period of his or her revocation, suspension or denial for violation of the Code of Ethics.

Authority O.C.G.A. 20-2-200; 20-2981 through 20-2-984.5

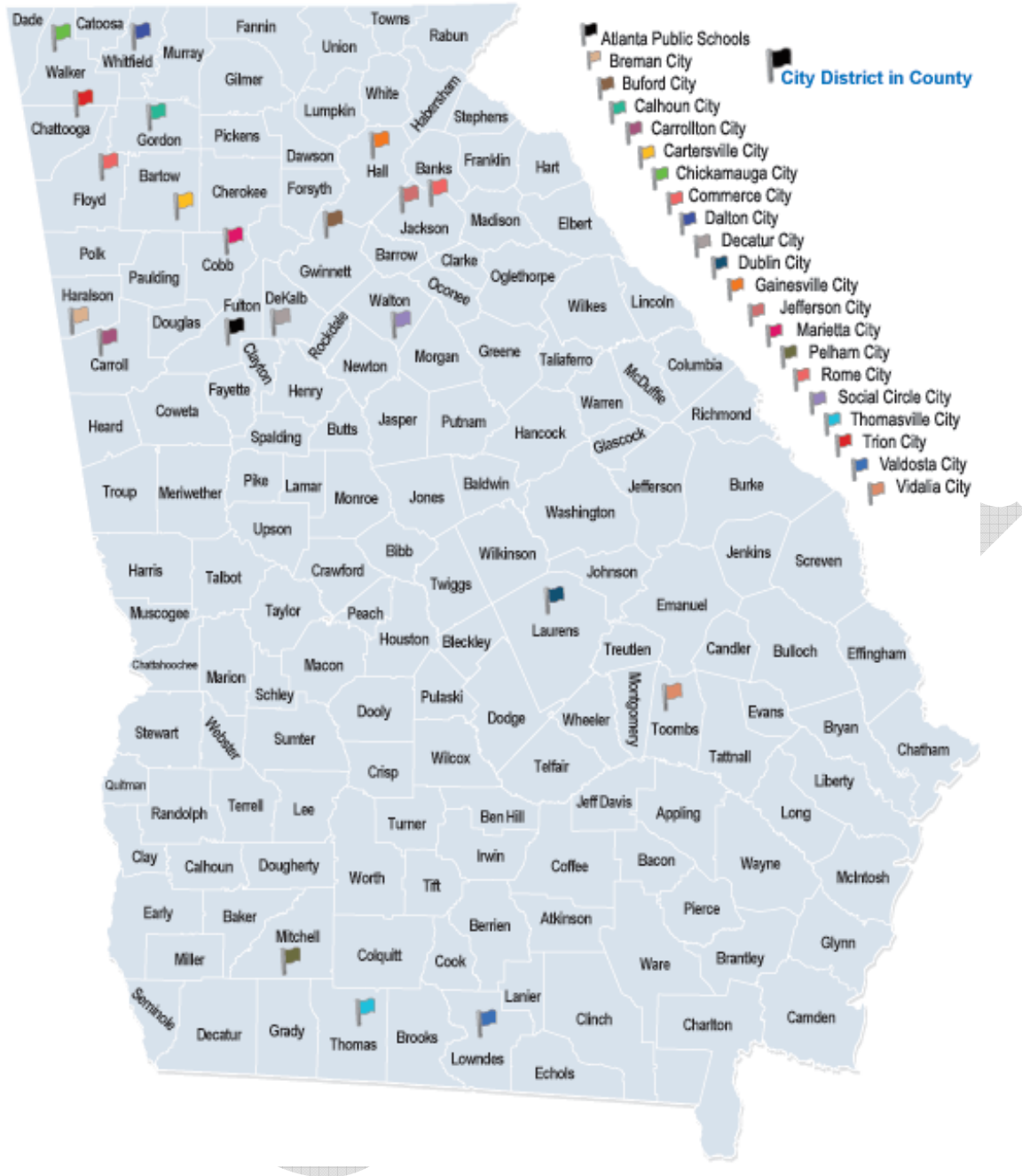


Figure 1 School Districts in Georgia

Checklist for New Superintendents

First Day on the Job

- Introduce yourself to all central staff
- Set-up lists of names, addresses, emails, phone numbers, etc. of all critical staff members
- Arrange office and files the way you want
- Go over expectations with your secretary, clerk and receptionist. Find out how things work in the office.
- Conduct office staff meeting to establish your expectations
- Set dates and first agenda for administrative team/cabinet meetings

First Week

- Set-up individual (lunch) meetings with each board member
- Review board policy book and strategic plan
- Prepare for first Board meeting agenda
- Tour facilities
- Introduce yourself to: County Clerk, Mayor, news media personnel, service/civic organizations
- Meet with administrative team/cabinet
- Call/set-up meeting with GSSA coach

Monthly Activities

- Administrative team meetings – Leadership Team
- Schedule school visits
- Review Financial reports with finance staff
- Review SBOE policies and rules GSBA – monthly policy review is a valuable process

- Cabinet meeting to prepare board agenda
- Prepare Board agenda with board chair/vice chair to distribute to other board members
- Attend local RESA meetings
- Meet with individual board members to build relationships

July/August

- New budget year start
- System Orientation
- System Staff Retreat
- Teacher induction
- Bus inspections
- Pre-planning schedule (Build calendar of events) & welcome back letter
- Inspect playground equipment and play areas for safety
- Refresh school system safety and security plans w/ local law enforcement and GEMA, SRO's
- Bid buses
- Refresh calling list for emergency school closings
- GSSA New Superintendent Orientation
- Transmit budget by Aug. 31
- Approve courses for next year

September/ October

- Prepare for Student day count
- Prepare for October FTE count
- Become familiar with teacher evaluation process and dates
- Review professional development plans for the year
- Familiarize yourself with RESA and Executive Director
- Familiarize yourself with state and local tax assessment dates your business/finance office can provide information
- Register for GSSA Fall Bootstrap conference
- Check-in with GSSA Coach

- Snow day/weather emergency procedures and communication plan with local media outlets
- Discuss/develop legislative platform with the board
- Check report card procedures
- Attend school faculty meetings to introduce yourself

November

- Review holiday traditions and review system calendar for school/district closure
- Special Education December 1 count (for IDEA federal funding)
- Monitor new teacher evaluation timeline with principals
- GSBA/ GSSA conference in December
- Review issues/preparations as first semester comes to a close
- Review finances with finance office as midterm nears

December

- Attend GSBA/GSSA Conference with board members
- Prepare for second semester school start-up/professional development
- Discuss changes with staff/ cabinet
- Check with board on your evaluation ongoing process
- Alert board members of election requirements if election year
- Begin work on school/ system calendar for next year gather input

January/February

- School/ System calendar development for next year
- Board elections for officers per LBOE policy
- Enrollment projections for next year
- Resolution Code of Ethics for School board (GSBA)
- Plan for board budget workshop/ retreat
- Letters of Intent for next year employment

- Textbook/digital content adoption
- GAEL Winter Conference
- Consider spending freeze (if budget warrants)
- Remind staff to complete evaluations by April 1
- Prepare leadership recommendations for next year

March/April

- Recommend certified staff for next year
- Midterm adjustment supplemental budget
- Deadline for contracts April 15
- Continue Budget workshop with BOE
- Legislative session in full swing check **Capitol Watch** on website
- Consolidated application (federal funds)for next year
- Spring Bootstrap Conference
- Sport equity report to SDOE
- Prepare for SACS accreditation process (if time)

May/ June

- Begin closing out budget fiscal year
- Prepare facilities maintenance for summer
- Plan summer school programs
- Student data report completion and sign-off
- Budget workshop with BOE