

# **Georgia-Cumberland Conference Office of Education Policy**



**Updated 3/02/2023**

NOTICE: Where there are differences, Georgia-Cumberland Conference policies supersede Southern Union policies, as Georgia-Cumberland is the employer.

The Georgia-Cumberland Conference Executive Committee has authority to act on behalf of the constituents between regular sessions. Several subcommittees serve the Executive Committee, including: 1) Adventist Book Center Board, 2) Association and Trust Services Board, 3) Cohutta Springs Adventist Center Board, 4) Finance and Building Subcommittee, 5) Personnel Committee 6) Strategic Planning Committee for Evangelism, and 7) Board of Education.

The Executive Committee is the constituency for the Board of Education. The Committee appoints the members of the Board of Education in accordance with the Board constitution for a term of office concurrent with the term of the Executive Committee. Functions of the Board of Education include: 1) to assume general authority for operation of the Conference educational system, 2) to approve an adequate balanced annual budget, 3) to consider and act on the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools (Vice-President for Education) in the employment, transfer, and dismissal of educational personnel, 4) to review wage and salary rates for educational personnel within the wage scale of the Southern Union, 5) to support and implement the denominational program of school evaluations, 6) to approve the school calendar which meets denominational and state minimum requirements, 7) to arbitrate appeals and grievances, 8) to evaluate facility needs in terms of student population projections, 9) to evaluate recommendations of the Superintendent of Schools regarding opening and closing schools, and the consolidation of existing schools, and 10) to receive and process applications to the Southern Union from junior academies teaching secondary subjects.

#### TRAVEL REMUNERATION FOR BOARD MEMBERS

GCC 1132

Travel remuneration will be authorized for all board members to attend Board of Education meetings.

#### MULTIMEDIA POLICY

GCC 1219

The Georgia-Cumberland Conference seeks to maintain high academic and spiritual standards in all our schools. Academic time should be closely guarded. Videos, DVD's, and other multi-media can be a valuable learning tool when used to augment specific curricula and academic goals. However, when used as time-fillers and entertainment, this media can be a waste of valuable learning time and possibly damaging to the spiritual atmosphere in the classroom.

Teachers must realize that Christian parents have wide-ranging views as to what is acceptable media for their children to view. Consideration must be given to views that may be more conservative in nature. If school administration believes a parent's view is extreme and parent objections jeopardize the smooth operation of the school, the local school board and/or conference Education Department should be consulted. **PG-13 and R-rated movies are never appropriate.**

Keeping in mind the principles in Philippians 4:8, the following policy was developed by the GCC CIAC and approved by the conference Board of Education:

All entertainment media to be shown in school or at school functions must be approved by the principal/head teacher. In one-teacher schools the school board chairperson or conference regional director should be consulted. All media should be previewed before use. Parents should be notified in advance before showing any media for entertainment purposes.

It is also recommended that instructional media be approved by the principal/head teacher, and teachers must notify parents before showing any media in the classroom.

Off-campus activities can be an integral part of a well-rounded educational experience for students. Much learning can be gained from well-planned field trips that meet spiritual and educational objectives. Student groups who perform for audiences can be a powerful witness for Christ and the school. Care must be given, however, to consider the costs, time, and philosophical basis for such activities.

All off-campus trips, including class trips, must meet the school's mission and fit the spiritual philosophy of education for Seventh-day Adventist schools. Philippians 4:8 serves as an appropriate guideline when considering the value of a given activity. "Whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable, . . . think on these things."

All trips should have specific educational/spiritual objectives in mind. Age appropriate witnessing and community service activities are especially encouraged. Literary, historical, scientific, artistic, and active recreational activities may also be appropriate. Activities that glamorize non-Christian behaviors or are frivolous in nature are to be avoided.

Safety and proper supervision of students is of utmost importance when planning and implementing off-campus activities. While it is recognized that there will be a certain amount of risk in any off-campus activity, teachers and administrators must take reasonable precautions and use sound judgment to minimize such risks. It is impossible to develop guidelines that address all possible scenarios involving off-campus activities. However, provision must be made for students to be under direct supervision at all times by an adult.

#### A. ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (PRE-K through 8)

The following information applies to all off-campus trips. All school trips should be connected to academic or spiritual activities. All day trips must be approved by the local school board, and in addition all overnight trips must be approved by the Conference Office of Education. (Use Overnight Trip Request form) Overseas and out-of-country school trips are not permitted for elementary students.

Each trip should be planned to include all class members without respect to financial status. All trips should be planned with consideration to limiting the "three D's": Days (time) out of class, Distance to be traveled, and Dollars (cost).

Supervision: One or more teachers must accompany all school trips, and adequate gender-appropriate chaperones must be provided: Levels PreK-2, 1 for every 3 students; Grades 3-4, 1 for every 5 students; Grades 5-8, 1 for every 8 students. Overnight trips require additional gender-appropriate chaperones.

Inter-school sports games must be scheduled after school hours so they do not compete with academic teaching time.

Overnight trips are limited to three (3) school days. The request must verify that all activities have a spiritual or educational purpose, with related assignments and an evaluation plan:

1. Touring groups: music, gymnastics, and others are limited to three (3) school days per year.
2. Eighth grade class trips are limited to three (3) school days.
3. Water activity requires the presence of a certified lifeguard.

Verification of compliance with all areas of this policy must be provided on the Overnight Trip Request form. There is an October 31 deadline for submitting the basic outline, and the final request must be submitted at least 30 days prior to the trip. Plans should not be finalized nor the trip taken until approved.

Accommodating Non-Participating Students: All students are expected to participate in all school functions planned for their class or group. Accommodation at school should be made for students not involved in the particular school function or Pathfinder event, and for those excused with a legitimate reason not to participate, such as a health reason or parental request. The school should provide supervision and appropriate alternate activities in school for non-participating students in attendance. Unless a special activity is planned, this may be done by assigning the student(s) to another classroom, or by providing a substitute teacher if the teacher is away.

NOTE: Exceptions to the time restrictions in this policy must have the written approval of the local conference Office of Education.

## **B. JUNIOR ACADEMY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

An off-campus trip is one in which the class or school is involved in worthwhile off-campus activity. When a trip is planned, the teacher or sponsor should consult with and receive approval from the school administration/school board before suggesting or discussing a trip with students.

### Day educational trips:

The trip must be educational and planned well in advance.

The itinerary must be prepared and presented to the school board/secondary administrator at least one week prior to date of event.

The trip should be planned to include all class members without respect to financial status.

Funds for the trip are to be raised in accordance with local school policy.

Overnight educational trips for junior and senior academies are limited to three school days.

Chaperone ratio guidelines for field trips for grades 9-12 is 1 for every 12 students (1 for every 10 students for overnight trips). For overnight trips an additional number of gender appropriate chaperones will be required as determined by the local operating board.

Touring groups such as choir, band, gymnastics, etc. requiring overnight lodging shall not exceed three (3) school days for any one organization during a school year.

Non-educational off-campus activities such as club activities, class picnics, student association outings, and other special activities shall be limited to one school day. Exception: Senior class trip has a five-school-day limit. All class trips must include both spiritual and educational components. (SU 5272).

Out of division trips – Please consult (NAD) North American Division “Out of Division Trips” policy FEB 05 40 for guidelines and procedures. Requests for sea cruises must receive GCC BoE approval after local board approval.

NOTE: Exceptions to the time restrictions in this policy must have the written approval of the local conference Office of Education.

## **Checklist for Overnight Field Trips**

The following checklist has been developed as a guide for planning overnight field trips. It is assumed that the teacher or principal has personally checked out all exhibits/sites and knows what is worthwhile and what may be unacceptable to our most conservative families. If not, describe plans to ensure this trip will be appropriate for all students.

Field trip addresses standards in the following areas:

- Participation by all students regardless of their ability to pay.
- Evidence of planning for daily spiritual components, devotions, activities.
- Outlined assessments for educational and spiritual objectives.
- Lesson plans for classroom substitute(s) are complete.
- Student/chaperone ratio is adequate for type of field trip taken. (GCC 1228)
  - A. PreK-2, 1 for every 3 students
  - B. Grades 3-4, 1 for every 5 students
  - C. Grades 5-8, 1 for every 8 students
  - D. Overnight trips require additional gender-appropriate chaperones.
- All chaperones have received written guidelines for the trip.
- Leader and chaperones are aware of students with food/other allergies and medical needs.
- Leader has plan for addressing these issues if necessary.
- First aid kit
- Provision made for certified lifeguard at all swimming events.
- Chaperones and trip leader have working cell phones.
- Cell phone numbers are available to principal and trip director.
- Principal has received a detailed itinerary for entire trip.
- Signed consent/release forms for each student.
- Students and parents have read written trip rules.
- Policy concerning searches.
- Policy on electronics (DVDs, iPods, videos, games, etc.)
- Dress code in place for trip (casual, swimwear, formal, etc.)
- “Items to Bring” list given to every student.
- Volunteer driver forms complete. Drivers have adequate insurance and good driving records. (GCC 1231)
- Vehicles are in good condition and meet safety requirements (no 12-16 passenger vans)
- Map with description of trip route is available for principal and others.
- Contingency plans in place in case of vehicle breakdowns.
- Transportation costs calculated and funds are in place to cover those expenses.
- Lodging secured for each night of the trip.
- Lodging adequate for age and number of students/chaperones.
- Room assignments complete.
- Meal-planning complete and all food expenses are covered.
- Exceptions to policy – obtain additional guidelines from regional director.

Revised January 26, 2023

Fifteen-Passenger Van Use – In the interest of safety, denominational organizations shall not purchase, lease, rent or use fifteen-passenger vans, or modified fifteen-passenger vans, for sponsored activities under any circumstances. Alternatives to fifteen-passenger vans include: minivans and SUVs, mini-school buses, and fifteen-passenger buses with dual rear wheels.

Students may only be transported to/from school and to school functions under the following conditions:

#### REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL DRIVERS

1. In an effort to alert volunteer, for hire, and employee drivers of their responsibilities, as well as to screen volunteers for good driving records, the Georgia-Cumberland Conference Office of Education has developed a “Driver Questionnaire.” (See [www.gccsda.com](http://www.gccsda.com) education forms). ALL drivers must complete the questionnaire before being approved as a designated driver. The school must verify a driver’s driving record before permitting them to drive for school functions. The completed forms are to be kept on file to document due diligence by the school for all drivers for school events. Each driver must have an acceptable record of not more than two traffic citations and no at-fault accidents in the last three (3) years
2. Drivers must be at least twenty-one (21) years of age, have a properly credentialed driver’s license, and have no health issues impacting on the ability to drive.
3. The weight of passengers and/or cargo in approved vehicles or trailers shall not exceed the manufacturer’s guidelines for gross vehicle weight and towing capacity. Trailers shall not be towed by any van carrying passengers other than the driver and an additional adult.
4. Written parent consent must be obtained before students can be transported.
5. All students must wear appropriate seat belts as provided by the vehicle manufacturer. Under no circumstances shall students share restraints or ride without restraints. Violations of this rule may result in the student being sent home or otherwise disciplined.
6. Driving for school events is not a right. It is a privilege and can be denied or revoked by the school or GCC.

#### PRIVATELY OWNED VEHICLES

7. Per school policy students may be transported using insured privately owned and properly maintained passenger vehicles when authorized by local school administration.
8. Adventist Risk Management recommends that volunteers using privately owned vehicles have at least \$100/\$300 thousand liability coverage. Schools must satisfy themselves that drivers have at least state mandated minimum automobile liability and medical payment insurance. If an accident occurs, the volunteer’s insurance will be considered the primary coverage and ARM will be secondary **or excess**. Schools should **obtain** a copy of proof of insurance and a copy of their driver’s license **for drivers wishing to drive for school events. Such documents should be filed and maintained.**
9. **Privately owned vehicles must comply with the School/Church Owned Vehicle Policy as stated below.**

#### SCHOOL/CHURCH OWNED VEHICLES

10. All school/church owned vehicles must carry the appropriate insurance as required by NAD policy. Contact the conference treasury department for further details.
11. Vehicles, including a school **bus** or MFASB “**multi-function activity school bus**,” rated with a total capacity of up to 15 passengers (including the driver) may be used to transport students. MFASB vehicles have the appearance of a shortened bus and are not referred to as a van. Check current state regulations for requirements for driver’s licenses.

12. **Large Vans.** No vans manufactured or equipped with seating for more than 12 occupants,

regardless of the number of seats installed, shall be utilized (utilized = owned, rented, lease, volunteered, or borrowed) for use by GCC entities, unless equipped with dual (four) rear wheels *and* a raised roof. Acceptable examples would be mini-buses, Ford Transit vans with factory dual rear wheels, Turtle-Top conversions, etc. If not clearly in compliance, entity must seek guidance from GCC before utilizing the vehicle.

No full-size vans manufactured before 2015 shall be utilized by GCC entities, unless such vans are a part of a fleet which is professionally serviced and maintained. Examples of approved vans would be hired shuttle services, Southern Adventist University Transportation vehicles, and commercially-rented vehicles. Privately-owned vehicles which are part of a car-sharing marketplace do NOT qualify as a commercially-rented vehicle and may not be utilized unless they meet the standards outlined above.

Vans manufactured after 2015 with the capacity from the factory for up to 12 seats may be utilized by GCC entities.

13. **Vans with a Capacity for Less than 12 Passengers.** Care should be taken in the selection of vans with a capacity of less than 12 passengers for regular use. The specific model's safety features, safety data from crash tests, and accident/injury data, where available, should be taken into consideration. Newer vans generally have additional safety features and should be preferred.

Any employee who drives, authorizes, or has knowledge of their church or school using a passenger van not conforming to this policy may be disciplined up to and including termination of employment.

## SCHOOL DAY AND HOUR POLICY (PREK-10 SCHOOLS)

GCC 1233

**School Calendar.** The Conference publishes an annual *PreK-10 School Calendar* with specified opening and closing dates for elementary schools and junior academies. All school calendar changes, exceptions, and special arrangements must be approved by the Conference Office of Education on an individual basis.

**School Days.** The approved *School Calendar* contains 180 student contact school days as required by state laws and denominational policy. All days missed must be made up.

**School Hours.** The minimum school day shall be 6.5 hours including lunch and recess (6 hours excluding lunch). On days preceding the Thanksgiving, Christmas, and summer vacations only, school may be dismissed at noon. These days may still be counted as full school days. If a school has a delayed opening up to 2 hours or has early dismissal after lunch is served, the day is counted as a full day.

**Excluded Activities.** According to state regulations, a number of school-related activities sometimes allowed by Union policy must be excluded from the required 180 days of school, unless school is actually in session. These include registration day, parent-teacher conferences, staff development/teacher in-service days, and all school holidays and vacations.

**Snow Days.** School must have been in session at least half a day in emergency closure situations in order for that day to be counted as a school day. In Georgia, state regulations provide that up to four days lost due to factors beyond the school's control may be excused with specific approval by the Conference Office of Education. In Tennessee, state regulations permit schools the option of adding 30 minutes to each school day for the entire school year to make provision for up to 13 "snow days" to be used if needed due to inclement weather. Tennessee state regulations do not permit these days to be used to lengthen vacations nor shorten the school year, nor can they be carried over to the following school year. However, some of them may be used for parent-teacher conferences and other local professional development activities, if designated and pre-approved prior to the beginning of the school year.

**Make-Up Days.** “Make-up days” refers to unscheduled school days conducted to make up time lost due to emergencies or bad weather. Generally, make-up days should be conducted during vacation periods or Spring Break, or added to the end of the school year. School holidays should not be used. Teachers may not miss in-service meetings to make up days. All make-up days must be full-length school days (minimum 6½ hours). In order to be counted as school time, activities must be conducted during regular school hours with required attendance and record taken. No partial or shortened days, nor weekend or evening activities, may be counted. Special functions for make-up days must be approved by the Conference Office of Education.

**Weekend and Evening Activities.** Weekend and evening activities cannot be counted as school time. Activities held on Sunday or in the evening, such as field trips, community service events, open houses, science fairs, fall festivals, picnics, school programs and graduation, must be in addition to the required 180 days of school.

**Parent-Teacher Conferences.** Parent-teacher conference days may not be counted as part of the required 180 days of school. Provision is made for teachers to schedule time for conferences, as follows. Regulations vary in each state. In Georgia, a limited amount of early dismissal time (after at least a half day of school) may be used for conferences. One half day per semester, with an additional half day for classrooms with 18 or more students, is permitted. In Tennessee, schools may use “snow days” for parent-teacher conferences, if approved as professional development days prior to the beginning of the school year.

**Early Friday Dismissal.** Preparation for the Sabbath day is a part of Seventh-day Adventist teachings and culture. Early Friday dismissal option up to one hour early in order to accommodate readiness of students and teachers for the Sabbath hours is permitted when voted by local school boards. So that all parties are informed, the local school board must communicate dismissal times to the Conference Office of Education.



# Georgia-Cumberland Conference Office of Education Grades 1-8 Suggested Daily Schedule

## **SCHEDULE SUMMARY\***

A daily schedule should be firm enough to provide a pattern for the day's activities and yet flexible enough to allow for unexpected instructional needs and opportunities. Activities should be alternated between active and quiet work and varied to include research and study, drill, creative expression and self-directed activity. This is a working document. Please contact your Regional Director for any updates.

The following table represents the **minimum expected minutes and criteria for GCC classroom schedules.**

Subject	Grades 1-4	Grades 5-8	Grades 1-8
Worship	15 minutes daily	15 minutes daily	15 minutes daily
Bible	30 minutes daily	45 minutes daily	30-45 minutes daily
Balanced Literacy Pathways Reading Workshop			
• Reading/Phonics	75 minutes daily	45 minutes daily	45-75 minutes daily
• English/Grammar	30 minutes daily	45 minutes daily	30-45 minutes daily
• Spelling	10 minutes daily	20 minutes daily	10-20 minutes daily
• Handwriting	10 minutes daily	15 minutes daily	10-15 minutes daily
Math	60 minutes daily	60 minutes daily	75 minutes daily
P.E. (Physical Education)	30 minutes daily	30 minutes daily	30 minutes daily
Recess	Scheduled daily	Scheduled daily	Scheduled daily
Science/Health	60 minutes WEEKLY	150 minutes WEEKLY	60-150 minutes WEEKLY
Social Studies	60 minutes WEEKLY	150 minutes WEEKLY	60-150 minutes WEEKLY
Art	60 minutes WEEKLY	60 minutes WEEKLY	60 minutes WEEKLY
Music	60 minutes WEEKLY	60 minutes WEEKLY	60 minutes WEEKLY
Keyboarding	Scheduled Weekly (Grades 3, 4)	Scheduled Weekly	Scheduled Weekly (Grades 3-8)

## **INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**

**GCC 1247**

The Georgia-Cumberland Conference has developed an Internet Acceptable Use Policy for implementation in all K-12 schools. Guidelines are given for each of grade levels K-2, 3-6, and 7-12, with use rules, safety rules, and legal implications listed for each level. Individual schools may make additions to the policy, but may not delete portions of it. Each school's Internet Acceptable Use Policy should be evaluated and updated annually.

**SAFETY INSPECTION POLICY****GCC 1248**

Each school board should establish a School Safety Committee and designate its chair as the School Safety Officer. Each school must submit an inspection report to the Office of Education annually using the School Safety Inspection Check-off List (FORMS section).

**EXCLUSION OF DANGEROUS EQUIPMENT AND ACTIVITIES****GCC 1249**

The use of mini tramps is excluded in our schools unless specific liability coverage is provided, and the use of skates on the school premises is discouraged. Skateboarding is not permitted in Georgia-Cumberland Conference schools for safety reasons.

**REGARDING STUDENTS WITH ALLERGIES****GCC 1250**

It is the goal of schools in the Georgia-Cumberland Conference to provide a safe environment for all students. However, it is not feasible to guarantee that students with allergies will not be exposed to potential allergens within the school environment. This includes food allergens such as wheat, soybeans, dairy products, and peanuts.

Therefore, it becomes the responsibility of the parents and students with the allergies to assist the school in developing procedures to minimize potential exposure and to determine the appropriate course of action should an allergic reaction take place. Parents should do the following:

- Notify the school in writing of potential allergens
- Work with the teacher to develop a plan to minimize potential exposure
- Write specific guidelines for school faculty to follow should an allergic reaction occur
- Provide any medication that may be administered by school faculty in the event of an allergic reaction
- Train the student how to avoid potential exposure to allergens and what to do should an allergic reaction occur

The school faculty will attempt to assist the student and parents in following the plan as outlined to minimize potential exposure to allergens. However, parents and students must recognize that the school cannot control every scenario that might result in such an exposure. Thus, it is extremely important to have procedures in place in the event of an allergic reaction.

**SCHOOL INCIDENT REPORT FORM****GCC 1251**

Use of the School Incident Report Form is to be implemented in our schools. (See GCC website)

**SCHOOL EMERGENCY DRILLS****GCC 1252**

All schools are required to follow their state law concerning emergency drills. See the “School Emergency Drill Policy and Guideline” document for further details (GCC Supplement L or GCC website)

**USE OF CHURCH AND/OR SCHOOL FACILITIES  
BY INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS (See SU 1260 & 1265)**

**GCC 1260**

Churches and/or schools should not use their facilities to operate or house the ongoing operation of schools or home schools independent of the conference educational system.

**AE21 POLICY**

**GCC 1270**

The following guidelines must be met and conference approval granted in order for a school to operate an AE21 Program.

1. There must be a minimum of five students for grades 9 & 10. If the school is a regular, established Junior Academy applying for grades 11 & 12, there must be a minimum of five students in those grades.
2. Any school that has an established K-10 program (excluding AE21) can offer grades 11 & 12 through AE21 if they meet the minimum enrollment requirement.
3. The majority of the students enrolled in the program must be constituents of the Georgia-Cumberland Conference.
4. Schools who do not meet the above criteria may operate an AE21 program independently. Students enrolled in the program must have student accident insurance and be listed in the school register.

**GUIDELINES FOR ACCEPTING STUDENTS:**

**GCC 1600**

When an interested family and prospective student(s) contact the school requesting admission, the following steps should be taken:

1. An enrollment packet containing the school's handbook and other information about the school and appropriate enrollment forms should be made available.
2. The student must present the completed required forms and records, including (a) the Registration Application form, (b) at least one written recommendation from a previous teacher or pastor, and (c) the last report card from the former school.
3. A testing appointment should be set up and a placement test administered (*WRAT 3* or *Scholastic*).
4. After test scores are available, an interview with the student will be conducted.
5. Information from the Registration Application form, the written recommendation(s), the report card, the placement test, and the interview will be reviewed by an Admissions Committee of the faculty or the school board to determine whether the student should be admitted.
6. Once acceptance has been granted, the student's family must turn in the state health card and the physical examination form, and sign a release for the student's cumulative records to be sent from the previous school. The school will contact the previous school for these records.

Deadline for Accepting Students. April 1 is the deadline for enrolling transfer students into Georgia-Cumberland schools for credit. After that date, students are encouraged to make arrangements to remain at their former school or to finish the grade with special assignments from that school. Academic credit, grades, and/or transcripts will not be given unless the student has transferred to a Georgia-Cumberland school on or before April 1, except in combination with official progress records from the former school. (See SU 1806)

## SCHOOL ACCREDITATION

GCC 1700

Seventh-day Adventist schools are accredited by the Accrediting Association of Seventh-day Adventist Schools, Colleges, and Universities, a member of the National Council for Private School Accreditation (NCPSA) which is approved by the U.S. Department of Education as a school accrediting agency, and by the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) for the purpose of enrolling non-immigrant (F-1) students.

In Georgia, SDA schools are additionally accredited by the Georgia Private School Accreditation Council (GAPSAC), which has been approved by the State Board of Education and by the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia for transfer of credits, and by the Georgia Student Finance Commission for HOPE scholarship eligibility.

In North Carolina, SDA school accreditation under the National Council for Private School Accreditation (NCPSA) is recognized by the North Carolina Division of Non-Public Education.

In Tennessee, SDA Schools are State Approved as Category II schools (agency approval through a non-public school approval agency).

All Seventh-day Adventist schools in the Georgia-Cumberland Conference, therefore, enjoy accreditation that is recognized both nationally and by the state educational authorities in each state.

## HOMEWORK GUIDELINES FOR GCC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

GCC 1709

### **Rationale**

Homework is a controversial topic being debated among parents and educators. While most schools continue to require some form of homework, the value of such is being questioned by more educators in light of recent research. According to Alfie Kohn in his recently published book, *The Homework Myth*, “Decades of investigation have failed to turn up any evidence that homework (some vs. none or more vs. less) is beneficial for students in elementary school.”

On the other hand, many parents evaluate the quality of education based on the amount of homework a child has to do. The opinion is that the more homework there is, the more the child will learn.

The Georgia-Cumberland Conference Curriculum Instruction and Assessment Committee (CIAC) examined the need for homework guidelines in conference schools at the April 19, 2007 meeting. First, homework was defined as schoolwork assigned at school but completed at home whether specifically designated as “homework” or not. Then the following considerations were discussed relating to the development of appropriate guidelines.

- The length of the school day is now seven hours or more
- Children need time to play and do chores at home
- Childhood obesity is becoming an increasing health issue
- Family time including worship is important to preserve
- Fresh air and exercise is important to the well-being of children
- Time for extra-curricular and church activities is important
- There is no teacher guidance/control during completion of homework
- Some activities may have value when completed at home

## **Homework Guidelines**

The following are to be considered as homework guidelines and not rules that must be strictly adhered to. However, the guidelines reflect the philosophy of the Georgia-Cumberland Conference and should be carefully examined before implementing any homework policy or practice in the elementary school (grades K-8).

**Grades 1 thru 4**—Homework should be informal and primarily consist of reading with parents/guardians. It may be appropriate to do some practice of math facts, spelling words, or memory verses at home, but most of this learning should be done at school. An occasional project may be completed at home, but the bulk of the work on such projects should also be completed at school. Total time should not exceed 20 minutes on any particular night.

**Grades 5 & 6**—Home reading should be encouraged at this level, but requirements should have some flexibility. In addition, occasional classwork, projects, or reviewing for tests is permissible. Total time should not exceed 30 minutes per night.

**Grades 7 & 8**—It may be necessary for students to complete some classwork at home in addition to home reading. Reviewing for tests, working on projects, etc. are appropriate at this level as well. Total time should not exceed 45 minutes per night.

**All Grades**—Homework should not be assigned or expected to be completed over weekends, holidays, or vacation days.

## **SCHOOL RECORDS POLICY**

**GCC 1711**

School records are the property of the school, not the student or parents. Private schools are legally permitted to hold school records for non-payment of fees, provided that a statement of this policy is published in the school bulletin (SU 3145). The conference will honor the school's directive to withhold transcripts if so notified.

Records from a previous school are not a part of the school's records unless the information is entered into the current school's records. School records are to be sent to another school only on the written consent of the parents (of a minor student). In harmony with state regulations, school records will not be sent or given to parents or tutors in home schools. Parents have the right to see their child's school records, and may request copies. Parents may not take originals from the school nor carry them to another school.

When a student transfers, the Cumulative Record along with medical records, immunization records, and reading record cards should be sent to the new school, with the written consent of the parents. The students' folders should be purged of all superfluous material. The tear-off paper copy of the cumulative record is to be sent. The card copy is to be kept in the school as a permanent record card. When transferring student records to another school, a note should be made at the bottom right corner of the permanent record card with the date and the name and address of the school where the records are being sent.

After 3 years, if the whereabouts of a pupil is unknown, discard the tear-off sheet and all else in the folder. Keep the permanent record card, with a dated note at the bottom right corner that the folder and the records in it have been discarded.

In harmony with state regulations, when a school closes all permanent record cards should be sent to the conference office to be stored. All other cumulative records should be destroyed.

Official attendance and scholarship records are to be entered into the *School Register*, which is sent to the conference office at the end of the year. The conference will provide transcripts from these records on request. Local elementary schools may not issue transcripts. (Junior Academy records and transcripts are handled by the Southern Union office.) The school's directive to withhold transcripts for non-payment of fees will be honored.

#### **ACHIEVEMENT TESTING POLICY:**

**GCC 1721**

In harmony with Southern Union policies and previous actions of the Board of Education, MAP assessments are to be administered each fall, winter, and spring in grades 3-8 and 9 & 10. Local school results will not be released.

MAP assessment services may be provided to home-schoolers for the grades being tested at the school. Tests will be administered by the church school as a part of the regular testing program. This may not meet state testing requirements for home-schoolers.

Placement tests are available from the Office of Education on an individual basis for new students and where special placement needs are indicated.

#### **TEXTBOOK STATEMENT**

**GCC 1724**

Textbooks constitute an important part of the curriculum in all schools including Seventh-day Adventist schools. However, a good class is not based solely on the textbook. In other words, the textbook is not the curriculum of the class. The teacher uses the readings and other resources in the textbook as a major ingredient for student assignments in addition to other carefully selected materials. This does not mean that the textbook is the "final authority" or the "gospel truth" of the class but is one of many classroom resources.

In some subject areas, the Seventh-day Adventist Church spends millions of dollars to produce their own textbooks. But in some subjects, the church has felt they could utilize some of the excellent textbooks already available in the general market. Before allowing a church school to purchase such books, the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventist Church Office of Education has a very careful process of evaluating and recommending approved textbooks. The evaluators include Adventist teachers and administrators who carefully study the books to determine their suitability for Adventist schools. Textbooks with a pervasive philosophical approach counter to Adventist teachings will not be approved. Other textbooks will meet the high standards required for approval. However, even the best approved textbooks sometimes contain inaccuracies. Some of these are factual errors while others represent differences of opinion on important philosophical or religious issues. Should the textbook being used have such problems, the Seventh-day Adventist teacher will make every attempt to point out the errors or differences. This also gives the teacher an opportunity to discuss with the children important ideas they will be confronting at the present time or in the future as they further their education. Since the Adventist teacher will be emphasizing that the textbook is not the "Bible" of the classroom, students will be taught to read critically and thoughtfully every textbook under the careful guidance of the classroom teacher. As students then enter the broader world, they will be better prepared to deal with the many challenges their belief system will face having been made aware of these potential areas under the thoughtful care of a dedicated Adventist teacher.

#### **GRADE PLACEMENT POLICY (See SU 1610, 1719, 1806, 1810, 1811, 1812)**

**GCC 1806**

**Placement Level.** Georgia-Cumberland Conference schools are organized on the general expectation that most students will progress through school at the rate of one grade per year. Students should not be placed at a level more than two grades removed from their appropriate age placement. Students should graduate from

8<sup>th</sup> grade before they turn 15. Grade placement should be based on the student's age, social, physical, mental, and emotional maturity, as well as academic achievement.

**Adjusting Grade Placement.** Teachers must submit a Proposed Grade Placement form and obtain conference approval before retaining or accelerating a student. This form should be submitted early, at least several weeks before the adjustment takes place.

**New Students.** Any students lacking school academic records and/or testing data must be assessed prior to enrollment for appropriate instructional placement. Permanent grade placement should be assigned only after school records have been received.

**Acceleration.** Ideally, all students will remain their peer group. A written plan of enhanced curriculum should be designed and implemented for students who are identified as high achievers. The GCC iCare Plan can be used for this purpose as well.

**Retention.** Retention should be completed as early as possible within the primary grades, and should generally be avoided at the 7th and 8th grade levels. It is preferable to have students make up deficiencies during the summer rather than to retain them. Remedial work must be under the direction of a certified teacher or through an approved learning center program. Documented evidence of successful completion of such a program must be presented to the school upon application or re-application for enrollment for the following year. A student should not be retained more than once in his/her school experience. Special Education students with a current IEP may not be retained in any grade, but should be placed in the next grade level at the end of the school year with a plan for appropriate modifications and adaptation. The GCC iCare Plan should be used to document student needs. Teachers should refer to *Lights Retention Scale* before making a formal request.

## PATHFINDER SCHOOL DAYS POLICY

GCC 1817

**Policy on School Absence for Pathfinder Functions.** Pathfinder field activities, as a general rule, are to be scheduled outside of school hours. If, however, there is an occasional Pathfinder activity (in addition to the annual Camporee) that will necessitate early dismissal or absence from school, the following policy should be followed:

1. The club director should consult with the school not less than two weeks prior to the planned activity, and obtain school approval for the prearranged absence of Pathfinder students. The notification should include the names of the Pathfinders to be dismissed, the nature of the activity, and the time the students are to be picked up. Then, the club staff should meet the appointment on time. When these arrangements have been made, then appropriate prearranged absence and parent permission forms need to be on file for each student involved. Students must be marked absent from school (except for the authorized Camporee as outlined below).
2. Students may be required to make up any school work missed as a result of the activity.
3. Clubs should ask for dismissal of Pathfinders for weekend activities only, except for the annual Camporee. The Camporee is the only Pathfinder activity which may be authorized as a school function as outlined below. One-day activities should be conducted on Sunday or other non-school days, if possible.

The Pathfinder Camporee may be considered a school function only if specifically authorized in an official action by the local school board. Weekends may not be counted. In order for week days to be counted as school time, school officials must be in charge or Pathfinder leaders officially designated as school personnel

for the Camporee by school board action. Otherwise, Camporee days must be made up unless school is in session. This policy is designed to accommodate students who attend, and not to affect the school program nor alter the school calendar. Except when the Camporee is authorized as a school function as outlined above and counted as school time, students who attend the Camporee when school is held are to be given excused absences from school, which shall not negatively impact the student in regards to perfect attendance recognition. (See GCC 1228 – Accommodating Non-Participating Students)

Southern Union policy states that students are permitted one school day maximum for Pathfinder Camporees. For those who have to travel several hours, Pathfinder students may be dismissed early on Thursday. In years when there is a Union-wide Camporee, two days may be taken. One additional day will be allowed for travel to the Union Pathfinder Camporee where necessary. The Pathfinder director should arrange departure time with the principal.

#### **WEAPONS POLICY (See SU 1854)**

**GCC 1854**

Students shall not possess weapons or dangerous instruments of any kind on school grounds, buildings, buses, nor at any school-related or school-sponsored activities away from school facilities.

Weapons and dangerous instruments include, but are not limited to:

1. Firearms: pistols, revolvers, shotguns, rifles, "zip guns," "stun guns," lasers, and/or any other device capable of chemically propelling a projectile.
2. Cutting and puncturing devices: dirks, daggers, knives with blades longer than three inches, folding knives with a blade that locks into place, disk with points or blade, or razor with an unguarded blade.
3. Explosive and/or incendiary devices: pipe bombs, time bombs, cap guns, containers or inflammable fluids, and/or other hazardous devices.

Any instrument used for the purpose of inflicting harm or injury constitutes a weapon for the purpose of this policy.

Any school employee shall confiscate any device used as a weapon.

The principal and/or the local school board reserves the right to take any disciplinary action deemed appropriate in response to the offence.

Upon information that a student is suspected of violating this policy, the principal/head teacher shall notify the student's parent(s) or guardian(s). In case of firearms, explosive or incendiary devices, and knives with blades longer than three inches the appropriate law enforcement officials shall be notified.

#### **BULLYING, SHUNNING, AND/OR HARASSMENT**

**GCC 1858**

Adventist Christian educators, administrators, teachers, staff, and students strive to make each Georgia-Cumberland Conference Schools a safe place for all. Because we value each student, we are stating a student or group of students must not participate in, or allow any act of direct or indirect bullying, shunning, and/or harassment which degrades, injures, threatens, or disgraces a student, staff member, and/or visitor to the campus. Bullying, Shunning, and/or harassment includes jokes, teasing, gestures, rumor spreading, intimidation, any physical, verbal, cyber attack, or any such activity that is directed at a person's race, religion, national origin, age, gender, possessions, abilities, physical features, or any other feature or characteristic of another individual.



Incidents of bullying, shunning, and/or harassment, and/or sexual harassment occurring during on-campus or off-campus school sponsored events are to be reported to the supervising teacher and administrator. As far as possible every effort will be made to protect student identity, anonymity, and confidentiality. Confirmed incidents of bullying will result in disciplinary action.

### **Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment includes sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, physical, or cyber conduct or contact that by design or innuendo, is sexual in nature. This kind of behavior interferes with an individual's ability to perform work or school assignments due to the intimidating and hostile environment that is created.

Incidents of sexual harassment occurring during on-campus or off-campus school sponsored events are to be reported to the supervising teacher and administrator. As far as possible every effort will be made to protect student identity, anonymity, and confidentiality. Confirmed incidents of sexual harassment will result in disciplinary action.

Disciplinary action will usually include suspension. Severe infractions and/or repeated infractions can result in dismissal.

## **GEORGIA-CUMBERLAND CONFERENCE EDUCATION ENDOWMENT**

**GCC 3041**

The Georgia-Cumberland Conference of Seventh-day Adventists hereby establishes a Quasi- Endowment Fund under the following terms:

### **I Name**

The name of this fund shall be known as the "GCC Education Quasi-Endowment Fund" and shall hereafter be called **THE FUND**.

### **II Purpose**

The purpose of **THE FUND** shall be to promote and foster Christian Education throughout the Georgia-Cumberland Conference. It is expressly intended that income generated from **THE FUND** be given in accordance with *Section V* below, to Georgia-Cumberland Conference operated schools, beyond and totally separate from any other appropriations, gifts and/or subsidies that the Conference would otherwise grant to the schools. The Board shall annually allocate grants to these schools to assist with worthy students, new school development, school growth projects and special needs as they arise.

### **III Controlling Board**

**THE FUND** shall be administered under the authority of the Georgia-Cumberland Conference Board of Education. This board shall be responsible for annually reviewing **THE FUND's** financial statements, and ascertaining that the income derived from **THE FUND** has been properly discharged in accordance with this document.

### **IV Principal**

**THE FUND** shall initially be established with certain gifts that have been given to the Conference over the past 20 or so years, totaling approximately \$ 300,000.00, which have already been deposited for this purpose

with the Conference. Additionally, the Conference shall at times solicit funds and accept donations which shall be added to the principal of **THE FUND**.

It shall be the responsibility of the Georgia-Cumberland Conference treasurer to maintain, safeguard and invest the principal of **THE FUND** to yield a reasonable rate of return, in accordance with denominational policy.

It is not intended that any portion of the principal of **THE FUND** be used or expended for any reason. Rather it is intended that the entire principal be invested as specified above.

#### **V Income**

One tenth (1/10<sup>th</sup>) of all income generated from **THE FUND** shall become part of the principal of **THE FUND** and shall be re-invested as specified above.

The remainder of all income generated from **THE FUND** shall be distributed annually, during the third quarter of each year, in accordance with the purpose of this fund (above) as specified by the Board of Education.

#### **VI Modification/Dissolution**

It is the express intent of the donor(s) and of the Board of Education that **THE FUND** be used for the perpetual benefit of Christian Education for as long as it exists.

This Board may, by three fourths (3/4) vote of the Board membership, modify this document and/or dissolve **THE FUND** and return all remaining assets of **THE FUND** unrestricted, to the Georgia-Cumberland Conference, with the stipulation that to the extent possible, all assets be used to fund educational activities within the Conference.

#### **FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT ALLOCATION POLICY**

**GCC 3045**

The conference's financial support of FTE teaching positions is contingent upon tithe and adequate conference resources and a demonstrated need based on enrollment in each school. Impact on existing schools in the area will be considered before expanding, opening, or reopening a school.

Conference-employed teaching staff will not be added nor the staffing level sustained unless the total school enrollment is maintained at the following levels:

- 8 students enrolled for a one-teacher allocation
- 18 students enrolled for a two-teacher allocation (an exception would be made if there are 16 students enrolled in all eight grades at a two-teacher school)
- 36 students enrolled for a three-teacher allocation
- Additional teacher allocations will be made to schools with more than 50 students (a request for an additional teacher may be made for each additional 15 students).

NOTE: In a Junior Academy, 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade students each count as 1.5.

Exceptions may be considered, above or below the number of teachers allotted, if:

- A school has a past due debt to the conference for teacher salaries,
- A school has a PreK/Kindergarten and/or 9<sup>th</sup> grade program,

- A local school constituency and church has a history of meeting financial obligations with a lower student/teacher ratio,
- A school is experiencing a temporary decline in enrollment, or
- A school is considered remote and necessary.

Two (2) FTEs are to be kept in reserve each year to be used in the fall as needed to meet the needs of shifting enrollments across the conference.

<b>FTE</b>	<b>Students</b>	<b>FTE</b>	<b>Students</b>
1	8	12	170
2	18	13	185
3	36	14	200
4	50	15	215
5	65	16	230
6	80	17	245
7	95	18	260
8	110	19	275
9	125	20	290
10	140	21	305
11	155	22	320

#### **SCHOOL TREASURERS**

**3049**

The proper management in handling monies is crucial to the ministry of the school. To protect and safeguard the integrity of the ministry, to guard against conflict of interest, and to protect the reputation of the teacher and his/her family, the teacher/principal and any immediate family member or individual representing a conflict of interest should refrain from serving in a treasury capacity for the local school.

#### **SCHOOL ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE POLICY**

**GCC 3050**

**PURPOSE:** To support Conference-wide Christian education without creating cash flow problems at the Conference office and, at the same time, promote fiscal responsibility, good stewardship and sound financial practices at the schools.

1. When the local school's outstanding balance is not paid within 30 days, the Conference Undertreasurer will notify the Conference Vice President for Education. The Conference Vice President for Education will send a letter to the school board chair, principal/head teacher, and school treasurer requesting payment. A copy of this letter will be sent to the Conference Undertreasurer, local pastor, and church treasurer.
2. When the outstanding balance is older than 60 days, the Conference Undertreasurer will notify the Conference Vice President for Education. A letter will be sent to the school board chair, principal/head teacher, and school treasurer by the Vice President for Education or Regional Director asking for prompt payment and reason(s) for the past due account. A copy of this letter will be sent to the Conference Undertreasurer, local pastor and church treasurer. When unforeseen circumstances do not allow for prompt payment the school must submit a plan to the Conference Office of Education and the Treasury Department. This plan is to be approved by the school board and received at the conference office within two (2) weeks of receipt of the letter by the board chair.

The submitted payment plan will be reviewed and approved by the Conference Vice President for Education and the Vice President for Finance. If the submitted payment plan is not approved by the conference, the school board must resubmit a modified payment plan within two (2) weeks.

3. When the outstanding balance is older than 90 days, the Conference Undertreasurer will notify the Conference Vice President for Education. The Conference Office of Education will send a letter to the school board chair, principal/head teacher, and school treasurer to request a special local school board meeting, within two weeks, to inform the board of the current situation and request prompt payment. A copy of this letter will be sent to the Conference Undertreasurer, local pastor, and church treasurer. The actions taken by the Conference and the school board will be reported to ADCOM and the Board of Education.
4. If all steps are not followed, teacher allocation will not proceed for the following school year until the Board of Education approves the payment plan.

#### **ACADEMY WORTHY STUDENT FUND POLICY**

**GCC 3142**

The Georgia-Cumberland Worthy Student funds are available to:

1. Boarding students of conference-supported four-year academies.
2. Students attending conference-supported four-year day schools with funds coming directly from the current constituent church of such day schools.

#### **ANGEL LIBRARY PROGRAM**

**GCC 3240**

The schools in the Georgia-Cumberland Conference participate in the ANGEL Library Program provided by Southern Adventist University. ANGEL (Adventist Network of General Educational Libraries) provides centralized library purchasing, processing, and record keeping for all the schools in the conference, and has expanded into other conferences in the Southern Union and across North America.

All schools are required to participate in the ANGEL Library Program, which is funded by subsidies from Southern Adventist University, the Southern Union, and the Georgia-Cumberland Conference, and by direct per-student charges billed to the schools. These charges should be included in the student registration fees each year.

#### **INDEPENDENT MINISTRIES PUBLICATIONS STATEMENT**

**GCC 3242**

Publications from private ministries that have been identified by the NAD as antagonistic to the SDA church are not to be displayed in school libraries.

#### **MENTORING PROGRAM**

**GCC 4012**

A mentoring program has been established for teachers in one- and two-teacher schools. An experienced teacher will be appointed as mentor in each of five districts to assist in the orientation and adjustment of teachers new to small schools. Each mentoring teacher will receive a stipend in recognition of extra time and service.

#### **FULL-TIME CERTIFICATED INSTRUCTIONAL PERSONNEL**

**GCC 4013A**

The Office of Education employs full-time instructional personnel. In the event that a school desires another teacher beyond the conference subsidized allocation, the school may request to fully fund a teacher at the

unsubsidized rate. Unsubsidized teachers are not considered local hires. They receive the same benefits and are obligated to the same policies as subsidized teachers. Schools will be billed 100% of the cost of the teacher. In consultation with the Regional Director, submit a request to the Vice President of Education for approval.

## **PART-TIME CERTIFICATED ADMINISTRATIVE/INSTRUCTIONAL PERSONNEL - GCC 4013B**

Local school boards are delegated by the Board of Education to recruit and select appropriate candidates for part-time teachers (see L #2080) in cooperation with Office of Education. The Office of Education retains supervision of all instructional staff part or full-time through direct or delegated processes.

**Standards:** See also: Southern Union Code 4010-4113, 4159-4160, 4195, 4210, 4766.

### Qualifications to include but not limited to:

- NAD Teacher Certificate for the grades/classes taught
- Cleared background check
- Member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in regular standing
- Be a Christ like role model both at school and off duty as an employee representing the Seventh-day Adventist church
- Infuse spiritual overtones across teaching and learning
- Provide a safe learning environment
- Utilize the NAD curriculum and standards, textbooks, and GCC approved alternate textbooks
- Develop weekly lesson plans for the subjects/classes taught
- Competency to teach
- Provide constant supervision of students in their care
- Provide timely and regular communication
- Establish fair and timely procedures for grading, returning work, and completing report cards.
- Discipline is fair and appropriate but never physical
- Recognize and support the supervisory role of the conference and the administrative team.
- Abide by applicable conference and Southern Union educational policies.

**Salary and Benefits:** Remuneration and benefits shall be determined on a prorated basis reflecting the work load or responsibilities involved. Regular employment benefits may not be provided.

**Professional Development:** Part-time teachers may be invited to attend GCC Regional Professional Development Days and Teachers' Convention. Expenses will be remunerated per policy.

Part-time teachers may request of the Office of Education (OoE) to take Southern Adventist University coursework to renew their certificate and/or work towards a master degree in education.

## **CLASSIFIED PARAPROFESSIONAL**

**GCC 4013C**

Hiring paraprofessionals is delegated to the local school board. See Southern Union Code 3585, 4800-4880 for further details, including qualifications and duties.

## **PreK-12 EDUCATIONAL PAYROLL**

**GCC 4014**

The PreK-12 payroll includes all conference-employed elementary and secondary teachers in the Georgia-Cumberland Conference.

## **PROCEDURE/GUIDELINES FOR THE EMPLOYMENT OF CERTIFICATED PERSONNEL**

**GCC 4015**

The employment of certificated personnel shall be by the authority of the conference Board of Education in consultation with the local school board. When it is determined that a position is open and needs to be filled, the following procedure is to be followed:

1. Any openings will be posted on the NAD website for a minimum of 14 days. This site can be accessed by the GCC website.
2. Eligible Respondents shall have a valid NAD denominational teaching certificate with endorsements for the level or subjects to be taught.
3. Respondents shall submit a current resumé with documentation of a current NAD denominational teaching certificate, a list of updated teaching experience with school names and locations, a list of references, and a completed application form.
4. The Conference Office of Education or its designee shall verify NAD certification and check the teacher's references.
5. When it is determined that a candidate meets the criteria for an opening, the resumé will be shared with the local school board for review.
6. The Conference Office of Education and the local board will select the candidates to be interviewed. The Conference Office of Education will arrange the interview(s) and will meet with the local board and the candidate(s).

**NOTE:** Teacher hiring is a process that involves a working partnership between the local board and the Georgia-Cumberland Conference Office of Education. Any teacher or administrator to be interviewed must have the approval of both the local school board and the Office of Education. When either partner is not convinced that the individual is a good option, the search process should continue until both partners are in agreement on a candidate.

7. Once the Conference Office of Education and the local board agree to extend an offer to a candidate the Conference Superintendent will communicate the offer of employment to the candidate. If the offer is accepted, the employment of the teacher must be reviewed and voted by the Board of Education at its next meeting.
8. Once the offer of employment has been extended, it can be rescinded by the employing organization at any time prior to acceptance and ratification by the Board of Education.
9. When the candidate has accepted the offer of employment, an employment packet will be sent to the teacher in order to begin the process of transition to the Georgia-Cumberland Conference.

## **REQUIRED FORMS - NEW EMPLOYEE**

**GCC 4016**

The new employee is required to complete the following forms:

1. Form W-4: Federal Income Tax Withholding
2. Form G-4: Georgia Income Tax Withholding (if you work in Georgia)
3. Form I-9: Employment Eligibility Verification (with required identification)
4. Hire Information
5. Harassment Employment Agreement
6. Authorization for Records

7. Report of Physical Examination Form, where applicable
8. Education Employment Application
9. Health Care Application

## **TUBERCULOSIS TESTING**

**GCC 4017**

New educational personnel working in the Georgia-Cumberland Conference must provide evidence of tuberculosis screening (and the results) to the Office of Education. This is a part of the initial physical examination required for employment of conference-employed teachers. For locally employed teachers and aides, screening should be secured at a public health department where the cost of a skin test is not prohibitive. The cost is to be reimbursed by the local school for locally employed personnel. The results of the TB test must be provided to the conference Office of Education.

## **TEACHER JOB DESCRIPTION**

**GCC 4018**

**Job Summary:** Duties include teaching, supervision of students, and varying staff functions

### **Scope of Responsibility:**

1. To fulfill teaching assignments as directed by school/conference administration
2. To supervise and protect students
3. To direct programs and functions as outlined below
4. Other duties as assigned by school/conference administration

### **Typical Duties:**

1. **Spiritual:**
  - Lead students to accept Christ as their Savior and/or develop a growing relationship with Christ
  - Provide spiritual mentoring for students
  - Provide a dynamic environment with emphasis on Christian living
  - Emphasize character development and development of Christian values
  - Enable students to develop spiritual leadership skills
2. **Instruction:**
  - Provide an effective dynamic learning environment
  - Make provision for individual differences and special learning needs
  - Utilize instructional techniques to address various learning styles
  - Monitor and evaluate student learning progress
  - Deliver curriculum in harmony with Southern Union curriculum standards
3. **Supervision:**
  - Maintain positive and effective classroom control and discipline
  - Establish a climate of mutual respect in training students for self-government
  - Ensure the care and safety of students by providing adequate supervision
  - Provide supervision duties and responsibilities as assigned by school administration

### **Special Requirements:**

- Demonstrate a commitment to Jesus Christ, the teachings and mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church; be a Seventh-day Adventist church member in regular standing; desire to serve in a cooperative, spiritually redemptive, and soul-winning atmosphere; serve as a Christian example and role model
- Express a love of children and young people, and a love of teaching
- Relate well to all students, parents, superiors, and the public

**Qualifications:**

- Bachelor's Degree in Education with current denominational teaching certificate (minimum)
- Adventist EDGE and 4MAT unit planning and training preferred
- Demonstrated effective teaching skills
- Recognized people skills
- Write and speak English fluently
- Moderate technology skills

**Typical Physical Demands:**

- Able to interact with and keep pace effectively with students
- Requires sitting, standing, bending, reaching, and may require lifting up to 50 pounds
- Requires manual dexterity sufficient to operate standard office/school equipment such as computers, fax machines, calculators, telephones, etc.
- Requires normal range of hearing and vision
- Must be able to operate a motor vehicle and maintain a current driver's license

**Working Conditions:**

- Essential school tasks performed under normal conditions with little or no noticeable discomfort
- Both indoor and outdoor work areas in a typical school environment
- Some travel involved on field trips and other school trips

**PROFESSIONAL DRESS RECOMMENDATIONS****GCC 4019****Guide to Business Casual Dressing for Work**

This is a general overview of appropriate business casual attire. Items that are not appropriate for school are also listed. Neither list is all inclusive and both lists are open to change. The lists tell you what is generally acceptable as business casual attire and what is generally not acceptable as business casual attire.

No dress code can cover all contingencies so teachers must exert a certain amount of judgment in their choice of clothing to wear to work. If you experience uncertainty about acceptable, professional business casual attire for work, please ask.

The Georgia-Cumberland Conference Office of Education's objective in establishing a business casual dress code is to allow principals, teachers, and school staff to work comfortably and modestly in the workplace. While being comfortable, employees still need to project a professional image for students, parents, church members, and community visitors. Business casual dress is the standard for this dress code. These guidelines were requested by school boards and principals.

Because all casual clothing is not suitable for school, these guidelines are to help you determine what is appropriate to wear to work. Clothing that works well for the beach, yard work, exercise sessions, and sports contests is not appropriate for a professional appearance at work. Articles of clothing revealing cleavage, chest, back, feet, stomach or underwear is never appropriate at school, even in a casual setting.

Even in a business casual work environment, clothing should be pressed and never wrinkled. Torn, dirty, or frayed clothing is unacceptable. All seams must be finished. Any clothing that has words, terms, or pictures



that may be offensive to parents and a poor example to students is not acceptable. Clothing with the school logo is encouraged. Sports team, university, and fashion brand names as displayed on clothing are generally acceptable.

### **Slacks, Pants, and Suit Pants**

Slacks that are similar to Dockers and other makers of cotton or synthetic material pants, wool pants, flannel pants, dressy capris, and nice-looking dress synthetic pants are acceptable. Inappropriate slacks or pants include jeans, sweatpants, exercise pants, Bermuda shorts, short shorts, shorts, bib overalls, leggings, and any spandex or other form-fitting pants such as people wear for biking. Jeans are appropriate for out-door education and identified field-trip events.

### **Skirts, Dresses, and Skirted Suits**

Casual dresses and skirts, and skirts that are split at or below the knee are acceptable. Dress and skirt length should be at a length at which you can sit comfortably in public. Mini-skirts (skirts above the knee), skorts, sun dresses, beach dresses, sleeveless dresses, and spaghetti-strap dresses are inappropriate for school.

### **Shirts, Tops, Blouses, and Jackets**

Casual shirts, dress shirts, sweaters, tops, golf-type shirts, and turtlenecks are acceptable attire for work. Most suit jackets or sport jackets are also acceptable attire for the office, if they violate none of the listed guidelines. Inappropriate attire for work includes tank tops; midriff tops; shirts with potentially offensive words, terms, logos, pictures, cartoons, or slogans; halter-tops; tops with bare shoulders; sweatshirts, and t-shirts unless worn under another blouse, shirt, jacket, or dress.

### **Shoes and Footwear**

Conservative athletic or walking shoes, loafers, clogs, sneakers, boots, flats, dress heels, and leather deck-type shoes are acceptable for work. Wearing no stockings is acceptable in warm weather. Flashy athletic shoes, flip-flops, and slippers are not acceptable school wear.

### **Jewelry, Makeup, Perfume, Cologne, Hats, and Hair**

Jewelry, beyond a wedding band, is not to be worn. Make-up should be used with good taste and not applied to draw attention to one's self. Remember, some people are allergic to the chemicals in perfumes and make-up, so wear these substances with restraint. Hats are not appropriate in the building. Hair should be kept clean, neat and well-groomed with no radical hair length, style or color.

## **ELEMENTARY ENDORSEMENT FOR SECONDARY CERTIFIED TEACHERS**

**GCC 4111**

The elementary endorsement (see Certification Requirements section 3.1.1) is required for secondary certified teachers who are hired to teach in an elementary position.

An applicant for an elementary endorsement must complete the following requirements in addition to fulfilling the general requirements for the Basic or Standard Certificate:

1. Required areas:
  - science
  - health
  - mathematics
  - reading
  - language arts
  - religion (Bible)
  - social studies

Recommended areas:

art  
music  
physical education  
children's literature  
applied arts

2. An applicant must have instruction and experience in a multi-grade classroom of three or more grades, preferably in a small school with three or fewer teachers.

## **CERTIFICATION POLICY**

**GCC 4112**

Certification is the responsibility of the teacher. At the time of prospective employment, the Superintendent/Principal shall emphasize to the teacher that certification and recertification is solely his/her responsibility. Official transcripts for certification are to be sent to the conference Office of Education at the request of the teacher. Originals will then be forwarded to the Southern Union Office of Education where final decisions are made on certification issues.

Certification and recertification courses plus master's degrees in education are available at Southern Adventist University to the conference/academy approved staff.

Any course(s) which may be required/requested by the employing organization but are not offered at the college may be funded by the employing organization.

The following wording is to be added to the teacher employment contract and annual contract binder:  
"Current certification is required. Teachers will be notified one year before expiration. Salary will be reduced one increment and frozen at that level if certification has expired. One year after expiration the teacher may be terminated from employment."

(From SU 4153) Each teacher is personally responsible for maintaining his/her teaching certificate. A teacher who allows his/her certificate to lapse will be paid at the level of a non-certified teacher. Salary rates shall be maintained at that level until the certification has been restored. No retroactive pay adjustment will be made for the period during which the teaching certificate was expired. Lack of certification is cause for termination.

(From SU 4154) Certification work (academic or non-academic) must be completed by August 31, and transcripts or records received in the Southern Union office of education by October 31 in order to be eligible for retroactive pay from the beginning of the current contract year. Both renewals and salary step adjustments are to be retroactive upon completion of requirements by August 31.

See also Southern Union 4132 and 4111 for additional information.

## **CHURCH ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION**

**GCC 4113**

The following provisions from the Southern Union Education Code will be followed in Georgia-Cumberland Conference schools:

Church membership. All school staff, including locally-funded personnel, shall be members of a Georgia-Cumberland Conference Seventh-day Adventist Church and exemplify high standards of Christian conduct. They shall maintain membership in a constituent church of the school, academy church, or church within the

conference and are expected to participate in church activities, programs, and finances. (SU 4012.2a) Any exceptions for having membership outside a constituent church must be voted by the local school board with Office of Education personnel present.

Attendance and participation. The teacher shall transfer membership to a constituent church of the school, academy church, or church within the conference and participate wholeheartedly in its activities. The sense of belonging and brotherhood will win the hearts of students and strengthen the work of the school. Attendance at church services should be regular, both for the teacher's own spiritual refreshment and for the example set before the students. (SU 4405)

Residence location. Georgia-Cumberland Conference teachers are requested to live in the vicinity of the school where employed and required to be part of the school where employed and required to be part of the school constituency and local church community.

Christian example. The Christian educator is intended to be an exemplar to the pupils, the school, and the community, and has the personal responsibility to:

- Practice consistently the ideals of the Seventh-day Adventist Church
- Have a high sense of loyalty to the aims and ideals of Christian education, particularly to the Seventh-day Adventist philosophy of education
- Look upon Christian teaching as a holy vocation and ministry
- Support Adventist education, including the enrollment of the employee's own school-age children enrolled in the K-12 constituent school
- Participate in church and community activities
- Develop effective relationships with parents, patrons, and colleagues (SU 4910 and 4915)

Faithful return of tithe. Adherence to the basic beliefs and practices of the Church is a condition of employment for all credentialed/licensed employees. Because of the importance of tithing as a principle and the spiritual experience it represents, no church organization shall employ a Seventh-day Adventist who is not returning a faithful tithe. Employee tithing practices are subject to annual review. (GCC Working Policy 1160)

## **INTERN TO REGULAR STATUS**

**GCC 4125.A**

In the spring of the school year when a teacher is completing an internship and ready to move to regular employment status (usually when finishing the third year), the local school board will vote to retain or recommend the teacher for the next year, the Office of Education will review the local board's recommendation and send it to the Conference Board of Education for a vote, and then the teacher will receive a letter confirming the change in status.

## **IMPLEMENTATION OF TRANSFER STATUS**

**GCC 4125.B**

Each experienced certificated teacher transferring into the Georgia-Cumberland Conference from another conference will be placed on transfer employment status for a period of three years. Regular employment status is maintained only when reassigned within the conference.

## **EMPLOYMENT STATUS**

**GCC 4125.D**

### **Probationary Status**

In addition to the provisions stated in the Southern Union Employment Manual, in the Georgia-Cumberland

Conference a probationary contract will be issued to teachers not currently certificated for one year or until such time as appropriate certification is secured.

## **PRINCIPAL SUPPORT**

**GCC 4162**

Definition. A principal is the administrator of a school with at least 4 teachers including the principal. A head teacher is the leader in a school with 1 to 3 teachers including the head teacher. (See SU 4162, 4164)

Administrative Allowance. Principals and head teachers will be given an administrative allowance as recommended in the current Southern Union salary scale. (See SU 4740)

Salary. In addition to the monthly administrative allowance and salary rate published in the Southern Union salary scale, principals of large schools (4 or more teachers) will be placed on 12-month employment and receive a 12-month salary according to the salary scale.

Responsibilities. Principal and head teacher responsibilities are outlined in Southern Union policy. (See SU 1852, 4162)

Teaching Load. Principals' teaching loads must not exceed the maximum number of students or classes stated in the Georgia-Cumberland Conference policy for schools with 50 or more students. (Note that the Georgia-Cumberland policy recommends that the principal's teaching load be reduced from what is stated in the Southern Union policy.) The maximum number of students should be reduced by 5 from the classroom teaching loads listed in SU 4167 for a teaching principal in an elementary school with 50 or more students. (See GCC 4167)

Release Time. Release time is built into the teaching load restrictions for schools with 50 or more students. (See GCC 4167) Head teachers and teaching principals will be granted additional release time by employing a substitute teacher equivalent to one-half day per teacher per year for supervision and evaluation of teachers. (See GCC 4792)

Office Support. Secretarial help should be provided for principals/head teachers in schools with 50 or more students. (See SU 4167.4)

## **ELEMENTARY AND JUNIOR ACADEMY PRINCIPAL'S TEACHING LOAD**

**GCC 4167**

In the Georgia-Cumberland Conference, it is recommended that elementary and junior academy principal's teaching load be reduced, as follows:

### **Junior Academy Principal**

The principal of any junior academy where there are **50-75** students and/or four other teachers, should not be required to teach more than three secondary units or the elementary equivalent. The principal of any junior academy where there are more than **75** students and/or six or more other teachers should not be required to teach more than two secondary units or the elementary equivalent.

### **Elementary Principal**

The principal of an elementary school should not be required to carry more than a 3/4 teaching load if there are **50-75** students and/or four other teachers; 1/2 teaching load if there are **75-100** students and/or six other teachers; 1/4 teaching load if there are **more than 100** students and/or eight other teachers.

(All other provisions of SU 4167 apply)

## REDUCTION IN FORCE

GCC 4177

When low enrollment or lack of funds creates financial difficulties for a local school, the local School Board may, after consultation with the Conference Vice-President for Education, vote to request that the Conference Board of Education invoke a reduction in force. If the request is voted by the Board of Education, it will also determine which teacher(s) will lose position(s), after reviewing input from the Conference Personnel Committee and the local School Board. Because a reconfiguration of grades and teaching responsibilities will likely be necessary, the Conference Board of Education will consider the best interests of the students and the successful long-term operation of the school when making this determination, and will not base the decision solely on employment status or tenure.

Should reduction in force be implemented, efforts will be made to implement transfer procedures for the affected employee(s). It is recommended that all schools with openings give careful consideration to any displaced elementary teachers within the GCC. If a transfer is not procured, non-renewal policies will be in effect.

## UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION

GCC 4201

Not-for-profit organizations, including church-affiliated schools, are exempt from Federal unemployment premium contributions; consequently, employees of such organizations are ineligible for Federal unemployment compensation.

## LOANS (FROM GCC WORKING POLICY 4220)

GCC 4720

Under extreme circumstances and the following guidelines, loans may be available to full-time employees when approved by ADCOM.

### Automobile Loans

1. *Security.* All automobile loans shall be secured by the Conference having custody of the certificate of title to the automobile with registered lien to the Georgia-Cumberland Conference.
2. *Limitations.* Used automobile loans are limited to ninety percent (90%) average loan value as determined by the NADA Used Car Guide up to a maximum of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000). New automobiles are limited to seventy-five percent (75%) of purchase price up to a maximum of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000).
3. *Repayment.* Monthly payments shall be set up on a payroll deduction basis and are fully payable within three (3) years. If the vehicle purchased is ten or more years old, the loan is payable within two (2) years.
4. *Interest.* Interest rates charged on an automobile loan shall be prime rate plus two (2) percent but not less than seven (7) percent.

The loan is fully due at the time the employee concludes his/her employment with the Conference or wishes to sell the automobile.

**Bridge Loans.** When circumstances warrant, due to a required employee move at the request of the conference, a bridge loan may be granted under the following circumstances:

1. *Security.* Security shall be obtained in favor the Georgia-Cumberland Association in the form of a lien/security deed placed on the former home or as determined by ADCOM.
2. *Limitations.*
  - a. The bridge loan shall not exceed the lesser of:
    1. Ten (10) percent of the value of the new home or minimum required down payment or

2. Forty (40) percent of the net equity of the former home.
- b. Former home must be placed on the market and listed with a licensed realtor (not “for sale by owner”).
3. *Repayment.* Payment in full shall be made at the closing of the former home.
4. *Interest.* Interest rates charged on bridge loans shall be set at prime rate plus one (1) percent.

#### **CHRISTMAS BONUS (SEE GCC WORKING POLICY 4040)**

**GCC 4721**

An annual monetary Christmas gift is given to all full-time Conference employees.

#### **HOUSING ASSISTANCE (FROM GCC WORKING POLICY 4080)**

**GCC 4726**

The remuneration factor and the implementation of cost of living granted to the employee include a provision for housing.

Employees are encouraged, whenever possible, to own housing in, and make adequate provision for housing free-of-debt by the time they are no longer in active service. When an employee purchases housing, he/she accepts the full responsibility involved in home ownership. The employee should, however, counsel with Conference Administration as to the appropriate geographical area for his/her new home that would best serve his/her needs and the needs of the Conferences (refer to GCC Working Policy 3130).

#### **DUPLICATE HOUSING EXPENSE (FROM GCC WORKING POLICY 4070)**

**GCC 4727**

**Initial Assistance.** When an employee is moved from one location to another, and because of the conditions of the lease, or failure to sell or rent his/her home, he/she is required to pay housing expenses both at the former location and at the new location, an allowance may be granted to cover the time when payments are being made at both locations and both homes were habitable. The allowance may be granted under normal conditions up to three (3) months.

**Unusual Circumstances.** In unusual circumstances when the employee has not been able to sell the home at the former location and evidence is presented indicating that the asking price for said home at the end of the three- (3) month period was no more than one hundred percent (100%) of an appraisal provided by an independent appraiser, up to an additional three (3) months’ assistance may be granted. An independent appraiser shall be understood to be a qualified appraiser such as may be contacted through banks or home loan associations. Real estate agents are specifically excluded from this group. The reasonable cost of such appraisal will be reimbursed by the employing organization.

**Extreme Circumstances.** If the employee has not been able to sell the home after having received an allowance for six (6) months because of extreme circumstances, the allowance may be continued for a further period of six (6) months, if the asking price for the said home is not more than ninety-five percent (95%) of the appraisal during this period. A written request must be submitted to ADCOM to extend beyond the six-month (6-month) period.

**Amount.** When granted, the monthly allowance shall be the actual expense for principal and interest, property taxes, and insurance up to 100 percent of the cost factor (housing/utilities/property tax of the Relocation Analysis Report) as indicated by ERI for which the employee was eligible at the former location. Fifty percent (50%) of any rental income shall be deducted from the allowance. The expenses on the prior residence should be used as the basis for figuring the assistance granted. Second mortgages are excluded.

For those who have no mortgage payment, the conference will pay the monthly utility bills, prorated property taxes and homeowners insurance up to six (6) months. Any extension must be requested in writing to ADCOM.

**Sharing of Loss on Sale.** In view of the importance of pricing a home correctly **before** it is placed in the market and due to the critical importance of the first thirty (30) days in the sale of the property, both the employee and the new employer may agree at any time during the selling process that in lieu of spending all the duplicate housing allowance provided, the property may be placed for sale at less than one hundred percent (100%) of market value as determined by current appraisal. The cost of the reduction may be shared between the new employer and the employee at an agreed upon ratio on an individual basis. The employer cost is not to exceed the maximum duplicate housing allowance provision.

**Application Form.** This form is available from Human Resource Services or Treasury.

## **SUBSTITUTE TEACHER EXPENSE POLICY**

**GCC 4730**

The **conference** will grant travel, per diem, lodging and all substitute teacher expense when it requires the assistance of a teacher or school administrator. Examples are school evaluation teams, curriculum committee, Board of Education. The conference will pay all substitute teacher expense for teachers attending professional meetings according to that policy. None of this expense will be billed to the local school. (See SU 3580, 4732)

The **school** will be charged for travel, per diem, lodging and all substitute teacher expense for the teacher when he/she is asked to accompany students to educational functions. Examples are Academy Bible Conference, Youth to Youth, Music Festivals, Environmental School or Outdoor Education, Field Trips, Science or Social Studies Fair, Academy Day, Class Trips, etc. All (100%) of the substitute teacher expense will be billed back to the local school.

The conference will pay **two-thirds** and the school will be charged **one-third** of substitute teacher expense for absence due to the teacher's bereavement, jury duty, personal days, or illness, according to policy. (See SU 4770) The conference will pay the substitute teacher(s) and bill one-third of the expense to the local school.

All absences not covered by specific policies are considered to be special requests. As such, the teacher must receive prior approval from the school administrator and the superintendent before seeking local board approval and before making financial obligations. The teacher may have to forfeit salary for taking an elective absence. When a teacher's salary is forfeited, each day's pay will be deducted from the teacher's salary based on that teacher's daily salary rate. The deduction will be calculated as 1/220 of the teacher's annual salary for 10-month employees, and 1/240 for 12-month employees. (See SU 4190.) The school will not be charged any portion of the substitute teacher's pay when this occurs.

All substitute teachers will be paid for their services through the conference Office of Education and the appropriate portion will then be billed to the local school. The school administrator must submit all appropriate forms—completed and signed—to the Office of Education for the substitute to be paid.

Substitute teachers will be paid on a differentiated daily rate for non-degreed, degreed, and currently certificated teachers. To qualify for degreed or certificated rates, documentation of the degree/certificate must be received by the conference prior to payment for services, and the certificate must be current.

Increases in the substitute teacher's pay will be tied to the wage scale, based on a sliding scale within the range established by the Southern Union. (See SU 3580)

**Long-Term Substitute Wages (00-27):** Substitute teachers will be paid daily wages at the daily rate according to the established scale (see SU 3580) as long as the regular teacher remains employed and on regular salary, including extended illness and maternity leave. The expense will be funded on a percentage basis with a portion billed to the school according to the established formula. Daily employment of substitute teachers will not be utilized to fill a vacancy, nor continued beyond the policy provisions for a paid leave.

Qualified long-term substitutes employed for an extended period of time to fill a vacancy when the regular teacher takes FMLA leave will be paid for thirty working days at the current long-term substitute rate. Such employment should be negotiated by the conference before any long-term substitute teacher is placed. The expense will be funded by continuing the regular teacher billing to the school.

Long-term substitutes who are employed to complete a school year when the regular teacher vacates the position will be reclassified as full-time employees, and will be paid on a pro-rated basis according to the regular teacher salary scale based on the his/her teacher certification qualifications.

## **EMPLOYMENT OF SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS**

**GCC 4732**

**SDA Church Membership and Age Requirements.** All instructional employees including substitute teachers and paraprofessionals (see SU 4807) must be members of the Seventh-day Adventist church and at least 18 years of age.

**Screening and Approval.** All substitute teachers must be approved by the school board and submit required screening and employment documents to the conference. A list of substitute teachers should be screened and pre-approved by the school board and the conference before the beginning of the school year. The board may enable the principal (or board chair in small schools) to approve the hiring of a substitute after the list of approved candidates is exhausted.

**Payment of Wages.** All substitute wages will be paid through the conference payroll according to the substitute teacher pay scale, and the appropriate portion will be billed to the local school. Pastors and other workers on conference salary will not receive additional pay for substituting. However, all substitute days and other teacher absences must be reported to the conference.

**Use of Paraprofessionals.** When a substitute teacher is needed, it is preferable to allow classroom paraprofessionals to remain in their regular roles. However, a paraprofessional assigned to the classroom may be used as a substitute teacher if needed and willing, or if a better qualified substitute is not available. The board and the conference must approve the hiring of each paraprofessional to be used as a substitute teacher the same as with other substitutes. (A paraprofessional may not be used to avoid expense, nor to avoid reporting the absence of the regular teacher.)

**Paraprofessional Replacement.** When the regular classroom paraprofessional is used as a substitute teacher, additional assistance must be provided in the classroom to replace the services of the paraprofessional at local board expense. The arrangement must be approved by the conference Office of Education. If the substituting paraprofessional is being paid less than the substitute teacher rate or is a volunteer, the wages for substituting must be paid according to the regular substitute teacher pay scale.

**Use of Student Teachers.** State and university regulations do not permit student teachers to be employed as substitute teachers during their student teaching assignment, nor to be given unsupervised classroom teaching responsibility except as outlined for the student teaching program. Therefore, assigned student teachers may not be used as substitute teachers in Georgia-Cumberland Conference schools.



## **INTERNET/E-MAIL REIMBURSEMENT**

**GCC 4734**

Primary communication with employees is via electronic mail to their GCC email accounts, which are assigned to full-time employees and salaried part-time teachers. The Georgia-Cumberland Conference provides an Internet reimbursement of \$20.00 per month per household to all regular full-time employees and salaried, part-time teachers. Requests received after the 20th of the month will be processed the following month.

### **To request reimbursement:**

1. Subscribe to an Internet account.
2. Once a year, send a copy of your monthly bill via email, fax or mail to the Payroll Office at the Georgia-Cumberland Conference.

### **To Request/Receive the Reimbursement:**

1. Subscribe to an Internet account. High speed internet is recommended.
2. Once a year, send a copy of your monthly bill via email, fax or mail to the Payroll Office at Georgia-Cumberland Conference.

## **SPECIAL TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT**

**GCC 4739**

A special travel reimbursement will be made for authorized travel. After being submitted on an expense report and approved by the Office of Education, this expense is reimbursed as special travel.

The following special travel allowances are authorized:

1. Teachers' Convention.
2. Conference-approved in-service meetings.
3. Summer school and workshops. (4780)
4. Pre-approved professional meetings. (4789)
5. Conference-called meetings: Board of Education, Principals' Meeting, Curriculum Committee, and other committee meetings.
6. Hiring interviews/moving (when authorized).

General policies governing special travel reimbursements are as follows:

1. Mileage. Automobile mileage is reimbursed at the current rate on a per mile basis by the shortest route. (Car pool rates may be determined for special circumstances.)
2. Parking fees, tolls. Nominal additional incidental expenses incurred in automobile travel will be reimbursed if receipts are submitted.
3. Public transportation. If travel is authorized by public transportation, the amount will be reimbursed when receipts are submitted, provided the most direct and economical carrier is used.
4. Meals. Unless meals are provided or reimbursed directly, a standard amount is paid for overnight trips only at the current per diem rate.
  - a. Full per diem for two or more meals per day.
  - b. One half of the daily per diem when only one meal's expense is involved.
  - c. No allowance when fully entertained.
5. Lodging. Unless housing is provided, actual motel expenses are reimbursed if receipts are submitted. The employee is expected to use hotels or motels which are reasonably priced.

## EMPLOYEE SURVIVOR BENEFIT PLAN (FROM GCC WORKING POLICY 4120)

GCC 4748

An employer-provided life insurance policy shall be provided for full-time denominational employees, their spouse, and dependent(s) as defined in the Health Care Assistance Policy.

**Benefit Provisions.** The benefit shall be as follows:

Employee	\$100,000.00
Spouse	\$ 50,000.00 (Benefits reduced at age 70)
Dependent child	\$ 10,000.00
Stillborn	\$ 750.00

**One Benefit Per Death.** If the spouse or dependents are also serving as employees of the denomination, only one benefit per death will be paid.

**Seminarians.** Sponsored students at the Theological Seminary are covered by this employee basic life insurance.

### Additional Benefits Financed by Employees.

1. *Life Insurance.* Employees on a voluntary basis may supplement their basic life insurance amounts by participating in an insured Supplemental Life Insurance Plan administered by Adventist Risk Management Inc. for themselves, their spouses, and dependent children through payroll deductions.
2. *Eligibility.* Eligibility for participation in the Supplemental Life Insurance Plan may be determined by an underwriting evaluation of the employee's application form conducted by the insurance carrier.

**Governing Policy.** The provisions of the insurance carrier at the time a claim is submitted will prevail over the provisions as outlined in this section.

## OPTIONAL PROGRAMS

GCC 4749

Following is a list of sample optional programs available through payroll deduction. Check with the Georgia-Cumberland Conference Treasury Department for other available programs and application forms.

1. **Hartford Life** – provides insurance you purchase for yourself and your family through payroll deduction at a competitive group rate. It's available to all active employees of North American Division of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist employees working 20 or more hours per week, their spouse and dependent children to age 19 or age 26, if a full-time student.

### Available Coverage Amounts

#### Employee:

Guarantee issue purchase amounts -- three times annual earnings, rounded to the next higher \$10,000 to a maximum of \$250,000.

Medical underwriting purchase amounts – Seven times annual earnings, up to \$750,000.

#### Spouse:

Guarantee issue purchase amounts -- \$30,000.

Medical Underwriting purchase amounts – Purchased in increments of \$10,000

to a maximum of \$250,000. Spouse benefit cannot exceed the amount of employee's Supplemental Life amount.

**Child:**

\$25,000 flat amount, increments of \$1,000 to maximum of \$25,000. Child's amount cannot exceed the employee's Supplemental Life amount.

**Exclusions:**

Exclusions will be described in detail in the enrollment kit.

2. **Accidental Death and Dismemberment (AD&D)** (From GCC Working Policy 4090) insurance is offered by the Hartford Life Insurance on a voluntary basis. It is intended to provide future security for the employee's family and is payroll deducted. The benefits accrue only from accidental death or from accidental dismemberment.
  - a. **Eligibility.** AD&D is available to all active employees of the Georgia-Cumberland Conference, working twenty (20) or more hours per week, their spouses and dependent children to age nineteen (19) or age twenty-six (26), if a full-time student.
  - b. **Information.** Further information, including an application form, can be obtained online from the conference website ([www.gccsda.com](http://www.gccsda.com)) or from Treasury.
3. **Long-term Disability:** (from GCC Working Policy 4140) The Disability Income Plan provides partial income during a prolonged absence from work because of a disability. All full-time employees are covered under this plan. Adventist Risk Management coordinates this program which is underwritten by Hartford.

A monthly benefit amount of 66.67% of pre-disability basic monthly earnings, in addition to worker's compensation or any other assistance program related to employment, subject to a minimum monthly benefit of three hundred dollars (\$300) and a maximum benefit of six thousand dollars (\$6,000) per month, will be paid after a one hundred eighty- (180) day waiting period.
4. **Cancer Insurance:** (from GCC Working Policy 4110) This insurance coverage is on a voluntary basis. It is offered by a private company and is payroll deductible. Further information, including an application form, can be obtained from Human Resource Services, or Treasury.
5. **Tax-Shelter Annuities (TSAs and TDAs):** The new denominational defined contribution (DC) retirement plan is now in effect. In addition to the investments selected for the retirement plan, employees of non-profit charitable organizations are eligible to purchase additional tax-sheltered annuities (tax-deferred retirement savings) by payroll deduction from a number of approved providers. Contact the payroll department for more information.

**HEALTH CARE ASSISTANCE PLAN – ARM (FROM GCC WORKING POLICY 4130)**

**GCC 4750**

The Seventh-day Adventist Church recognizes that it has a fundamental interest in the health and general welfare of its employees, which is partially expressed by its Health Care Assistance Plan.

**Purpose.** The purpose of these services is to promote efficiency in corporate operations as well as contribute to employee financial security by providing a program to maintain the health of employees and their eligible dependents.

**Health Care Assistance Plan Services.** Adventist Risk Management, Inc. Health Care Services is the health care plan administrator for the Georgia-Cumberland Conference. ARM/Health Care Services has arranged with a third party to serve the Conference.

**Yearly Eligibility.** Reapplication will be made annually on January 1 to determine new eligibility or ineligibility. An eligible dependent is born to or legally adopted by the employee and is claimed as a dependent on the employee's income tax return.

**Coordination of Benefits.** All benefits, including the following, are subject to coordination of benefits:

1. Group insurance of spouse or family.
2. "No-fault" auto insurance reparations.
3. Private auto insurance.
4. Student accident insurance.
5. Government program or coverage.

Exclusions to this policy are personally purchased individual health insurance and benefits.

**Employee Mandatory Contribution.** A contribution is required for all employees who are eligible to receive Health Care Assistance Plan benefits. For current contribution amounts contact the Office of Vice President for Finance/Treasurer.

**Health Care Assistance Plan.** For full details of the Health Care Assistance Plan, including benefits, coverage, exclusions and limitations, go to [www.adventistrisk.org](http://www.adventistrisk.org). Additionally, the conference takes advantage of a Preferred Provider Organization (PPO), to contain medical costs. For information regarding providers, go to [www.bcbs.com](http://www.bcbs.com). For new cards, address changes, family coverage changes, or general inquiries, contact the Office of Vice President for Finance/Treasurer.

**Adventist Risk Management, Inc.** Address questions regarding procedures and implementation of the plan directly to Adventist Risk Management, Inc. The toll-free number to call is:

1-888-276-4732  
Monday - Thursday, 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM  
Friday 9:00 AM - 12:00 Noon

## **WORKERS' COMPENSATION (FROM GCC WORKING POLICY 4150)**

**GCC 4751**

All states have laws that provide compensation to workers whether pastors, teachers, local church or school workers, or anyone who is on Conference payroll, whether part- or full-time if they are injured while at work for an employer, whether or not the employer has been negligent. Workers' Compensation benefits can include medical expenses, loss of earnings, permanent disability benefits, death benefits, and rehabilitation benefits. All benefits are subject to state law and may have a waiting period. Each location must post a panel of doctors in clear view of all employees.

The states of Georgia, Tennessee, and North Carolina require that the "First Report of Injury" claim form be in the hands of the insurance carrier within three (3) days of the injury. A job-related death must be reported within twenty-four (24) hours. Failure to notify the State within this time period can cause a fine to be levied against the entity. **It is the responsibility of every employee to report a work-related accident as soon as it happens.** Claims must be filed with the Conference Risk Management Department.

## **BEREAVEMENT POLICY — CERTIFICATED PERSONNEL**

**GCC 4770**

Provision is made for certain paid leaves for certificated personnel. Substitute teachers will be paid according to conference substitute teacher policy for the following: 1. Bereavement (Compassionate Leave) a. The employee will receive three days leave upon the death of an immediate family member, including in-laws, grandparents, and grandchildren. b. The employee is eligible for five days (one work week) if responsible for settling the business affairs of the deceased. c. Substitutes for the compassionate leave will be paid on the same basis as substitutes for sick leave. d. Additional time may be granted in hardship cases by the employing organization. e. Travel costs incurred in connection with a bereavement leave are the responsibility of the employee. f. Travel Time. Two (2) days are granted for travel if the deceased immediate relative lived over 500 miles from the home of the employee.

## **PREGNANCY LEAVE CALCULATION**

**GCC 4771**

In the Georgia-Cumberland Conference, pregnancy leave will be calculated exclusive of holidays and vacation. The conference will continue to pay the salary for 30 working days for leaves for the birth, adoption, or placement of a child. The leave time will be extended by the number of school holidays and vacation days occurring during the leave.

## **SUMMER SCHOOL ATTENDANCE (SEE SU 4745, 4746, 4780)**

**GCC 4780**

These courses and programs are provided tuition-free for conference teachers. Teachers requiring dual housing accommodations will be reimbursed a weekly stipend plus mileage for each term in attendance at Southern Adventist University (SAU). The stipend amount will be determined by the weekly cost for double occupancy dormitory housing at SAU, whether or not the teacher stays in the dormitory. Teachers living 20 or more miles from the campus and commuting to the university are eligible for mileage reimbursement up to the stipend amount each week while attending summer school.

1. Special summer workshops for teachers sponsored by the conference, the Southern Union, or SAU.
2. Undergraduate courses taught in summer school at Southern Adventist University.
3. Southern Adventist University and LaSierra University Master's degree and related graduate courses taught in the summer at SAU.

If courses or programs are available in the Southern Adventist University summer school program and teachers elect to take the work elsewhere, no assistance will be provided, except as provided for in the Professional Enrichment fund.

Newly employed personnel coming from areas outside Southern Union Conference territory may have advanced so far in their study program that transferring to a college in this union would result in loss both to the employee and to the denomination. When such loss would occur, boards may grant approval for the employee to continue summer school in the original college and to receive the same benefits as though attending a college in this union.

## **CLASSES TAKEN DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR**

**GCC 4782**

Teachers desiring release time from school for taking classes at a local college or university must make satisfactory arrangements to cover their teaching duties and responsibilities while away from the school and secure approval from the local school board and from the conference Office of Education. Such arrangements are subject to the class load limits and other guidelines for classes taken during the school year.

## **RECERTIFICATION AND GRADUATE STUDY EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT**

**GCC 4783**

Recertification Assistance. Reimbursement for tuition and fees for courses needed for recertification which are not available through Southern Adventist University may be granted up to a maximum of \$450 per year.

Secondary Teachers' Graduate Study Assistance. Special reimbursement to secondary teachers (including secondary teachers in junior academies) for graduate study at the master's level in specialized fields not available through Southern Adventist University may be granted if approved. A maximum of \$1500 per year may be granted up to \$3,000 total.

Amortization. When the Georgia-Cumberland Conference agrees to assist an educational worker, its investment will be amortized the following year. Should the worker transfer to another field or discontinue employment for any reason, the unamortized amount must be negotiated with the calling organization or be deducted from the teacher's final pay.

**NOTE: See SU Code 4747 for information concerning the Southern Union Post-Graduate Study Assistance Program.**

## **PROFESSIONAL EDUCATOR PORTFOLIO (PEP)**

**GCC 4787**

The Educator Portfolio is designed to serve as a comprehensive collection of professional records which validate teachers' accomplishments and provides a showcase for teachers' creativity in the classroom. If student photos are used, Media Release forms need to be on file. Portfolio materials should be available for review by school administrators and conference supervisors. This document should be valuable to share with a school board in connection with job interviews. The Educator Portfolio should contain, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Philosophy of education statement
2. Up-to-date resume
3. Copies of transcripts, teaching certificates, credentials, etc.
4. Record of non-academic and academic work for certification renewal
5. Classroom observation and teacher evaluation forms (See below)
6. Pictures, letters, and other collectible items reflecting professional activities
7. Updated Professional Growth Action Plan
8. 4MAT Lesson Units
9. Community Service and Outreach Involvement
10. Leadership and Administrative Accomplishments (For principals)

Classroom observation and teacher evaluation reports:

The PEP program includes the teacher evaluation and classroom supervision program of the GCC. Conference educational administrators and local school administrators will conduct announced and unannounced drop-in visits.

## **FOREIGN TRAVEL ALLOWANCE**

**GCC 4788**

(See SU 4787)

The foreign travel policy applies to administrative and teaching personnel with a professional or administrative certificate. A fund of \$150 a year will accumulate for each teacher meeting this requirement, and may be used after one year of service. No borrowing of time will be allowed.

Approved overseas travel under this policy is defined as any trip outside the United States and Hawaii.

Foreign travel expenses will be reimbursed up to \$150 per school year with a maximum allowance of \$750 (five years accumulation). These funds may be combined with any funds the teacher may have accumulated under the Professional Enrichment Policy (See GCC 4789). The maximum combined accumulated allowance available at any time will be \$1500. Funds will not continue to accumulate after the maximums have been reached. When these allowances are utilized funds will once again begin to accumulate.

A report indicating the professional benefit received from this approved overseas trip, along with sufficient receipts covering the assistance received, will ensure that the amount is not taxable.

In the event the teacher leaves conference employment, all accumulated credit will be canceled. See also Southern Union 4787 for additional information.

## **PROFESSIONAL/PERSONAL ENRICHMENT ALLOWANCE**

**GCC 4789**

Purpose of the Policy: To provide funds and time off to professionally enrich teachers.

### *1. Professional Enrichment Funds*

Eligibility and Description of Benefit:

\* Full-time exempt teachers: \$300 accrued annually up to a maximum of \$750.

\* Principals: (For schools with more than four teachers.) \$400 accrued annually up to a maximum of \$750.

Approved professional enrichment includes: computer hardware & software, tablets, laptops, computer accessories, cell phones and accessories, professional membership fees, academic coursework and class books, seminars, travel expenses related to classes or seminar attendance, exercise equipment, and professional subscriptions.

Policy Provisions:

- 1) Reimbursement requires submitted receipts and professional enrichment expense report to the office of Education.
- 2) The annual fund is based on the beginning of employment agreement, replenished annually on July 1<sup>st</sup>.
- 3) Employees hired mid-year after December 31<sup>st</sup> will receive half the designated annual amount.
- 4) Funds are not available after the employee conclusion date. This fund carries no cash credit.

*2. Professional Days Allowance: (see SU 4406)* Two professional days per year will be provided to and may be accumulated up to a maximum of five days. Professional days may be used for opportunities involving professional enrichment. Time off must be preapproved by principal/superintendent for all professional days taken. Additional time for leadership training and involvement in regional/national professional organizations must be approved by the local school board and the Conference Office of Education. *Substitute teacher expenses are covered by the conference.*

*3. Annual Spiritual Renewal/Reflection Allowance:* One regular school day is provided annually for spiritual renewal and reflection. A substitute teacher is covered at 100%. Professional funds can be used to cover per diem, mileage, and hotel if so desired. Cohutta Springs Conference Center will provide one free overnight stay when space is available.

*4. Certification, Correspondence and Graduate Courses:* Professional Enrichment funds may be used to pay for such courses. Special assistance for graduate study and certification courses not available through Southern Adventist University may be granted upon request provided funding is available.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE RELEASE TIME FOR PRINCIPAL/HEAD TEACHER**

**GCC 4792**

Head teachers or teaching principals are granted release time one day per teacher per year for administrative duties.

See also Southern Union 4790 for additional information.

## **ARCHIVING OBSERVATIONS**

**GCC 4793**

All written evaluative observations of teachers are to be copied to the Regional Director and Office of Education for archiving.

See also Southern Union 4790 for additional information.

## **CHILD ABUSE REPORTING REQUIREMENT**

**GCC 4940**

Pursuant to the legal requirements of parties suspecting child abuse, education personnel shall not only immediately report suspected child abuse to the appropriate local agency but also complete and submit to the Office of Education a “Suspected Child Abuse Report” form. The original completed report is to be submitted to the Conference and the copy of the original is to be placed in a confidential school file (there shall be no entry made in the child’s cumulative folder).

See also Southern Union 4940 for additional information.

## **LOCAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCEDURE (See Form online or on CD) for Dealing with Parent /Teacher Concerns**

**GCC 4962**

The Conference Board of Education has voted the following Local Conflict Resolution Procedure for adoption and use in all schools. The Procedure ensures of due process and is founded on the Biblical principles outlined in Matthew 18. Any questions regarding the fundamental philosophy and/or procedures prescribed should be directed to the Conference Office of Education.

### **Parent\*/Teacher Concern Procedure:**

1. Parent is to meet with the teacher\*\* alone or as a family to deal with the concern. It is recommended that this issue not be discussed with other parties.
2. If the concern remains unresolved after Step 1, the unresolved concern is to be taken to the school principal/head teacher for the purpose of securing assistance in finding resolution.
  - A meeting among the three parties (principal, parent, and teacher) is to be held with the principal chairing the meeting.
  - The principal is to keep minutes of the meeting, including all relevant issues and/or agreements discussed.
  - The minutes are to be reviewed by all parties prior to the completion of the meeting.
  - Should the concern involve the school principal, the school board chairman would serve as the facilitator and keep minutes.
  - Should the principal be involved, the Office of Education is to be notified.
3. At each instance in which a concern is registered, the teacher should have the right to address the concern directly. If the concern remains unresolved, it will be referred to the Executive Committee, or to the School Board if there is no Executive Committee. At this point, a Conference Office of Education representative is to be directly involved.

If these steps prove unsuccessful and the concern remains unresolved, a final appeal of the issue can be



made to the School Board. In order to ensure fairness, the teacher is to be present at this meeting. A representative from the Conference Office of Education will be invited by the school board chairman to participate in the discussion of the issues. Should the parent be a member of the school board, he/she will remove himself/herself from the decision-making process relative to the issue at hand. A final resolution to the concern will be acted upon at this level. **All parties are to be officially notified, in writing, of the school board's decision.**

- \* or other individual with a concern about the teacher
- \*\* all meetings with the teacher(s) and/or principal must be by appointment

### **Pastor/Teacher Concern Procedure:**

In the event of an unresolved Pastor/Teacher conflict, either/both should notify the respective Regional Directors as soon as possible to arrange for assistance.

**Please NOTE: These steps are to serve as general guidelines and are not mandatory.**

### **CRITERIA FOR STARTING OR REOPENING A SCHOOL**

**GCC 5003**

When applying to start or reopen a school, churches will be asked to provide a written proposal which demonstrates and verifies that the following criteria are met: (See also SU 5003)

1. The rationale for opening a church school: (See SU 5002)
  - A statement outlining the need for the school
  - A list of all other nearby SDA schools
  - The reason(s) that there is a need beyond what can be met by other schools
2. A description of the physical plant:
  - Verification that classroom and building size requirements are met: Minimum 750 square feet per classroom, with 33 square feet per student (35 for kindergarten) (See SU 5027, SU 6021)
  - Verification that adequate restroom facilities are provided (See SU 5031)
  - A list of school and playground equipment (See SU 5036)
  - A plan for providing school office and classroom furniture and equipment
3. A tentative school operating budget: (See SU 3112)
  - A list of expected income and anticipated expenses
  - Confirmation that the church will be able to support the school with an annual operating subsidy to ensure adequate funds to operate the school program
4. A total cash reserve including commitments to cover the first year's operation costs: (See SU 3110)
  - The teacher's salary plus a full-time paraprofessional
  - Estimated cost of textbooks and curriculum materials (See SU 1724)
  - Estimated cost of library books and materials, and other instructional supplies (See SU 5038)
5. An outline for a recruitment plan, and a projected three-year student roster:
  - All projected students
  - Parent contact information
6. A commitment to support the conference in the selection of instructional staff:

- A denominationally employed teacher with current denominational elementary certification (see SU 4012.2.c)
- A screened and approved classroom paraprofessional (See GCC 5062)

## PROCEDURE FOR CLOSING A SCHOOL

**GCC 5004**

The local church and the conference are jointly responsible for the operation of an SDA church school. Both organizational levels have responsibilities that require long-range commitments, planning, and budgeting. It is essential, therefore, that a flow of effective communication be maintained so that neither organization is caught by surprise when unfortunate situations develop that necessitate closing the school.

The conference, as the owner of the property and the legal entity responsible for operating the school, must make investments and financial commitments based on expected funds from the local church to partially fund these commitments. It is the responsibility of the conference to make every effort to collect these funds and to give adequate and timely notice before it can close the school for lack of payment of the school account by the church.

Other situations that might necessitate the conference closing the school could include safety problems, disasters and inadequate facilities, governmental and legal regulations, and immoral or abusive behavior on the part of a teacher. While these might require immediate action on the part of the conference, every effort will be made to make temporary arrangements or replacements as soon as possible.

The local church might find it necessary to close the school for lack of finances, enrollment, or commitment. In such cases, the following procedures must be met:

1. A long-range projection of the school's future should be determined. Schools should not be allowed to open and close for a year or two, but rather the decision should be made based on **at least** a three-year projection. If possible, a way should be found to "prop up" the operation for the short term if it is determined that there is future potential for successful operation of the school.
2. As soon as a possible problem is realized, and certainly several months before the end of the school year, the local church, independently or through the school board, should alert the conference Office of Education of the possibility that the school might close.
3. As early as possible, a representative from the Office of Education should meet with the school board and/or the church board to seek a solution and to explain all policy issues and ramifications. A meeting of the school constituency or the church in business meeting is required before the school can be closed. Neither the school board nor the church board has the authority to open or close a school.
4. When it is determined that the closing of the school is inevitable, necessary steps must be taken to inform the parents and the teacher, and to finish the school year and close out the operation of the school properly.
5. Financial obligations and other commitments of the school must be cared for appropriately, or arrangements made to do so as soon as possible.
6. The conference and the church should assist the teacher and the students in finding other SDA schools if possible.

The Office of Education must be informed and involved early in the process, and a representative must be present when any official action is taken. These procedures must be followed when closing any SDA school, even where the teacher is locally church-employed.

## **STAFFING A ONE-TEACHER SCHOOL**

**GCC 5062**

It is required that a classroom paraprofessional or adult volunteer be provided during school hours to assist at all schools where only one teacher is employed. This is needed not only to help the teacher and to facilitate learning, but also to provide protection against allegations of instructional malpractice, teacher misconduct, and lack of proper supervision at all times.

## **JUNIOR ACADEMY ELIGIBILITY POLICY**

**GCC 5100**

The following standards must be met before applying for Junior Academy status.

1. There must be a minimum of two full-time teachers in the school, and the office of education must evaluate the teacher loads to ensure balance.
2. The school must be able to verify a sustainable enrollment for a minimum three years.
3. The school must have remained current in financial remittances to the conference for teacher salaries over the previous two years.
4. There must be appropriately certified instructors at all levels. It is recommended that the teacher of a 7-9 Multi-grade Classroom holding an elementary teaching certificate have nine semester hours in math in order to teach 9<sup>th</sup> grade math.
5. The school must offer union and conference approved courses and other curricular offerings.

In all other respects regarding Junior Academy status, all Southern Union and Conference school operating policies must be met.

## **PRE-K PROGRAM DAY/HOUR POLICY**

**6007**

To better meet the developmental needs of some young children, the GCC Office of Education has voted to allow schools with approved PreK programs to operate a half-day program, providing they meet the following guidelines:

1. The school board must have a voted action indicating their intention to operate a half-day program for at least four hours per day. One copy must be submitted to the Office of Education; a copy of this board voted action is needed in local records.
2. The half-day program must be operated on the current school day schedule with a minimum of four hours of attendance daily, i.e., 8:00-12:00.
3. The partial day PreK program must operate on a regular five-day week schedule (minimum of 20 hours per week).
4. All other policies pertaining to the operation of a school-based PreK must be in place.

## **CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER POLICY (See SU Section 7000: Early Childhood Education Programs) GCC 7010**

Child development centers, sometimes called early childhood learning centers or day care centers, are not a part of the school system or the K-12 educational program of the Georgia-Cumberland Conference or the Southern Union. They are not monitored by the state education departments, but are under the jurisdiction of another department in each state.

The following policies apply to all child development centers operated by Georgia-Cumberland Conference entities:

1. All child development centers must be licensed by the Department of Human Resources of the State of Georgia or the Department, the Department of Human Resources in North

Carolina or the Department of Human Services in the State of Tennessee. Evidence of license must be filed with the Office of Education before the facility may begin operating. In addition, current child care policies and procedures as outlined by Risk Management must be followed. Child Development Centers must follow the strictest of the combined rules of the state and Risk Management.

2. Centers must agree to participate in the Georgia-Cumberland Conference Office of Education student accident program underwritten through Christian Educators Insurance Trust.
3. Centers must carry one million dollars (\$1,000,000) of liability insurance through the Georgia-Cumberland Conference general liability policy.
4. All child development centers must meet safety requirements set forth by the State of Georgia, North Carolina, or Tennessee, and the Southern Union. All facilities may be inspected at any time by the Office of Education. Inspections may take place at any time during regular operating hours.
5. Copies of regular and emergency inspection reports from the State must be sent to the Conference Office of Education.
6. Child development centers are subject to internal audit by the Conference Internal Auditing Services.
7. Child development centers may offer programs from infancy through pre-kindergarten.
8. Child development operations and daily programs are to be conducted as separate entities from a regular school program. The child development center should operate a board separate from the school board. The child development center should operate a board separate from the school board. Child care is not a part of the academic curriculum of the kindergarten and primary grades of a school.
9. The school principal or other professional instructional personnel employed by the Conference are not to be responsible for the management of, or involved in the daily operation of a child development center.
10. All directors of child development centers operated by the Conference entities must be members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.
11. NAEYC guidelines for developmentally appropriate education should be followed as a model for curriculum. Centers should work toward certification with NAEYC.
12. Southern Union Policy #1265 does not permit privately operated schools to use church facilities. This would apply to child development centers as well. Church entities operating child development centers in non-church owned facilities must still comply with all of the above policies.

# **SUPPLEMENTS AND GUIDELINES**

## Georgia-Cumberland Conference

### School Emergency Drill Policy and Guideline

The Office of Education has developed the following policy and guidelines below in an effort to meet the requirements of all three states while streamlining expectations throughout the conference. Please check your state requirements listed below. *NOTE: A written log template is provided at the end of this document.*

<b>GCC Policy 1252</b>	All schools are required to follow their state law concerning emergency drills. See the "School Emergency Drill Policy and Guideline" document for further details.
<b>GCC Guideline</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Teachers are expected to carry their red emergency contact folder with them during all drills, account for each student verbally by name outside, and check for complete guest evacuation as appropriate.</b></li> <li>• Log the date and time of each drill in Renweb and a written log for the fire marshal.             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Exercise one random fire exit drill each month school is in session, with the exception of scheduling one in the first week followed by a second within the first 10 days of school.</li> <li>2. Execute one intruder drill within 15 days of the first day of school.</li> <li>3. Execute three additional emergency drills during the school year such as tornado, severe weather (November and February), and intruder.</li> </ol> </li> <li>• Contact the local Fire Marshal for any additional local or state requirements such as posted evacuation routes, fire extinguisher tags, closing doors, etc.</li> <li>• Have the school grounds and plant routinely inspected by the board elected Safety Officer for fire and safety hazards.</li> <li>• Review Southern Union Policy on "Safety Preparedness" #1248.</li> <li>• Review school's state statutes listed below.</li> <li>• Call the school's Regional Director for additional information.</li> </ul>
<b>Georgia Statute § Life Safety Code 11-7-1</b>	<p>There shall be at least one fire exit drill each month that school is in session, the first two to be within the first 10 days classes begin.</p> <p>Practice drills <b>may</b> be held during inclement weather. Such drills <b>may</b> also be held at regular dismissal time, when the pupils are fully clothed, by using the exit drill alarm system.</p> <p>This type of drill would not necessitate a return to a classroom signal. Drills shall be executed at different hours of the day. Fire drills shall be an exercise of school management. Running shall be prohibited. Principals are responsible for inspecting exits, panic hardware, exit lights, fire alarm systems, and other safety features daily to ensure their in-service condition. The searching of toilets or other rooms shall be the responsibility of the teachers or other assigned staff members.</p> <p>Additionally, the State Fire Marshal's office is requesting that a Severe Weather Drill is executed and reported online during the months of <b>November</b> and <b>February</b>, in lieu of a Fire Drill.</p> <p>SCHOOLS, please click <a href="#">HERE</a> to contact us if you have a question or problem.</p> <p><a href="https://www.oci.ga.gov/PublicEducation/SchoolFireDrills.aspx">https://www.oci.ga.gov/PublicEducation/SchoolFireDrills.aspx</a>  <a href="http://www.oci.ga.gov/PublicEducation/SchoolFireDrillReport.aspx">http://www.oci.ga.gov/PublicEducation/SchoolFireDrillReport.aspx</a></p>

	<p>Pursuant to Life Safety Code 11-7-.1, <b>all public and private</b> schools must conduct monthly fire drills <b>while in session</b>. This web page enables you to check a school's fire safety drill record. To date, for <b>August</b>, we have received fire drill reports from 838 schools out of 3254 (25%).</p> <p>To view your child's school fire and severe weather reports, you must first select the county in which the school is located from the listing below, then click on the "Get School Data" button. This will display a new selection option of schools within the chosen school system. School names with a + have submitted a fire drill report for this month. Select the school and click on the "Get School Data" button again.</p> <p>If you do not see your school listed below, please contact the State Fire Marshal's Office, Fire Safety Education Section at <b>(404) 657-0831</b>.</p> <p>Please choose a school system from below then a school to display their drill reports.  <a href="http://www.oci.ga.gov/PublicEducation/SchoolFireDrillReport.aspx">http://www.oci.ga.gov/PublicEducation/SchoolFireDrillReport.aspx</a></p> <p><b>8/9/2013</b> - <a href="https://www.oci.ga.gov/PublicEducation/SchoolFireDrills.aspx">https://www.oci.ga.gov/PublicEducation/SchoolFireDrills.aspx</a>  As stated in the 2006 International Fire Code, Section 408.3.1, First emergency evacuation drill of each school year shall/must be conducted within ten (10) days of the beginning of classes (or school starting).</p> <p>Additionally, as stated in the Life Safety Code 101 Handbook, Section 14.7.1.2 (3), Emergency egress and relocation drills shall/must be conducted as follows:</p> <p>One additional emergency egress and relocation drill, other than for educational occupancies that are open on a year-round basis, shall/must be required within the first 30 days of operation.</p> <p><b>In summary, two (2) fire drills must be conducted and reported online within the first 30 days of school opening, with the first fire drill due within the first ten (10) days of the start of school. After the first two, the fire drills are conducted and reported online once monthly.</b></p> <p>However, during the months of November and February, the Georgia State Fire Marshal's Office requires a severe weather is conducted and reported online, instead of a fire drill. If your school must conduct a fire drill during the months of November and February, the severe weather drill is the only drill to be placed online.</p>
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<b>North Carolina Statute § 115C-288</b>	<p><b>Powers and duties of principal.</b></p> <p>(d) To Conduct Fire Drills and Inspect for Fire Hazards. – It shall be the duty of the principal to conduct a fire drill during the first week after the opening of school and thereafter at least one fire drill each school month, in each building in his charge, where children are assembled. Fire drills shall include all pupils and school employees, and the use of various ways of egress to simulate evacuation of said buildings under various conditions, and such other regulations as shall be prescribed for fire safety by the Commissioner of Insurance, the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the State Board of Education. A copy of such regulations shall be kept posted on the bulletin board in each building.</p> <p>It shall be the duty of each principal to inspect each of the buildings in his charge at least twice each month during the regular school session. This inspection shall include cafeterias, gymnasiums, boiler rooms, storage rooms, auditoriums and stage areas as well as all classrooms. This inspection shall be for the purpose of keeping the buildings safe from the accumulation of trash and other fire</p>
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	<p>hazards.</p> <p>It shall be the duty of the principal to file two copies of a written report once each month during the regular school session with the superintendent of his local school administrative unit, one copy of which shall be transmitted by the superintendent to the chairman of the local board of education. This report shall state the date the last fire drill was held, the time consumed in evacuating each building, that the inspection has been made as prescribed by law and such other information as is deemed necessary for fire safety by the Commissioner of Insurance, the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the State Board of Education.</p> <p>It shall be the duty of the principal to minimize fire hazards pursuant to the provisions of G.S. 115C-525.</p> <p><a href="http://www.ncga.state.nc.us/enactedlegislation/statutes/html/bysection/chapter_115c/gs_115c-288.html">http://www.ncga.state.nc.us/enactedlegislation/statutes/html/bysection/chapter_115c/gs_115c-288.html</a></p>
<p><b>Tennessee Statute §68-102-137, 49-5-201</b></p>	<p><b>68-102-137. Public and private schools -- Institutions -- Fire drills -- Doors to be kept unlocked -- Safety drills.</b></p> <p>(a) It is the duty of the commissioner, or the commissioner's deputies and assistants, to require fire drills in educational and institutional occupancies.</p> <p>(b) Fire drills requiring full evacuation shall be held at least once a month during the school year, with an additional fire drill to be conducted within the first thirty (15) days of operation in educational occupancies where such occupancies constitute the major occupancy of a building, and at least once every two (2) months in institutional occupancies where such occupancies constitute the major occupancy of a building. A record of all fire drills, including the time and date, shall be kept in the respective school or institutional offices, and shall be made available upon request to the state fire marshal, or the state fire marshal's deputies or assistants, for inspection and review.</p> <p>(c) In educational occupancies, fire drills shall include complete evacuation of all persons from the building. In institutional occupancies, fire drills shall be conducted to familiarize operating personnel with their assigned position of emergency duty. Complete evacuation of occupants from the building at the time of the fire drill shall be required only where it is practicable and does not involve moving or disturbing persons under medical care...</p> <p><b>49-5-201</b> (legislation update 7/31/2013)</p> <p>(6) (A) One (1) fire drill requiring full evacuation every month during the school year, with an additional fire drill to be conducted within the first fifteen (15) days of operation;</p> <p>(B) One (1) intruder drill to be conducted within the first thirty (30) days of operation; and</p> <p>(C) Three (3) additional safety drills during the school year, which may include inclement weather, earthquake, intruder or other emergency drills not requiring full evacuation;</p>



# Emergency Drill Log

Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_

School Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Drill Date	Number of People	Response Time	Drill Type	Comment

## HOME SCHOOL REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

## GCC Supplement M

All home school programs are required to be registered with the state. Neither Georgia nor Tennessee permit church organizations to serve as “umbrella” organizations for registering home schools, except as outlined below.

Georgia requires that all home schools register with the local public school district office. Some church organizations have requested that they be authorized to register home schools, but the Department of Education states that this cannot be approved without an act of legislation by the General Assembly, so independent registration with the local school system is being enforced.

Tennessee has two options for home school registration, with two sets of home school registration procedures. One set is for *Independent Home Schools* and one set is for *Church-Related Home Schools*. On the surface it would seem that church organizations might be permitted to register home schools, but the law specifically states that *only* denominational or parochial school systems with accreditation or membership in one of the following organizations are authorized to register home schools:

Tennessee Association of Christian Schools (TACS)

Tennessee Association of Independent Schools (TAIS)

Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI)

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS)

Tennessee Association of Non-Public Academic Schools (TANAS)

Tennessee Association of Church Related Schools (TACRS)

Accelerated Christian Education, Inc. (ACE). [T.C.A. 49-50-801]

Otherwise, parents may operate an *independent* home school for their own children only. The intent to operate a home school must be submitted to the local public school superintendent’s office before the commencement of each school year. These home schools must register with the local public school system between August 1 and September 1, with a late fee of \$20 per week up to \$80 per family. The public school superintendent may waive the deadline and fee with just cause.

# INDEX

Georgia-Cumberland Conference  
Additions to the Southern Union *PreK-12 Education Code*  
Updated January, 2012

This Index is for the local conference supplement to the Southern Union *PreK-12 Education Code*. It indexes local Georgia-Cumberland Conference (GCC) policies only.

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