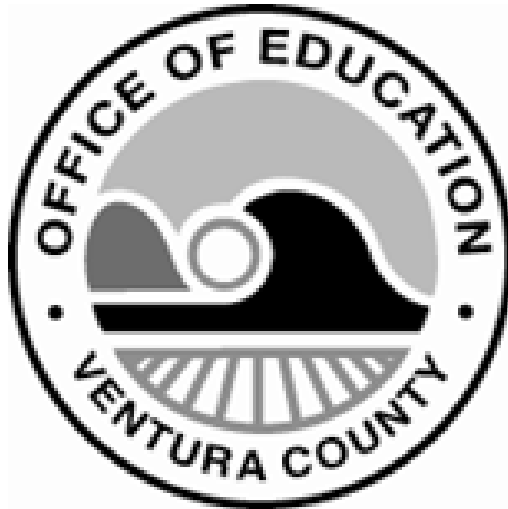


VENTURA COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION

# MANAGEMENT HANDBOOK



*Stanley C. Mantooth*  
*County Superintendent*

**Revised: December 2016**

*"Commitment to Quality Education for All"*

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## INTRODUCTION TO THE VENTURA COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION

It is a pleasure to extend a warm welcome to you as an employee of the Ventura County Office of Education (VCOE). We are pleased that you have chosen to join our team and to share our goal of providing a quality education for all. This handbook was prepared specifically for you, so that you might know how VCOE is organized, the benefits to which you are entitled and your responsibilities as an employee. It is our hope that this handbook is a helpful source of information that will serve to make your employment satisfying and rewarding. If there is something in this handbook that does not correspond with a Board of Education or superintendent's policy or a contract agreement, the official policy takes precedence. If you find such a discrepancy, or if you have any questions regarding a topic that is not included in the handbook or related to your employment, please contact your immediate supervisor or the Human Resources Department.

Welcome to the Ventura County Office of Education.

### **Vision**

All people will benefit from life-long learning.

### **Mission**

The Ventura County Office of Education provides quality services and support for life-long learning opportunities.

### **Motto**

*"Commitment to Quality Education for All"*

### **Goals**

We will collaborate to build relationships with local educational institutions and other government and private sector entities to provide leadership, service, and support for all learners, local educational institutions, and other government and private sector entities to:

1. Provide, promote and support environments that result in world-class quality learning opportunities.
2. Secure and develop resources (human, fiscal, and information) that support and promote our mission.
3. Develop and maintain an organization based on teamwork, trust, communication, commitment, and competence.
4. Optimize customer satisfaction.

## **ORGANIZATION**

The Ventura County Office of Education is governed by an elected Superintendent of Schools and a five member Board of Education. The County Superintendent develops personnel and program policy and is the employer for all county schools employees. The Board makes policy decisions related to county operated programs in appropriate areas of budgeting, curriculum, and planning. Another function of the County Board is to hear appeals related to student inter-district attendance, student expulsions and charter schools. The County Superintendent and Board invite interested individuals to attend board meetings and to take an active role in educational planning at the county level.

### **County Superintendent of Schools**

Stanley C. Mantooth

#### **Board of Trustees**

Area 1 – Rachel Ulrich

Area 2 - Marty Bates

Area 3 – Dr. Mark Lisagor

Area 4 – Dean Kunicki

Area 5 – Dr. Ramon Flores

## **WHO WE SERVE**

The Ventura County Office of Education is pleased to serve 8 unified school districts, 10 elementary school districts, 1 high school district, 1 community college district, and 4 Joint Powers Authorities. We provide service to 258 public schools.

A variety of additional information, including staffing and student demographic, can be found at <http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/>.

## WHAT WE ARE PROUD OF

The Ventura County Office of Education strongly supports local school districts in building a regional system of services and leadership to maintain, bolster, and improve educational opportunities for all children, staffs and community members in Ventura County. Some of the services and leadership strands include:

### **Educational Services Branch**

- Categorical Programs
- Comprehensive Health and Prevention Programs
- Curriculum and Instruction
- Early Childhood Programs
- Hearing Conservation
- Leadership Support Services
- Local District Support Services
- Regional System of District and School Support Services
- Research and Evaluation

### **Fiscal and Administrative Services Branch**

- Facilities and Maintenance
- Internal Business Services
- Personnel Services
- Human Resources
- Expanded Learning Services
- Teacher Support Services
- School Business and Advisory Services
- Technology Services
- Graphics

### **Student Services Branch**

- Career Education
- Charter School Support and Oversight
- Court and Community Schools
- Special Education
- Special Education Educational Support
- Student Achievement and School Support
- Student Competitions and Fundraising

The Ventura County Office of Education plays an important and vital role in helping educate the diverse population of Ventura County's students. VCOE recognizes that optimizing educational opportunities takes a team effort and must involve the entire community. Our young people will not have the best opportunity for success without each of us doing our part to effectively and efficiently provide an educational system that prepares students to be contributing citizens.

## WHY WE ARE IN BUSINESS

The Ventura County Office of Education is chartered to act as a regional support system for area schools, providing service and leadership to maintain and improve the schools in Ventura County. Our mission is to promote life-long access to world-class educational opportunities in Ventura County.

### DIRECT SERVICES TO STUDENTS

The Ventura County Office of Education operates specialized student programs and coordinates countywide student events. Each year we teach over 8,000 students in specialized programs such as severely handicapped special education, career education, and incarcerated, expelled and at-risk youth. The VCOE also provides student welfare and special services such as school safety programs; psychological services and nursing services to small districts; gang prevention; attendance improvement and dropout prevention; and healthy-start school based multi-agency services. In addition, the Ventura County Office of Education sponsors student activities and events that support academic excellence i.e. mock trial, academic decathlon, top scholars, spelling bee and science fair.

We are in business for four reasons:

- To provide direct services to students where appropriate
- To provide essential fiscal and administrative services to school districts
- To provide professional development opportunities for staff throughout the County
- To support compliance with State and Federal Mandates

### ESSENTIAL FISCAL & ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

The Ventura County Office of Education monitors school districts fiscal health, accounting for \$1.7 billion annually. We assist school districts' business offices by providing fiscal oversight of the ongoing fiscal integrity of districts and by ensuring that districts meet reporting requirements in an accurate and timely manner.

The Ventura County Office of Education is uniquely situated to bring together people, programs, and services within the county and offer the 21 school districts and the Community College District the benefits of cost containment and avoidance of duplication of services. Through our centralized business systems center, we distribute all public education vendor checks and paychecks for 25,000 employees in school districts. We coordinate a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) that purchases liability and property insurance, workers' compensation coverage, and medical, dental, and vision plans based on much reduced large group rates.

We assist personnel offices through teacher recruitment efforts, credential processing, employee screening, retirement counseling, and employer-employee relations services. Our technology services department provides electronic data storage, retrieval, and processing for fiscal, personnel, and student data systems. To maintain and build resources, we forge alliances with public and private agencies and businesses throughout the County.

The Ventura County Office of Education supports local districts in the development, selection, implementation, and evaluation of curriculum and materials through provision of a variety of curriculum, instruction, and assessment services. We enhance educational technology use through our California



Technology Project for training teachers and administrators in technology use; our teachers' materials preparation center; and the use of technology to strengthen instructional programs.

### **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

The Ventura County Office of Education provides a broad array of professional development opportunities for teachers, administrators, and other educational staff which might be cost prohibitive to an individual school or district, but can become cost-effective when shared across districts. Participants take advantage of state-of-the-art learning options ranging from administering educational programs to teaching reading to technology-based office practices. We conduct board and administrative retreats; planning sessions for local school districts; and job-alike meetings for superintendents, assistant superintendents, principals, special projects directors, librarians, and nurses. The Ventura County Office of Education also coordinates the Teacher of the Year competition and the IMPACT II program designed to spread effective teaching practices throughout Ventura County.

### **COMPLIANCE WITH STATE & FEDERAL MANDATES**

The Ventura County Office of Education also provides services as specified in State and Federal mandates: oversight of school elections for bonds and school boards; oversight of school district reorganization; appeal hearings of local school board decisions on expulsions, inter-district transfers and charter schools; verification of credentials and assignments of personnel; reporting to State Teachers' Retirement System (STRS) and Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS) for county employees; review of district audits and vendor warrants; approval of school district budgets and monitoring of districts for solvency; distribution of funding apportionments; maintenance of books of record of transactions; dissemination of California Department of Education advisories, programs, and curriculum frameworks.

County Offices have also formalized their assistance to under performing schools. Ventura County Office of Education has been approved by the California State Department of Education to begin interventions in our highest priority schools and districts in the county. The goal of our Curriculum and Instruction department is to ensure that standards-based teaching is fostering progress in student achievement in each school in the county. To that end, school reviews, and classroom observations focused on curriculum, instructional materials, instructional strategies, and adequacy of classroom support are being implemented. The County Office intervention teams are building capacity in the schools for sustained change and growth.

Without county offices, the quality of local schools would suffer, tax dollars would be wasted, and district and school site personnel would be flooded with additional duties.

### **YOUR SUPERVISOR**

Your supervisor is the most important person you will meet during the first few days on the job. This person is responsible for your orientation, training, and evaluation of your performance on the job. Your supervisor will work with you to ensure overall effectiveness on the job and will let you know exactly what is expected of you and keep you posted on policies and procedures. Your supervisor will assign your work, introduce you to other employees, help you get the feel of your job, explain the regulations concerning lunch breaks, rest periods, reporting absences, scheduling vacations, and other job-related information you will need to know. Do not be afraid to ask questions! If instructions are not clear, always ask for

clarification.

There may be times when you want advice on a problem or an answer to a question. Usually, your immediate supervisor will be able to help you. If not, your supervisor will try to obtain the information you need. The Human Resources Department is also available to answer any questions you may have about your employment.

## **EMPLOYEE EXPECTATIONS, VALUES AND BELIEFS**

The following values and beliefs are expected to be reflected in the behaviors of VCOE employees.

### **Personal Character**

We hold a strong belief that one's personal character profoundly affects one's work behavior. VCOE employees should be reliable, responsible, collaborative, open, self-reflective, confident, inquisitive, interested in learning, honest, humorous, trustworthy, authentic, enthusiastic, motivated, passionate, fair, ethical, respectful, empathic, sensitive, and culturally proficient.

### **Communication**

We strongly believe that open and honest communication provides the foundation for organizational and personal growth and improvement. VCOE employees provide regular opportunities for oral and written communication between all levels of the organization. Emphasis should be placed on communicating information that is necessary for maintaining organizational progress and goal attainment. Gossip is discouraged. Confidentiality and responsible disclosure of information is a responsibility of employees. Questions and concerns should be taken to the source.

### **Chain of Command / Employee Treatment**

We believe that empowering employees with information and decision-making responsibility will assist in achieving the mission of the organization. VCOE employees should treat each other respectfully, as equals, and should expect this treatment in return. Employees should maintain high standards of conduct and personal character as listed above. Employees should be committed to the organization. Each employee should be viewed as a life-long learner who is competent, committed to organizational goals, motivated, honest, self-directing, and collaborative. Each employee's contribution to the organization should be valued. Feedback regarding effectiveness should flow up and down the organizational hierarchy. The chain of command in the organization should be respected and followed.

### **Challenges / Risk Taking**

We believe that reasoned risk-taking is the only way to "break new ground" and invent new and more successful practices. VCOE leaders should encourage reasoned risk-taking and allow reasonable failure.

Leaders should expect professional judgment and continuous self and supervisor evaluation in all experimental practices. The welfare of the student and fellow employees should be paramount in any risk-taking decision.

### **Continuous Improvement**

We believe that a commitment to continuous quality improvement in our service is the charge of all employees. VCOE provides employees with the resources necessary to engage in continuous improvement including systematic data collection and evaluation, necessary professional development, personal support for change, opportunities for individual contributions along with recognition and celebrations of successes.

### **Conflict Management**

We believe that conflict is an opportunity to learn and is a natural occurrence in improving organizations. It is also believed that working toward constructive resolutions helps organizations improve faster. VCOE encourages employees to constructively disagree and provide differences in perspective in an atmosphere of goodwill. Leaders should intervene to resolve conflicts among staff and invest time in each employee's success.

### **Customer Service**

We believe that possessing a customer orientation will improve the value of our service. VCOE employees should identify customers, help them make informed decisions, be responsive, teach and model the process of learning and improving, continuously seek customer feedback, and anticipate what customers will value.

## **HANDBOOK PURPOSE**

This handbook is designed to familiarize management employees with the certificated personnel practices of VCOE, and consolidate the rules and regulations regarding the employee-employer relationship for certificated personnel at VCOE.

This handbook explains some of our philosophies and beliefs and describes (in general terms) some of our employment guidelines. We hope that it will serve as a useful reference document for employees throughout their employment at VCOE. Employees should understand, however, that this handbook is not intended to be a contract (express or implied), nor is it intended to otherwise create any legally enforceable obligations on the part of VCOE or its employees not otherwise found in California law.

Because VCOE is a growing and changing organization, it reserves full discretion to add to, modify, or delete provisions of this handbook, or the policies and procedures on which they may be based, at any time without advance notice. VCOE also reserves the right to interpret any of the provisions set forth in this handbook in any manner it deems appropriate. For this reason, employees should check with the Director of Human Resources to obtain current information regarding the status of any particular policy, procedure,

guideline, or practice. Similarly, to obtain information regarding specific employment policies or procedures, whether or not they are contained in this handbook, employees should contact the Human Resources Director.

No individual other than the Superintendent has the authority to enter into any employment or other agreement that modifies VCOE employment policy. Any such modification must be in writing.

This handbook is the property of the VCOE, and it is intended for personal use and reference by employees of the VCOE. Circulation of this handbook outside of the VCOE requires the prior written approval of the Human Resources Director.

## COUNTY OFFICE MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION

In order to fulfill the needs of Ventura County, it is necessary to have adequate, well-qualified staff. As indicated on the organizational chart, the organization of the Ventura County Office of Education involves the Superintendent for overall general administration and three divisions; Educational Services, Fiscal and Administrative Services, and Student Services, which function under the direction of Associate Superintendents.

## ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

In order to facilitate effective communication and interaction, the following groups have been established:

1. **Superintendent's Council** - Composed of the Superintendent and Associate Superintendents. This serves consultant and planning functions for the Superintendent.
2. **Leadership Team** - Composed of management team plus representatives from employee groups. This includes the Teacher and Paraeducator Federation Presidents and Chairperson of the VOICE Committee. This group meets at least quarterly to address organizational matters.
3. **Consultation Teams** - Composed of managers and employee group representatives. These groups meet bi-monthly to address concerns and issues relating to individual employee groups.

A management employee is defined as an employee in a position having significant responsibilities for formulating Ventura County Office of Education policies or administering VCOE programs. The following are the classifications of management personnel in our office:

## CERTIFICATED MANAGEMENT EMPLOYEE

A Certificated Management Employee holds a position requiring certification under the California Education Code and performing duties designated by the employer as management. VCOE may contract with certificated management employees on a year-to-year basis or for periods not to exceed the end of the school year in which the term for which the County Superintendent of Schools was elected expires and in no event for more than four years and six months.

### Certificated Manager

Unlike his/her counterpart in a local school district, a county office of education regular certificated manager does not receive tenure at any time (except as noted below), and is never classified as a permanent, probationary or substitute employee. The certificated manager serves at the behest of the Superintendent.

### Certificated Manager with Displacement Rights

A certificated manager with displacement rights is one who has taught as a classroom teacher for VCOE and has obtained permanency as a teacher for VCOE prior to becoming a manager. Such an employee shall have permanency as a classroom teacher only, and does not obtain permanency as a manager.

**CLASSIFIED MANAGEMENT EMPLOYEE**

A Classified Management Employee holds a position not requiring certification under the California Education Code and performing duties designated by the employer as management. Classified managers, upon initial employment, shall serve a probationary period of one year in a paid status. During this probationary period, a classified manager serves at the behest of the Superintendent and may be dismissed at any time by the Superintendent, or his designee.

Upon successful completion of the probationary period, a classified manager shall gain permanent status in the position and be entitled to rights identified in the Education Code. The anniversary date shall be July 1.

**CATEGORICALLY FUNDED MANAGEMENT EMPLOYEE**

A Categorically Funded Management Employee, classified or certificated, holds a designated management position funded by special funds and whose employment is dependent upon the continuation of those special funds.

A management employee hired pursuant to a program that is funded categorically on a year-to-year basis is not classified as a permanent, probationary or substitute employee. The manager serves at the behest of the Superintendent.

**TEMPORARY CONTRACT MANAGEMENT EMPLOYEE**

A Temporary Contract Management Employee, short-term classified or certificated, holds a designated management position and is employed to manage a particular assignment/project of specified duration or to completion. A temporary management person employed under a contract of undetermined duration is employed under the terms mutually agreed upon in writing by the employee and the Superintendent. A temporary contract manager serves at the behest of the Superintendent and is not classified as a permanent, probationary or substitute employee.

**PART-TIME MANAGEMENT EMPLOYEE**

Part-time management employees are persons in positions who are hired on a regular basis, but for less than a normal eight-hour day or 40-hour week. Part-time management employees accrue absence due to illness benefits as do full-time employees, except that their eligibility is proportional.

**PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL – MANAGING FOR RESULTS**

The Superintendent will determine the job content and qualification requirements of each management position.

All probationary classified management employees will be evaluated at least two (2) times during the probationary period. Management staff members will be evaluated at least once each year by his/her designated supervisor.

**Managing for Results**

The evaluation process for management employees of VCOE is based on the principles of "Management for Results" and participative management. This process of assessment is designed to maintain the effectiveness of staff and allow for reasoned risk taking and professional growth. The intent of the process is to improve and strengthen the quality of VCOE programs and services and to ensure continued staff effectiveness in those programs and services. This evaluation program is intended to continuously reaffirm the correlation between established goals of the office and the current practices of all departments. It is also intended to improve leadership skills and build capacity within the organization.

The primary purposes of "Management for Results" are:

1. Communication - Effective evaluation is a continuous process. The formal evaluation process is to be a summary of ongoing communications regarding an employee's job performance. The goal is to improve upon performance through structured and ongoing interaction with the supervisor to motivate and enhance individual development.
2. Accountability - The process helps to establish expectations and provides the opportunity to identify and commit to goals and objectives for program improvement.
3. Employee Growth - The evaluation process is a method of developing job-related goals in terms of performance as well as assisting employees in achieving their own personal goals and aspirations. It may also be used to set objectives for personal growth and lifelong learning.

**Goals and Objective Setting Process**

1. As a manager, it is understood that you will fulfill all the obligations as outlined in your job description.
2. You are to develop objectives for each department related areas of the VCOE Goals and County Superintendent Areas of Focus. Whenever possible, the objectives should be measurable. Your assessment can be of any form, preferably data-driven, that you feel will accurately reflect your endeavor.
3. Additionally, you are to develop two or three goals relating to the professional growth of yourself and any individual(s) that you evaluate.
4. Multiyear goals will be established with ongoing feedback and support.

**"Management for Results" Time Line – Two Year Cycle**

August	Management Team overview of "Management for Results" process. Deadline for the County Superintendent, to discuss the 24 month goals, objectives, and areas of focus.
September and October	Associate Superintendents review and discuss goals, objectives and focus areas with Branch staff.
November 15	Deadline for management team to meet with Supervisor to review and update team members' goals and objectives. Supervisor may identify or add new goals at this time.
December 1	Final "Management for Results" Plans due to supervisor.
Ongoing	Periodic meetings to discuss challenges and opportunities within each department.
May 15 – June 15	Management employees will meet with the supervisor to discuss formative evaluation data and documents.
June 30	Deadline for interim review of accomplishments to date. Goals and objectives may be modified at this meeting. A brief written summary capturing the progress to date will be provided to the management employee.
August	County Superintendent presents any additions or deletions to the goals or areas of emphasis.
Ongoing	Periodic meetings to discuss challenges and opportunities within each department.
May 15	Deadline for submission of data and documents that will be considered during the summative evaluation conference.
May 15 – June 15	All managers develop a self-evaluation to be reviewed as part of the Managing for Results process. Conferences will be held to discuss the material submitted for review. The evaluator may ask for additional information and data to support statements contained in the self-evaluation.
July 30	Deadline for final evaluations to be completed and signed for all management team members.

Neither the judgment of the evaluator nor the content of the evaluation shall be subject to the complaint procedure; however, disputes concerning the procedural elements of evaluations may be appealed. A non-probationary employee alleging that the evaluation contains misstatements of fact may appeal the administrative manager evaluation by filing a written request to meet for a review with the appropriate branch Associate Superintendent within ten (10) working days following receipt of the evaluation from the evaluating administrative manager.

The Associate Superintendent/designee (other than the evaluator) shall review the allegations concerning factual misstatement and determine whether the subject evaluation will be reconsidered. The Associate



Superintendent's decision shall be final. The employee will sign the evaluation, indicating acknowledgment of its receipt, and will be given a copy. The employee will, in addition, receive a copy of the evaluation signed by the Associate Superintendent/designee of the employing branch. The employee, after discussing the evaluation with the first level Leadership Team person as designated on the evaluation form, has the right to respond in writing within ten (10) working days from receipt of the evaluation and, upon request, have the response attached to the evaluation as part of the permanent file. This provision is not intended to provide a substantive right. The evaluation procedures are designed to be a communication process. Managers may be non-re-elected without reference to an unsatisfactory evaluation.

### **SEPARATION / DISCIPLINARY ACTION – (CERTIFICATED MANAGEMENT EMPLOYEE)**

Every employee is expected to meet the work standards as established by the department head and in the Superintendent's Policies and Regulations.

Probationary employees may be terminated at the will of the department head, with approval of the Superintendent. Certificated management employees serve in an at-will capacity.

Employees whose conduct is detrimental to VCOE or the Department may be 1) suspended (with or without pay), 2) demoted, or 3) dismissed. The disciplinary action varies with each case depending on the seriousness and frequency of the wrongful action, situations, action or inaction. In the course of an investigation of wrongdoing, a management employee may be placed on administrative leave with pay. This system sets out a practice not an expectation or contractual right.

### **DISMISSAL – (CERTIFICATED MANAGEMENT EMPLOYEE)**

A dismissal is an action to remove an employee from employment by the County Superintendent. A certificated manager serves at the behest of the Superintendent on a year-to-year basis and is considered an at-will employee.

### **SUSPENSION – (CERTIFICATED MANAGEMENT EMPLOYEE)**

A suspension is a temporary removal from employment for a specified period of time. The Superintendent may choose to suspend a certificated manager in lieu of dismissal.

### **DEMOTION – (CERTIFICATED MANAGEMENT EMPLOYEE)**

Certificated managers serve at the behest of the Superintendent. Therefore, a certificated manager may be demoted during a contract year.

## **INVOLUNTARY TRANSFER OR REASSIGNMENT – (CERTIFICATED MANAGEMENT EMPLOYEE)**

A certificated manager may be transferred or reassigned to another position in the same classification or salary range within VCOE if a Division Head (with the approval of the Superintendent) believes the transfer is in the best interest of VCOE.

## **NON-REEMPLOYMENT – (CERTIFICATED MANAGEMENT EMPLOYEE)**

Certificated management employees serve on a year-to-year basis at the will of the Superintendent. The Superintendent may choose not to renew a certificated manager's contract for employment at any time for any reason or no reason.

### ***Notice***

The Superintendent shall notify a certificated manager of the decision not to renew his or her contract not later than June 1, or in the case of an emergency, as determined by the Superintendent, June 30.

The Superintendent's decision not to renew a certificated manager's contract shall be final and not subject to review.

## **LAYOFFS – (CERTIFICATED MANAGEMENT EMPLOYEE)**

If a reduction in force becomes necessary, certificated management reductions will be determined in accordance with the program needs of VCOE. The Superintendent will make the final determinations based upon the recommendations of division heads.

### ***Notice***

Certificated managers who will not be retained as a result of a reduction in force will be notified by the Superintendent or designee. Notice will be provided of the intent to not renew a certificated manager's contract no later than June 1, or in the case of emergency, as determined by the Superintendent, June 30.

### ***Position Evaluations***

Reductions will be made within divisions primarily, but may involve interdivision reductions and/or transfers. The positions to be eliminated will be evaluated on a program by program basis. Factors including, but not limited to, performance, experience, longevity, credentialing, and funding may be considered when determining those staff members who will be subject to layoff.

### ***Displacement Rights***

Certificated managers with displacement rights as a teacher with VCOE prior to being promoted to a management position retain rights to continued employment with VCOE in certificated teaching position in accordance with applicable provisions of the Education Code.

## **SEPARATION / DISCIPLINARY ACTION – (CLASSIFIED MANAGEMENT EMPLOYEE)**

In keeping with the provision of the California State Education Code, any classified probationary employee

serves at the discretion of the Superintendent. A probationary employee may be subject to discipline at any time and may be dismissed without a showing of cause by the Superintendent or his designee. The tenure of each classified employee who has permanent status shall be subject to his or her good behavior and the rendering of efficient service.

The following, non-exclusive, disciplinary actions may be taken by VCOE against a permanent, classified management employee for any of the reasons listed in the Disciplinary Action Procedure.

### **DISMISSAL – (CLASSIFIED MANAGEMENT EMPLOYEE)**

Dismissal is removal from the employment of VCOE.

### **SUSPENSION – (CLASSIFIED MANAGEMENT EMPLOYEE)**

Suspension is temporary removal from employment for a specified period of time. Normally, suspension of an employee shall not be for more than 22 working days.

An employee may be suspended pending investigation of alleged misconduct, without receiving a notice of intent to dismiss, when circumstances indicate that the employee's continued presence at the work site could have detrimental consequences for the VCOE or on the health and welfare of students or employees. In such a situation, the employee may be suspended until a decision is reached regarding the potential disciplinary action. Should the suspension subsequently be found to be unwarranted or no longer necessary, restitution may be made, contingent upon approval of the Superintendent.

### **INVOLUNTARY REASSIGNMENT – (CLASSIFIED MANAGEMENT EMPLOYEE)**

Involuntary reassignment is the directed change of assignment to a position other than that occupied by the incumbent without his/her voluntary consent.

### **LAYOFFS – (CLASSIFIED MANAGEMENT EMPLOYEE)**

If a reduction in force becomes necessary (layoff for lack of work or lack of funds), classified management reductions will be determined in accordance with the following:

#### ***Notification of Layoffs***

When it has been determined by the Superintendent that a reduction in a particular kind or level of service is required, the Superintendent shall notify affected employees in writing a minimum of thirty (30) calendar days prior to the date of layoff. The notice shall specify the reason for the layoff. Any layoff shall be affected within a class. The order of layoffs shall be based on length of service within a class, plus higher classes. The employee, who has been employed the shortest time in the class, plus higher classes, shall be laid off first. A Length of Service means all hours in a regular paid status.

#### ***Displacement Rights***

Any permanent classified staff person who is laid off from a class, and who has previous service in an equal or lower class (either management or regular classified) shall have the right to displace an employee with less seniority in that class. Seniority shall include the total of the previous service in equal or lower class plus service in the class from which the layoff occurs and in higher classes.

***Voluntary Demotion or Transfer***

A permanent, management classified employee who will suffer a layoff for lack of work or funds despite his or her displacement rights may accept a voluntary demotion to a vacant position in a lower class or transfer to an equal class, provided that the employee is qualified to perform the duties required, and provided further that the Superintendent approves the voluntary demotion.

**DISCIPLINARY ACTION PROCEDURE**

Disciplinary action includes any action whereby an employee is subject to dismissal, suspension, demotion, except in the instance of a layoff for lack of work or lack of funds.

- A. DISCRIMINATION - No employee in a management capacity shall be suspended, demoted, dismissed or in any way discriminated against because of his or her: race, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, physical handicap, sexual or medical condition, marital status, veteran or military status, or sex.
- B. CAUSES FOR DISCIPLINARY ACTION - Any management employee may be disciplined for cause, including, but not limited to:
1. Incompetency;
  2. Inefficiency;
  3. Insubordination;
  4. Inattention to or dereliction of duty;
  5. Lack of cooperation or courtesy to the public or fellow employees;
  6. Violation of the Education Code, or of rules, regulations, or procedures adopted by the County Superintendent or the Board of Education pursuant to the Education Code;
  7. Dishonesty;
  8. Use, possession, or being under the influence of alcohol, narcotics, or other dangerous drugs while on duty or on the premises of facilities or grounds under the authority of VCOE;
  9. Engagement in political activities during assigned hours of employment;
  10. Conviction of any felony, or a misdemeanor involving moral turpitude;
  11. Making false or misleading statements on application or employment records;
  12. Excessive and/or unexcused absences or tardiness;
  13. Failure to report for required health examination after due notice;
  14. Negligence;
  15. Misuse or abuse of public property or equipment;
  16. Abandonment of position;
  17. Conviction of a sex offense as defined in Education Code Section 44010 or determination as a sexual psychopath pursuant to Education Code Section 45124;
  18. Inability to perform the tasks or duties of the position;
  19. Failure to comply with Office rules, policies, or regulations
  20. Theft;
  21. Addiction to or use of narcotics or other controlled substances ;
  22. Failure to possess or keep in effect any license, certificate, or other similar requirement specified in the employee's class specification or otherwise necessary for the employee to perform the

- duties of the position;
23. Unlawful discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, physical handicap, marital status, sex, or age against the public or other employees while acting in the capacity of a VCOE employee; or
  24. Other acts which are inconsistent with or incompatible with the employee's position or other failure of good behavior either during or outside of duty hours which is of such a nature that it causes discredit or reasonably tends to cause discredit to the employee, his/her fellow employees, or the Office.

## **POSITION RECLASSIFICATION**

The Department Head shall redefine the job responsibilities to show evidence of the change in duties that have existed for a period of at least six months and submit a request for reclassification form available from the Human Resources Department.

A committee composed of the Assistant Superintendents and the Director of Human Resources will review all requests for reclassification and make a recommendation for a reclassification study if deemed appropriate. The study will be completed by the Human Resources Department and a decision made based on the study.

If a reclassification is implemented and there is an incumbent in the position, the incumbent will be reclassified to the position. If the position is not filled, the promotional or recruitment process shall be utilized to fill the vacancy.

When the incumbent is reclassified to the position, the anniversary date shall not be affected. The incumbent shall be placed on the same step of the new salary range as had been attained on the old salary range.

## **REDUCTION TO PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT STATUS**

Pursuant to provisions of EC 44922 and EC 22724, an eligible certificated management employee may request a reduction to part-time employment status. Such request shall be made in writing to the County Superintendent.

## **RESIGNATION / TERMINATION**

Any management employee who voluntarily resigns from a position shall provide a written resignation to VCOE. At least ten (10) working days notice shall be given in order to be eligible for reinstatement or reemployment.

Formal notice of resignation may be accomplished by completing a resignation form, available from your supervisor or the Human Resources Department. The form shall be processed through the department head and forwarded to the Human Resources Department. Resignations requested during a contract period are granted at the discretion of the Superintendent.

Upon resignation, the employee shall have an exit interview with the Human Resources Department. Rights of retirement benefits, continuation of insurance coverage, and unemployment insurance benefits will be explained at that time.

The employee shall be required to turn in all County possessions such as: telephone credit card, cellular phone, computers, mobile devices/organizers, keys to any premise or vehicle, and identification card before the final pay check will be released.

## EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENTS

### AFFIRMATIVE ACTION / EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY / AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

VCOE is an equal employment opportunities employer. The employment and procurement in every department within VCOE will be on a totally fair and impartial basis, and no factors of race, religious creed, color, ancestry, national origin, sex, age, marital status, military or veteran status, medical condition, or physical handicap, where the latter does not impair one's job performance with reasonable accommodations, are to be considered.

Furthermore, VCOE recognizes the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and acknowledges that reasonable accommodations for the employment of qualified persons with a physical disability or medical condition are necessary and consistent with the philosophy and intent of ADA.

### CHILD ABUSE REPORTING

VCOE is concerned about the national problem of child abuse. In an effort to support existing laws and support county personnel in reporting child abuse, VCOE has established the following procedures which offer direction and, hopefully, clarity to the reporting process.

**To report abuse or neglect, call the Human Services Agency 24-hour hotline: (805) 654-3200. For emergency help, dial 911.**

IF YOU HAVE A REASONABLE SUSPICION THAT A STUDENT IS A VICTIM OF ABUSE, whether physical, sexual, or neglect:

1. You are legally obligated to report it. Call Child Protective Services (CPS). (Note: Reasonable suspicion means that it is objectively reasonable for a person with your training and experience to entertain such a suspicion based on the facts, i.e., knowledge or observation, available to you.) To assist in determining whether an incident is reportable, you can ask yourself the question, "Do I suspect, based on my training and experience, that the injury was not accidental or not self-inflicted?" If the answer is "yes", the incident is reportable. Try to be clear, include the name of the person making the report, the name of the student, the present location of the student, the nature and extent of the injury, and any other information, including information that led you to suspect child abuse.
2. Complete the Suspected Child Abuse Report Form on file at your site and forward it to the appropriate agency within 36 hours. If necessary, pictures of the abuse area shall be taken.
3. If a student tells you that he or she is being sexually abused, believe the student and report it directly to CPS. It is extremely rare for a child not being abused to make up a scenario involving sexual abuse.
4. Employees who directly work with students are considered mandated reporters and are immune from prosecution and cannot be sued for reporting a suspicion of child abuse, even in the event that it later appears not to have taken place. You can be found guilty of a misdemeanor and

confined in the County Jail for failure to report suspected abuse.

5. When discussing a child abuse matter, remember that they are the victims of a crime and are not to be blamed for it. Also, do not belittle the student's parents.
6. Supervisors should not prohibit their employees from completing a CPS report if the employees suspect abuse.
7. All employees should keep any reports made to CPS confidential, discussing the matter only with other employees who "need to know."

**IF YOU ARE ACCUSED OF MOLESTING OR ABUSING A CHILD:**

1. If a verbal allegation is made by a parent, tell them that in view of their serious concerns, you will contact your administrator who will arrange a joint meeting time. Do not debate the issue with the parent. If parents or guardians insist on calling the supervisor directly, that is their right. However, you may wish to call first to alert the administrator to the situation.
2. If a report has been filed with CPS or the police, there will be an investigation and you will be questioned. If a CPS worker questions you, it is recommended that you speak with an administrator present who can confirm what you say, and the context in which you made the statement. It is your right not to talk to a CPS worker without first consulting your personal attorney at your own expense.
3. If a police officer comes to interrogate you, you may wish, for your own protection, to consult your personal attorney at your own expense prior to saying anything to the police. Sometimes innocent people feel "I don't mind talking, I have nothing to hide," but innocent statements can sometimes be manipulated or interpreted in such a way as to aggravate the situation. If you do choose to discuss the matter, it is again recommended that you do so in the presence of an administrator.
4. If formal charges are filed against you, the VCOE will conduct an investigation into the matter before deciding what action, if any, needs to be taken.

**TO MINIMIZE THE LIKELIHOOD THAT YOU WILL BE CHARGED WITH ABUSE**

1. Whenever possible, conduct dressing and toileting activities in the presence of another adult.
2. "High Fives," handshakes, etc. are welcome contact for most students. Unrealistic fears of child abuse charges should not turn us into cold people, afraid to reward children with our touch.
3. When working individually with a child, do so in an area that is open to other areas. If it is necessary to work in a quiet and private place, keep a log of when and where you went and what activities the student was engaged in for that period.



## PROFESSIONAL CREDENTIALS

Credential renewals are the responsibility of the employee. If your position requires a specific credential and you do not have the appropriate credential on file, no payment of salary can be given. The credential must be on file with VCOE in order to receive compensation. The Human Resources Department is available to give credential information and assistance when necessary.

There are two ways to submit your application for renewal:

1. **Renew Your Credential Online** - Qualifying credentials must be renewed online at [www.ctc.ca.gov/](http://www.ctc.ca.gov/). Credentials renewed online are processed in 10 working days. Effective January 1, 2007, all clear, professional and professional clear credentials MUST be renewed online. The Commission no longer accepts paper applications for clear, professional, and professional clear credential types.
2. **Submit Your Application by Mail** - Credentials that do not meet online renewal criterion must be applied for via postal mail. Application forms are available for download at [www.ctc.ca.gov/](http://www.ctc.ca.gov/). Some credentials and permits may require you to file your renewal application through your employing agency or institution of higher education.

## EMPLOYEE MEDICAL EXAMINATION

All employees of VCOE may be required to undergo a periodic medical examination to insure that the employee is free from any communicable disease, or when there is evidence that a medical problem exists that interferes with the normal responsibilities of the employee's position. VCOE will either provide the required examination or cause the examination to be provided. A medical certificate stating that the employee is physically able to resume regular duties shall be placed in the employee's medical file.

## FREEDOM FROM TUBERCULOSIS

During payroll orientation, employees will be given the necessary forms to ensure verification of freedom from Tuberculosis. Verification of freedom from tuberculosis is required upon employment and every four years thereafter. If you had a TB taken for employment in another district which has not expired, it will be accepted to meet this requirement. If you had a TB x-ray or intradermal skin test within the past 60 days, for another reason that can be verified in writing by the doctor or agency who administered the test, it will be accepted. VCOE must have TB verification within thirty days of beginning your services.

## EMPLOYMENT ELIGIBILITY VERIFICATION DOCUMENT

Verification of the right to work in the U.S. is required by the Federal Government. Upon initial employment, the employee must show evidence of identity and employment eligibility when completing the I-9 Document.

## FINGERPRINTS

As applicable to the position with VCOE, each employee shall be electronically fingerprinted in conformance with Education Code Section 45125 and as a condition of employment. Fingerprints are forwarded to the Department of Justice and Federal Bureau of Investigation for screening to assure that no employee has been convicted of a controlled substance, sex crime or other crime that would preclude employment by VCOE. Employees may not report to their assignments for duty prior to acceptance of their fingerprint clearance by the Human Resources Department.

## OATH OR AFFIRMATION OF ALLEGIANCE

A signed Oath of Allegiance is required of all California public employees.

## MANDATORY DISASTER SERVICE WORKERS

All employees are by law disaster service workers in the event of a declared emergency. (See Appendix A – Government Code, Chapter 8, Division 4, Title 1, Sections 3101) According to the type of emergency, specific duties shall be assigned to all employees. In addition, VCOE employees can be reassigned to other public agencies during a state of emergency.

## ARMATUS SEXUAL MOLESTATION PREVENTION PROGRAM

VCOE has teamed with the Ventura County Schools Self-Funding Authority, our insurance Joint Powers Authority (JPA), to contract with the Praesidium group in order to provide the Armatus Sexual Molestation Prevention training program for all employees. The purpose of this program is to raise everyone's awareness level regarding the compelling issue of Sexual Molestation in our schools today. Sexual molestation of children is a vital social issue that affects all of us. It is our duty to safeguard the children and young people we serve in our schools each day and we can do this most effectively by observing and understanding the "signs" that sexual abuse may be occurring. The system tracks your participation and makes a report available to VCOE automatically.

All employees must complete the Armatus Sexual Molestation Prevention Program training.

The program is now available online. It is simple to use and the average time of completion of all modules is approximately one hour. Logging on is quick and simple by following these steps:

Logon to [www.praesidiuminc.com/](http://www.praesidiuminc.com/):

1. Click on "Login to Your Service" on the right-hand corner;
2. Select "Armatus Online Training" (login required);
3. Enter your login and password\* and click "submit"; and
4. Choose your course and click the title to begin.

\*Your password is the PSL# listed on your pay warrant stub followed by the letters "ca".

**SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

The key word in defining sexual harassment is **unwelcome**. When any unwanted, unwelcome, or unsolicited sexual conduct is imposed on a person who regards it as offensive or undesirable, it is sexual harassment. When a person finds the conduct is unwelcome, it becomes illegal. Even conduct implicit in nature--hidden in subtlety or innuendo--is unlawful if it is unwelcome. If the employee or student states that she (or he) finds the behavior offensive, the actions are unwelcome. Often victims will seek to avoid confrontation or may fear reprisals and consequently do not clearly state their objection. Therefore, all employees must learn to be sensitive to how their actions may be perceived by others, no matter what they personally may believe or intend.

**DISCRIMINATION**

If you feel you are being discriminated against, or if you observe that discrimination is being practiced in your work area, you should contact the Human Resources Department. It is your right to file a complaint under our Complaint Procedure, which is found in the Superintendent's Administrative Regulations.

**VERIFICATION OF SOCIAL SECURITY CARD**

VCOE requires a copy of your social security card be on file with the Payroll Department before any payroll checks will be processed. Per federal regulations, VCOE must pay you exactly as your name is listed on your social security card. This regulation is in place to protect both the employee and employer. By using the exact information printed on your social security card, earnings reported to state and federal agencies will be posted accurately to insure proper credit to you. If an employee is paid under an incorrect name or social security number, VCOE may be subject to penalties. A copy of your social security card is also required by the State Teachers Retirement System upon enrollment.

## SALARY AND BENEFITS

### DISTRIBUTION OF PAY CHECKS

Pay day is the last business day of each month. The following options are available for delivery of pay checks:

1. Direct deposit to a financial institution, provided employee has filed the appropriate forms with the Payroll Department. This option will electronically post the employee's pay check to a checking or savings account of the employee's choice each pay day; the employee will receive a pay stub (paper copy or e-mail) that looks like a regular check stub with all of the tax and deduction information. (One month processing time is required before the first direct deposit can be made.)
2. Employees, with the approval of their supervisors and as permitted by assignment, may pick up their check in the Payroll Department after 8:30 a.m. on pay day each month.
3. A specific employee, acceptable to the Business Office, may be authorized to receive pay checks for staff at various locations and distribute those checks to employees at that location. (This option is only available if there is a volunteer from your site that will come into the Payroll Department on pay day and pick up the checks.)
4. Employees may designate, **in writing**, a member of their immediate family to whom, with proper identification, the Payroll Department may release a pay check. This person will be required to sign for the check.
5. U.S. Mail may be utilized to forward pay checks to the employee's home. **We cannot assume responsibility for delays that may occur when mail is lost or delayed. A minimum of 7 days is required to report a pay check was lost in the mail.**

Your choice may be changed at any time. The Payroll Department must be notified at least 10 days prior to pay day for direct deposit, and at least 48 hours before pay day for any other option. Cancellation or change of any of the above options must be made to the Payroll Department in writing.

### PAY DAY AND DEDUCTIONS

Employees are paid monthly, normally on the last working day of each month. Accompanying your check will be a statement of earnings and deductions.

The following deductions are required:

1. Federal and State Income Tax,
2. Retirement Contributions\*,
3. Survivor Benefit (currently \$2.00 monthly),
4. Employee portion of Medicare contribution (applies to anyone employed after 4/1/86),

All other deductions are voluntary and require written authorization. If you choose, deductions will be made for such things as: Credit Union payments or savings, union dues (if applicable), Tax Sheltered

Annuities and some charitable contributions.

If you feel there has been an error in any pay check you receive, or if you have questions concerning the amount of your check, you should contact the Payroll Department immediately.

\*Retirement contributions are deducted before state and federal tax is calculated. Retirement contributions will be taxable when received at the time of retirement or withdrawal from the retirement system. Withdrawal prior to retirement or age 59-1/2 may also result in tax penalties.

## **SALARY SCHEDULE PLACEMENT**

The salary schedule consists of a salary range, with an approximate twenty-five percent increase between the minimum and maximum rate. The salary range for each position is assigned according to the degree of responsibility and the nature of duties required.

There are six steps in each salary range. Each step is an approximate five percent above the previous step with the exception of the final step; which is approximately 7-1/2% above the previous step. Salary schedule adjustments alter the six step schedule by the percent of adjustment to each step, but do not affect probation status or anniversary dates.

### **INITIAL PLACEMENT**

A manager new to VCOE shall be placed on the step of the appropriate salary range based upon an evaluation of previous experience and salary history. Original placement on the Management Salary Schedule may be on any step of the appropriate salary range, as determined by the Human Resources Department and the appropriate Associate/Assistant Superintendent subject to the review and approval by the County Superintendent. Doctoral stipends are pro-rated; it is the responsibility of the employee to provide documentation to the Human Resources Department.

### **PROMOTIONS**

An employee moving from another VCOE salary schedule to the Management Salary schedule shall be placed on the appropriate salary grade for the position. Step Placement within the designated salary grade will be based upon an evaluation of experience and salary history providing the employee at least a five percent (5%) increase.

An employee already on the Management Salary schedule who receives a promotion to a higher reclassification will be placed on the appropriate step of the new salary range to which the new position is assigned, insuring that an approximate 5% increase in salary is provided. The effective date of the salary adjustment will be effective on the date the promotion or reclassification is implemented.

### **DEMOTIONS**

A demotion is the change of an employee from one job classification to another with a lower salary range. Demotions may be voluntary or involuntary. (Examples: Voluntary - employee requests demotion in lieu of layoff or termination. Involuntary - position reclassified to a lower salary range.)

When a voluntary demotion is effected, the employee's salary will be adjusted to the range of the lower

position. Step placement on the salary schedule will be adjusted to the highest step on the lower range that does not exceed the employee's salary prior to demotion.

When an involuntary demotion is effected, the salary will be to the step on the lower salary range that will equal the employee's salary prior to demotion, or the employee will be "Y" rated until the salary range of the lower position exceeds the employee's salary.

A demotion to a lower unrelated position will require completion of a new probationary period, but will not change the anniversary date for purposes of step increases.

A demotion to a lower related position, will not require a new probationary period and will not change the anniversary date for purposes of step increases.

## **SERVICE INCREMENTS**

### **CERTIFICATED**

A certificated manager will be granted one increment for each year of service until the maximum salary for the classification is reached. A year of service is defined as service for at least 75% of the working days in the assignment year for the position classification. Progression between steps is on an annual basis, effective July 1 of each fiscal year.

### **CLASSIFIED**

A classified manager shall be granted a step advancement for each year of service in classification until the maximum salary for the classification is reached. A year of service shall be defined as service for at least fifty percent (50%) of the working days in the assignment year for the position classification. Progression between steps shall occur during a given fiscal year, effective July 1.

Step advancements are not automatic, but are based on supervisor's recommendation via performance evaluation reports.

## **TIME CARDS**

Each management employee is required to maintain a record of days worked, vacation, applicable holidays, sick leave and other approved leaves of absence.

Each employee shall record, on the time card, the actual days (in half day increments) worked. The employee's signature on the time card will serve as certification that "ALL" time worked is reported on the time card. All time cards must be submitted the first of each month to your supervisor whose signature of approval is required prior to submission to the Payroll Department.

All time cards become a part of the employee's permanent record.

## **WORK YEAR**

Management employees shall annually prepare a calendar of their intended work days and unassigned days according to the requirements of their work year. Prior to September 1 of each year, this calendar

shall be submitted to the respective Associate or Assistant Superintendent for approval and a copy forwarded to Payroll. The purpose of the calendar is to provide a plan so that the employee will be assured of working the required number of days during the year, and to assure that there is appropriate coverage to provide continuity of services. When changes are necessary, the updated calendar shall be submitted to the respective Associate and Assistant Superintendent for approval.

## **WORK HOURS**

Management employees in VCOE are required to work such hours as directed by the County Superintendent of Schools or a designee.

It is recognized that the management employee will normally be at work during the regular business hours of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Also, certain professional responsibilities will be performed during the other than regular business hours, such as in the evening or on weekends. To provide some tangible recognition for the time worked beyond the normal day, the supervising Associate and Assistant Superintendent may authorize modification of management employee's normal work day.

## **NON-WORK DAYS**

The appropriate Associate or Assistant Superintendent shall be responsible for approving non-work day schedules. Time off shall be scheduled in advance so as not to interfere with the normal functions of the department.

## **DAYS OVER CONTRACT**

Each management classification has a designated number of contract days indicated on the management salary schedule. A management employee may be authorized to work days in excess of the number of days designated for the classification on the management salary schedule. However, it will not be considered a demotion for a management employee if the number of contract days is reduced from the previous school year to the following school year, provided the number of days assigned for the new school year do not fall below the number of days for the management classification which are indicated in the management salary scheduled.

Employees must request and receive approval to carry over into the next work year days worked over contract, prior to the beginning of that school year. If carry-over of days is authorized, the appropriate Associate and Assistant Superintendent will approve the request and forward a copy to the payroll department, authorizing the carry over days to be credited against the next year's Contract.

Upon approval, a management employee may carry over up to ten (10) unused non-work days into the next school year based on the following criteria:

1. The certificated management employee must work at least 180 days per school year.
2. No more than ten (10) days may be carried forward into the next school year.
3. The days carried forward cannot accumulate, i.e. no more than ten (10) extra days will be allowed in any year.
4. Any unused days in excess of ten (10) at the end of the school year will be lost.

## HOLIDAYS

VCOE facilities will be closed on the following holidays:

- New Year's Day (plus one additional day)
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- Lincoln's Birthday
- President's Day
- Spring Break
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Veterans' Day
- Thanksgiving Day, and the day following Thanksgiving
- Winter Break (plus one additional day)

Classes shall be closed for the normal winter and spring recesses, as provided in the school calendar adopted annually.

## SICK LEAVE

Sick leave is authorized for all regular employees. Employees shall accrue sick leave credit at the rate of twelve (12) days per fiscal year of service.

Employees who work less than full-time will accrue that proportion of twelve (12) days that the amount of time employed bears to full-time service. Full-time service is twelve (12) months per year, five (5) days per week, eight (8) hours per day.

Sick leave shall be cumulative from year to year, and shall be used as follows:

1. Injury or illness of employee.
2. Medical and dental office appointments for employee.
3. Injury, illness, medical and dental office calls for immediate family. (These are covered under Personal Necessity Leave and are limited to seven (7) working days per fiscal year.)

Upon employment, each regular employee shall be advanced one-half (½) of the sick leave accruable in the first year of service. Should it be necessary to use sick leave, it will be subtracted from this advance. Should sick leave exceed the amount advanced **before** the end of six (6) full months of service, there will be a monetary deduction for sick leave. No additional time shall accrue until the seventh month of service, at which time sick leave shall be credited for the balance of the current fiscal year.

Sick leave may not be used to increase any vacation accrual.

### Sick Leave Accrual

VCOE employees have no limitation as to accrual of sick leave. Time accrued may be transferred to another VCOE employee through the Catastrophic Leave Process (see page 35), another school district in California, or the California State Department of Education.



An employee transferring from any of these agencies may be credited for sick leave accrued at the prior agency, when verified in writing by that agency.

**Change to Sick Leave Status**

An employee who becomes ill or injured while on vacation may change the status from vacation to sick leave by informing the supervisor on the first day of such disability. No time prior to the notification is subject to change.

**Doctor's Certificate - Medical Evaluation**

You will be required to furnish a certificate from a medical doctor during any period of absence for illness/injury exceeding five days. Before you return to work you may be required to submit to a medical evaluation by a physician designated by VCOE.

**Pregnancy**

Pregnancy is not considered an illness; however, paid sick leave may be used toward the necessary time off if the attending physician certifies it as a disability. Time beyond that may be charged to vacation, compensation time, or taken without pay, in accordance with Leave of Absence policies. At any time during pregnancy, the supervisor may require a doctor's certification indicating the employee is able to continue working. Leave of absence may be granted for up to one (1) year. Following childbirth, the employee must provide the supervisor with a doctor's certification that she is able to return to work, before she is reinstated.

**Calling In**

When it is necessary to be absent because of illness or accident, the employee shall notify the department head at the **beginning** of the normal work day, on the **first** date of absence. If the illness continues, the employee shall continue to notify the department head of the status on a daily basis. If the doctor or the condition indicates a specific period of absence will be required, and the supervisor is advised of the anticipated period of absence, it will not be necessary to report daily during the specified period. Additionally, if you are under the care of a doctor, notify HR for further guidance. Call in procedures may vary at school sites.

Regular and prompt attendance is an important requirement of your job. If illness or some other emergency causes an unplanned absence, you must notify your department head or supervisor as soon as possible on the first day of absence. Failure to call in shall be treated as unauthorized time off without pay. **Absence from work for three (3) consecutive days without authorization will be judged to be a voluntary resignation.** It is the sole responsibility of the employee to call in such instances.

**HEALTH, DENTAL AND VISION INSURANCE**

Health, dental and vision insurance is provided for the employee and all eligible dependents. Total cost of the coverage is paid by the VCOE for full-time employees. A brochure explaining benefits of the plan is provided to each employee. Any questions regarding coverage or payment of benefits should be directed to the Payroll Department.

If employment is less than full-time, VCOE will be responsible for paying a prorated amount toward insurance, based on your percent of contract. Employees must work at least 20 hours or more per week to be eligible.

All employees hired from July 2, 2006 to the present may enroll in a Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) at the time of hiring for a period of two years. You have the option of choosing one of two HMOs. If you prefer to enroll in a Preferred Provider Organization (PPO) at the time of open enrollment period for changing health coverage is the month of September, with changes effective October 1.

It is the employee's responsibility to request a change form from the Human Resources Department, to report a change of address. Changes in eligible dependents must be reported to the Payroll Department. All changes must be reported within 30 days to assure uninterrupted coverage.

## **CREDIT UNION**

All employees are eligible for membership in the County Schools Federal Credit Union and the Ventura County Federal Credit Union. An automated teller machine (ATM) for the County Schools Federal Credit Union is located outside of the Conference and Educational Services Center (CESC).

The credit union operates in order that you might conveniently save money through payroll deductions. It also enables you to borrow money which may be repaid through payroll deductions. To join the credit union, you must go in person to apply at their office.

## **RETIREMENT COVERAGE**

In accordance with the Education Code, certificated employees are required to be members of the California State Teachers' Retirement System (STRS). Members of Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS) who accept certificated employment may be allowed to continue PERS coverage. STRS provides disability benefits, survivor benefits and lifetime pensions for vested members. Tax-deferred contributions of 8% of earnings are deducted from the employee's pay. A refund of contributions may be taken only upon termination of employment. For a STRS Member Handbook or for additional information, contact the Retirement Division, or visit [www.calstrs.com/](http://www.calstrs.com/).

## **PUBLIC EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM (PERS)**

Membership in the Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS) is mandatory for employees working four or more hours per day on a regular basis. A minimum of five years of service and age 50 is required to be eligible for retirement benefits. Upon termination, you may request a refund of your contributions, leave your contributions on deposit until retirement age is attained, or roll over funds to a personal IRA.

Members of Public Employees' Retirement System are also covered by a "Survivor Benefit" program with a mandatory monthly deduction of \$2.00 (currently), which is not refundable. This provides an income for survivors in the event of the death of a member while in service before attaining retirement age.

Unused sick leave may be added to service to extend service credit at the time of retirement.

You may contact the Retirement Section in the School Business and Advisory Services Office for more detailed information regarding retirement benefits.

### **STATE TEACHERS' RETIREMENT SYSTEM (STRS)**

The California Education Code provides that all certificated employees must belong to the State Teachers' Retirement System (STRS) unless they were previous members of the Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS). Retirement contributions are made through payroll deductions. These deductions are sheltered from taxation until you retire or withdraw the funds. The employee's contribution to STRS may be withdrawn within 60 days of resignation or termination from employment provided the employee does not plan to continue teaching or managing in another California school district.

Unused sick leave may be added to service to extend service credit at the time of retirement.

You may contact the Retirement Section in the School Business and Advisory Services Office for more detailed information regarding retirement benefits.

### **SECTION 125 FLEXIBLE BENEFIT PLAN**

This plan allows for the use of "pre-tax" dollars to pay for the employee portion of certain benefits. Additionally, if you have dependent care or contribute to your health and dental insurance coverage, you may set aside more pre-tax dollars to pay for these. Contact the Payroll Department for more information.

### **TAX SHELTERED ANNUITIES**

Tax Sheltered Annuities (TSA) may be purchased through a number of licensed insurance companies or agencies. The employee must select the plan desired and request the appropriate contract revisions. Neither VCOE nor any member of the staff may promote or recommend any particular plan. The Payroll Department may advise you of the names of companies currently providing plans to other staff members. The amount of annual contributions to a TSA is limited by Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Regulations. The employee is responsible for assuring contributions are within the authorized limit.

Contributions to a TSA are taxable when withdrawn and may be subject to tax penalties if withdrawn prior to age 59½.

### **UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE**

State Unemployment Insurance benefits are provided to all employees as required by State law. Upon termination of employment, you are eligible to apply for benefits through any State Employment Development Department. Eligibility for benefits is determined by circumstances related to each individual situation. Only the Employment Development Department can determine your eligibility status.

## **WORKERS' COMPENSATION INSURANCE BENEFITS**

Workers' Compensation Insurance benefits are provided for industrial injury or illness. Coverage is provided by participation in the Ventura County Schools Self-Funding Authority. If you are injured, follow the procedure for Industrial Injuries as outlined in the Health and Safety section of this handbook.

## LEAVES OF ABSENCE

### REQUESTS FOR LEAVES OF ABSENCE WITH OR WITHOUT PAY

Any request for a leave of absence, other than a normal non-work day, shall be filed with the Supervisor who shall make a recommendation and forward it to the Human Resources Department for approval or denial. (Requests for leave of absence for less than thirty [30] days may be approved by the Department Head and do not require a formal written request; however, the Payroll Department must be notified.) Such requests shall state the reasons for the leave and the duration. If such leave is for medical reasons, a release from the employee's physician shall be presented before returning to duty. (This shall include leaves for work-related injury or illness, or maternity leave.) If in an unpaid status in excess of fifty percent (50%) of the scheduled work days in a month, your sick leave credit will be adjusted accordingly.

Health, dental and vision insurance benefits may be continued while on approved leave of absence by arranging to make personal payments. Coverage will be cancelled without notice if monthly payment is not received on time. Contact the Payroll Department to arrange personal payment.

An approved leave of absence guarantees return to an equal or similar position, not necessarily the same position or site.

### DISCRETIONARY PERSONAL NECESSITY LEAVE

Discretionary Personal Necessity Leave days (DPNL) are Personal Necessity Leave Days (Superintendent Policy 4261.22) an employee may use at his/her own discretion, without providing written or verbal justification for the leave. Employees will earn Discretionary Personal Necessity days based on the number of sick leave days accumulated and recorded on the September pay warrant. At no time can DPNL exceed the employee's accumulated sick leave. The following scale will be used to determine Discretionary Personal Necessity Leave days:

- a) One (1) to thirty (30) days accumulated sick leave = three (3) DPNL days.
- b) Thirty-one (31) to sixty (60) days accumulated sick leave = four (4) DPNL days.
- c) Sixty-one (61) to one hundred (100) days accumulated sick leave = five (5) DPNL days.
- d) One hundred-one (101) or more days accumulated sick leave = seven (7) DPNL days.

DPNL must be approved by the supervisor/administrator and require forty-eight hour advance notification. In the event that the number of employees at a school/program requesting DPNL leave will interfere, due to excessive absenteeism or other circumstances, with the normal functioning of the school/program and would result in severe hardship for

There is no carry-over of DPNL days from year to year. DPNL may be used in ½ or in whole day increments. No more than two (2) DPNL days may be used consecutively. DPNL cannot be used when employed on a daily pay rate for days over contract.

the school/program, the DPNL may be denied. DPNL cannot be used to extend holidays or vacations, to seek or engage in remunerative employment or for concerted activities.

## **PERSONAL NECESSITY LEAVE**

A maximum of seven (7) days per year of current and accrued sick leave may be used for personal necessity. Personal necessity is defined as: Circumstances of an emergency or serious nature, which the employee cannot reasonably be expected to disregard, and require the attention of the employee during assigned hours of work.

Events justifying personal necessity leave will include:

1. Death of a member of your immediate family when additional leave is required beyond that provided in the bereavement leave policy.
2. One day shall be granted in the event of a death of a close friend or non-immediate family member.
3. An accident involving your personal property, a member of your immediate family, or an immediate family member's property.
4. Appearance in court as a litigant or a witness under subpoena.
5. Incapacitating illness of a member of your immediate family.
6. Imminent danger to your home as a result of earthquake, fire, flood, etc.
7. One (1) day leave is granted to allow the father's presence at the time of birth of his child or when birth is considered imminent.
8. Religious holiday.
9. Discretionary Leave.
10. Other occasions you cannot reasonably be expected to disregard until other than work hours.

Personal necessity leave shall be requested at least five (5) working days in advance, except for purposes of death, serious illness of immediate family members, or accident involving personal property.

Proof of the need for use of personal necessity leave may be required.

## **BEREAVEMENT LEAVE**

An employee will be allowed up to five (5) working days off without loss of pay because of a death in the immediate family. If additional time off is required, the department head may allow use of personal necessity leave (charged against sick leave accrual), accrued vacation or compensatory time accumulated.

Immediate family is defined as: Mother, father, grandfather, grandmother, grandchild of the unit member

or the spouse of the unit member, spouse, son, daughter, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother or sister of the unit member or the spouse of the unit member, or any person living in the immediate household of the unit member. The "step" equivalent of any of the above relatives shall also be considered immediate family.

Immediate family does not include ex-spouses or family members of ex-spouse.

### **CATASTROPHIC LEAVE**

A catastrophic leave program is available to allow employees to donate available accrued paid leave benefits to another employee, when that employee or a member of his/her immediate family suffers a catastrophic illness or injury and the employee has exhausted all available accrued paid leave benefits. **Contact the Human Resources Department for specific rules and procedures regarding the use of catastrophic leave.**

### **FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (FMLA)**

An employee who has been employed for at least 12 months AND who has at least 1250 hours of actual time worked during the 12 month period immediately preceding the commencement of the leave is eligible for FMLA. FMLA requires the employer to grant as much as twelve weeks of leave in a 12 month period. Leaves for any of the following purposes qualify for FMLA Leave:

- The birth of a child, and to care for a newborn.
- The arrival of a child for adoption or foster care.
- To care for an immediate family member who has a serious health condition, including a child, grandchild, spouse, sibling, parent, parent-in-law or grandparent.
- For an employee's own serious health condition.

Entitlement to leave for the birth or placement of a child for adoption or foster care expires 12 months after birth or placement. Leave provided by FMLA in excess of available vacation time shall be unpaid.

The 12 month period is measured forward from the date an employee's first leave began. All leave usage that qualifies under the terms of the FMLA leave shall be counted towards the available 12 work weeks within a 12 month period, including intermittent and reduced workload leaves. Health care and dental benefits coverage shall be continued during the FMLA leave.

If an employee fails to return from leave, paid health and dental coverage will cease unless the employee does not return because of the continuation, recurrence, or onset of a serious health condition, which would entitle the employee to FMLA leave or other circumstances beyond the employee's control. The employee's desire to stay with a family member even though the family member no longer requires the employee's care, or a mother's decision to stay home with a newborn child and not return to work, do not qualify as "other circumstances beyond the employee's control." Except as provided above, if an employee fails to return after expiration for eligibility for FMLA leave, the employee shall pay the full cost of coverage for health and dental benefits during the entire period of unpaid FMLA leave. Any amounts due under this section may be deducted from any sums due to the employee (e.g. unpaid wages, vacation pay, etc.).

For additional information on other types of leaves, refer to Article 27 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

### **MATERNITY LEAVE & CALIFORNIA FAMILY RIGHTS ACT (CFRA)**

Maternity/Disability leave is provided to all expectant mothers. Accrued sick leave available must be used during the period of actual disability as certified by a medical doctor. Other accrued time and/or accumulated compensation time may be used for maternity leave purposes. If additional time off is desired, it shall be without pay, in accordance with the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and/or the California Family Rights Act (CFRA). Please schedule an appointment with Human Resources to discuss your options in a timely manner. Appropriate documentation will be prepared and sent to your doctor regarding the actual period of disability.

Additionally, adoptive parents may request leave through FMLA and/or CFRA. Notify the Human Resources Department to learn more about this option.

### **JURY DUTY**

If a summons for jury duty is received, it must be presented to your supervisor immediately, in order that duties can be reassigned in advance of the absence. While on jury duty, employees are expected to report to work any day or significant portion of the day they are not required to be present in court.

The appropriate code must be entered on the time card. No deduction will be made from regular salary. Any payment for daily jury service received from the County or Federal Government must be turned over to VCOE. Employees may keep any payment received for mileage reimbursement. When the check for jury duty services is received, it will also include mileage reimbursement.

### **INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENT AND ILLNESS LEAVE**

Employees who have successfully completed an initial probationary period will be granted leave of absence with pay for a period of sixty (60) working days in any one (1) fiscal year for the same accident. If the sixty (60) days overlap into the next fiscal year, salary will be paid for only those days remaining at the end of the fiscal year in which the accident occurred. To qualify for leave with pay, the absence must have been recommended by the attending physician. (Industrial leave is not deducted from accrued sick leave.) Such leave shall not be accumulated from year to year.

During a paid leave of absence, the employee must endorse all temporary disability benefit payment checks, received from the Workers' Compensation Claims Administrator, to the County School Service Fund. The employee will, in turn, receive full salary through the regular payroll process with all normal payroll deductions. This process enables the employee to receive full retirement service credit for the period of such paid leave.

Sick leave and any other available paid leave may be used to prevent loss of wages after the sixty (60) days industrial leave is exhausted.



A doctor's release to return to regular duties must be presented to your supervisor prior to returning to work from industrial injury or illness leave. In certain restricted situations, a release to return to limited or restricted duties may be accepted. Special permission must be obtained from the Human Resources Department.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

### AIR POLLUTION EMERGENCY ALERT PLAN

In the event of an air pollution emergency alert, the Human Resources Department will notify each site of the level of the alert. School staff will be expected to modify programs which require students to have prolonged or strenuous physical activities on the day of the smog alert. In determining whether a proposed activity can be conducted, assess each activity to ascertain its potential for increasing the respiration rate for an extended period of time. The intensity of an activity should be the determining factor in deciding to cancel an activity.

During a **Stage 1 Alert**, strenuous outdoor physical activity for all students shall be discontinued. Activities of a less strenuous nature shall be substituted. The following students shall be allowed to remain indoors:

- Students with respiratory difficulties which are aggravated by smog;
- Students who have notes from parents or doctors; and
- Students who are complaining about the effects of smog.

VCOE believes that safety and health information should be shared openly with anyone using or working around hazardous substances and that all attempts should be made to minimize the use of hazardous substances.

During a **Stage 2 Alert**, all students are to remain indoors.

### DRUG AND ALCOHOL FREE WORKPLACE

VCOE is fully committed to achieving a drug and alcohol free environment for its students and employees. The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispersing, possession or use of a controlled substance or alcohol is prohibited in all VCOE work places.

While VCOE has no intention of intruding into the private lives of its employees, involvement with drugs off the job can affect job performance and safety. Employees who think they may have a drug/alcohol problem are urged to voluntarily seek assistance and get help immediately through their individual health plans. While VCOE will be supportive of those who seek help voluntarily, it will be equally firm in identifying and disciplining those who continue to be substance abusers and do not seek help. To this end, VCOE will act to eliminate any substance abuse (illegal drugs, prescription drugs or any other substance which could impair an employee's safety and ability to effectively perform the functions of the assigned job) that increases the potential for accidents, absenteeism, substandard performance, poor employee morale or damage to the reputation of VCOE. All employees must be aware that violations of the Drug Free Workplace Policy will result in discipline, up to and including termination.

Employee responsibilities for a drug free workplace include:

- Not having his/her ability to perform job duties impaired due to the use of illegal drugs or prescription drugs without a prescription.
- Not reporting to work or being subject to duty while his/her ability to perform job duties is impaired by use of illegal drugs or prescription drugs, with or without a prescription.
- Not possessing or being under the influence of illegal drugs or prescription drugs, without a

prescription, during working hours or while subject to being called to duty, on breaks, during meal periods or at any time while on VCOE property.

- Not directly or through a third party selling or providing drugs to any person, including any employee, while either employee or both employees are on duty or subject to being called to duty.
- Submitting immediately to a drug test when requested by a responsible VCOE manager.
- Notifying his/her supervisor, manager or the Human Resources Department before beginning work, when taking any medications or drugs, prescription or non-prescription, that may interfere with the safe and effective performance of duties or operation of equipment.
- Providing within 24 hours of request, bona fide, verification of a current valid prescription for any potentially impairing drug or medication identified when a drug test is positive. The prescription must be in the employee's name.
- Notifying his/her supervisor or the Human Resources Department of any criminal drug statute conviction within five (5) days after such conviction.

As a condition of being employed to work under any federal grant received by VCOE, employees are required to abide by the terms of this statement. These employees are further required to notify their supervisor, (or the Human Resources Department), of any conviction for a criminal drug statute violation within five days after such conviction.

## **HAZARDOUS MATERIALS COMMUNICATION PROGRAM**

VCOE maintains a Hazard Communication Program that complies with Cal-OSHA General Industry Safety Orders, California Code of Regulations, Title 8, Section 5194. The full program is available on request to all employees or their designated representatives, Cal-OSHA personnel and other authorized persons as required by California law.

The following is a summary of VCOE's Hazard Communication Program:

- VCOE will label, tag or mark all hazardous substance containers with the chemical make/contents and appropriate health and physical hazard warnings;
- VCOE will maintain a list of all hazardous substances in the workplace;
- VCOE will maintain in a designated book in each area, Safety Data Sheets (SDS), recording when hazardous substances are used or stored; and
- Before being assigned to handle hazardous substances and before new hazardous substances are introduced into the work area, employees shall participate in Hazard Communication Training.

## INDUSTRIAL INJURIES

It is imperative that the following procedures be followed when an industrial (on-the-job) injury occurs:

1. All injuries, illnesses, and near-miss incidents **must** be reported immediately to your supervisor and the Risk Management Department before the end of the work shift during which the incident occurred, regardless of whether medical attention is necessary. Risk Management Department's phone number is (805) 383-1916. *(Note: If an industrial accident occurs outside of normal work hours, the injured worker must call the Risk Management Department and leave a message before seeking medical treatment.)*
2. Injuries on the job, regardless of how slight, must be reported to your supervisor immediately and cared for by First Aid, or if necessary, by a doctor. **Failure to report an injury at the time it occurs is grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.** (See item 15 under the "Rules and Regulations" section of this handbook.) Minor injuries (scratches, cuts, puncture wounds and contusions) should be treated immediately with appropriate First Aid procedures on site. Failure to apply First Aid to minor injuries can result in serious infections later. Reasonable precautions to prevent further complications are the responsibility of every employee.
3. The supervisor will complete and sign a "Supervisor's Report of Injury" form and submit it to the Risk Management Department.
4. Employee should contact the Risk Management Department to obtain (1) a Department of Workers' Compensation (DWC-1) and (2) an Employee Statement form. Failure to do this could result in a delay of payment of medical expenses or Workers' Compensation benefits.
5. If the injury requires medical attention, you will be given an authorization to seek medical treatment with a "designated medical facility." These facilities have been specifically selected for treatment of industrial injuries. The doctors are familiar with Workers' Compensation laws regarding reporting and billing. Unless a Pre-Designation of Personal Physician form is on file, **prior** to sustaining an injury, VCOE has the right to designate the treating physician in all industrial injury cases for the first 30 days of treatment. **DO NOT seek medical treatment without authorization from the Risk Management Department.** Proper procedure must be followed in order for VCOE to accept responsibility for your injury and required medical bills. Treatment at a hospital emergency room is only authorized when an actual emergency exists.
6. After 30 days from the date of injury, you have the right to be treated by a physician of your choice, within the Medical Provider Network (MPN) and within a reasonable geographic location. Contact the Risk Management Department if you desire a change in medical facilities during the course of treatment. A change in physician must be authorized by our Workers' Compensation Administrator before Workers' Compensation insurance will assume financial responsibility for any services.
7. As soon as you have been treated by a designated medical facility, report to the Risk Management Department and then to your supervisor the outcome of the visit. Submit all medical status reports from the medical facility to the Risk Management Department. If modified work or time off is required, the Risk Management Department must be notified immediately. Regularly update your supervisor on your progress.

8. If you have any questions regarding your injury, status during time off, medical bills, etc., please do not hesitate to call our Workers' Compensation Administrator at (805) 288-4072 or the Risk Management Department. For questions regarding salary continuation, contact the Payroll Department.
9. If, after treatment, you are dissatisfied with the physician or medical facility, contact Risk Management or the Workers' Compensation Administrator.
10. Prior approval must be obtained to leave the state while receiving Workers' Compensation benefits.

For additional benefits provided, refer to the Industrial Injury or Illness Leave section of this handbook.

## **INFECTIOUS DISEASES / BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS EXPOSURE CONTROL PLAN**

VCOE's "Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Program" is in accordance with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Bloodborne Pathogens Standard 29 CFR 1910.1030. The following summary outlines the VCOE Exposure Control Plan:

### **1. Exposure Determination**

Occupational exposure means reasonably anticipated skin, eye, mucous membrane, or parenteral contact with blood, saliva, semen, vaginal secretions or other potentially infectious body fluids that may result from the performance of employment related duties.

The tasks/procedures that are considered potential routes of exposure for teachers, paraeducators, nurses and specialists include: specialized healthcare procedures; interaction which results in a student spitting at, biting or bleeding on an employee; clean up of blood, saliva, semen or vomit; toileting or diaper-changing students; inspection of students for possession of weapons or drugs; and rendering first aid.

The tasks/procedures that are considered potential routes of exposure for custodians include: clean up of blood, saliva, semen or vomit; handling, repair or maintenance of equipment or tools that may be contaminated with blood, saliva or vomit.

Although administrative and clerical staff do not routinely perform tasks/procedures that are considered potential routes of exposure, they may occasionally perform any of the tasks/procedures listed above. Therefore, they are included in all aspects of the Exposure Control Plan.

### **2. Implementation Methodology**

- a. Work Practices - **Universal precautions will be observed at all VCOE facilities.** All blood, saliva, vomit and semen will be considered infectious regardless of the perceived status of the source individual. Work practices shall be implemented to eliminate or minimize exposure to employees.

- b. Personal Protective Equipment

- i. Personal protective equipment may include gloves, outer garments, masks, eye protection, face shields. Personal protective equipment shall be provided at no cost to the employee. The program manager/principal is responsible for ensuring that the proper personal protective equipment is available. Employees are responsible for wearing the designated personal protective equipment.
  - ii. **Disposable gloves** shall be worn whenever it is reasonably anticipated that employees could have contact with blood, saliva, semen or vomit. Associated tasks/procedures which require the use of disposable gloves include: rendering first aid; clean up of blood, saliva, semen or vomit; toileting and diaper-changing; specialized health care procedures; and decontamination of surfaces, tools or equipment. Disposable gloves are not to be washed or decontaminated for re-use. They shall be replaced after each use and when they become contaminated, torn, punctured, or when their ability to function as a barrier has been compromised.
  - iii. **Utility gloves** may be worn to perform some of the above tasks. They may be decontaminated for reuse as long as their ability to function as a barrier is not compromised.
  - iv. **Barrier masks** shall be available in all first aid kits. They shall be used whenever possible, for administering rescue breathing or CPR. They shall be decontaminated after each use.
  - v. **Masks/Eye Protection/Face shields** shall be worn when performing specialized health care procedures, feeding students and rendering first aid if it is reasonably anticipated that blood, saliva or vomit would enter the employee's eyes, nose or mouth. Masks shall be replaced after each use. Face shields shall be decontaminated after each use.
  - vi. **Personal protective equipment is decontaminated by soaking in a solution of one part bleach to ten parts water for at least five minutes.**
- c. Hand Washing - Employees shall wash their hands with soap and water following any contact with blood, saliva, semen or vomit and upon removal of personal protective gloves.
- d. Decontamination - All surfaces contaminated by blood, saliva, semen or vomit will be decontaminated as soon as possible. A solution of one part bleach to ten parts water shall be used.
3. Hepatitis B Vaccine
- Hepatitis B Vaccine (HBV) and vaccination series shall be offered at no cost to employees designated as having primary occupational exposure to bloodborne pathogens. Employees not offered the vaccine may request it by completing the "Voluntary Request for the Hepatitis B Vaccine" form. The vaccine shall be provided at no cost to the employee. The HBV vaccine is administered in a series of three injections spread out over a six-month period. Side effects are minimal, but the vaccine is not recommended for persons who are allergic or hypersensitive to yeast. Employees are encouraged to discuss any questions/concerns about the Hepatitis B vaccine with their personal physician. Employees shall be notified in writing of the locations and dates where the vaccine will be administered.

Employees have the right to decline the vaccination. Those who do so shall sign a declination form. Employees who initially decline the Hepatitis B vaccine and later wish to have it may then have the vaccine provided at no cost to them.

The Hepatitis B vaccine program is administered by the Risk Management Department, in cooperation with program managers and principals.

4. Post-Exposure Evaluation and Follow-Up

All exposure incidents shall be reported to the Program Manager or Principal and the Human Resources Department immediately. Some examples of exposure incidents are: an employee bitten by a student; blood, saliva or vomit entering the eyes, nose, mouth or an open wound; clean up of blood, saliva, semen or vomit without personal protective equipment; and a search resulting in a needle stick or cut by a contaminated sharp object.

Employees who experience an exposure incident will be offered post-exposure evaluation and follow-up in accordance with the OSHA Standard.

5. Training

Training will be provided to all employees regarding all aspects of the Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Control Plan.

## **INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**

The use of pesticides and chemicals has become increasingly common in schools when dealing with such problems as pests and weeds. Many of the pesticides currently in use in our society pose risks to human health and the environment. Therefore, VCOE has adopted a policy for managing pests on school sites in a manner that is safe for humans.

All employees are responsible for good housekeeping. Good housekeeping is an essential part of an effective pest management program. No chemical products shall be used directly around children. There will be no open food storage nor preparation in areas not intended and/or designated for the use. Classroom food and all lunches brought from home must be stored in a designated, sealable container. No chemicals or other pest management products shall be brought from home for use in the classroom.

When necessary to apply pesticide applications, warning signs will be posted prior to application at the school site. An annual written notification will be sent to parents and staff addressing expected pesticides to be used. The recipients of this notification will be given the opportunity to register to receive information regarding individual pesticide applications. School sites will maintain records of all pesticides use for a period of four years.

## **TOBACCO-FREE ENVIRONMENT**

Tobacco use is prohibited in all facilities owned and/or operated by VCOE, including indoors, outdoors and in all VCOE vehicles whether located on or off the premises. Included in the prohibition is tobacco use in privately owned vehicles located on VCOE owned and/or operated property. This policy applies to employees, students, and the general public.

## **VIOLENCE-FREE WORKPLACE**

VCOE has adopted a Zero Tolerance Policy for workplace violence because it recognizes that workplace violence is a growing nationwide problem that needs to be addressed by all employers. Consistent with this policy, acts or threats of physical violence, including intimidation, harassment, and/or coercion, which involve or affect VCOE employees, or which occur on VCOE property will not be tolerated.

Acts or threats of violence include conduct that is sufficiently severe, offensive or intimidating to alter the employment conditions or to create a hostile, abusive, or intimidating work environment for one or several VCOE employees. Examples of workplace violence include, but are not limited to, the following:

- All threats or acts of violence occurring on VCOE premises, regardless of the relationship between the VCOE and the parties involved in the accident.
- All threats or acts of violence occurring off VCOE premises involving someone who is acting in the capacity of a representative of VCOE.
- All threats or acts of violence occurring off VCOE property involving a VCOE employee if the threats or acts affect the legitimate interests of VCOE.
- Any acts or threats resulting in the conviction of an employee or individual performing services for VCOE on a contract or temporary basis, under any criminal code provision relating to violence or threats of violence which adversely affect the legitimate interests and goals of VCOE.

Specific examples of conduct that may be considered threats or acts of violence include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Hitting or shoving an individual.
- Threatening an individual or his/her family, friends, associates, or property with harm.
- Intentionally destroying or threatening to destroy VCOE property.
- Making harassing or threatening phone calls.
- Performing harassing surveillance or stalking.
- Suggesting or intimating that violence is appropriate.
- Unauthorized possession of firearms or weapons.

VCOE's prohibition against threats and acts of violence applies to all persons involved in VCOE's operation, including but not limited to personnel, contract, and temporary workers and anyone else on VCOE property. Violations of this policy by any individual on VCOE property, by any individual acting as a representative of VCOE while off VCOE property, or by any individual acting off of VCOE property when his/her actions affect the County Schools' business interests will lead to disciplinary action (up to and including termination) and/or legal action as appropriate.

Every employee and every person on VCOE property is encouraged to report incidents of threats or acts of physical violence of which he/she is aware. The report should be made to the Human Resources Department, the reporting individual's immediate supervisor, or another supervisory employee if the immediate supervisor is not available. Nothing in this policy alters any other reporting obligation established in policies or in state, federal or other applicable law.



## VCOE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### APPEARANCE AND DRESS

VCOE deals with the public. Common sense in your personal appearance should be considered in your neatness, cleanliness, and clothing and should be followed by all employees.

Inappropriate attire is identified as any item of clothing that causes a distraction to other employees, causes a break in the normal flow of office routine, or creates an unsafe situation for the job being done.

1. Employees working with students should consider the issue of safety and avoid wearing clothing or accessories which may cause an attractive distraction. Loose jewelry, such as necklaces, bracelets and dangling earrings, should not be worn as it could catch on apparatus or distract students.
2. Employees who work in areas that require climbing, lifting, and kneeling should consider the safety factor and wear clothing that is compatible with the job function they are performing.
3. Employees who interface with the public should give extra consideration to the appropriateness of their apparel and overall appearance.

Extremes in fashion and leisure activity clothing should be reserved for wear during non-work time. If a special activity or environmental change requires special needs, these needs should be recognized by the supervisor. Common sense should be the guiding principle in selecting apparel.

### CHANGE OF NAME, ADDRESS or PHONE NUMBER

If you change your name, address or phone number, remember to report the change to your supervisor and to the Human Resources Department.

### CODE OF ETHICS

The maintenance of high ethical and moral standards in public business is the basis of effective government.

Since public confidence is endangered when ethical standards falter, all officers and employees must act with unwavering integrity, absolute impartiality and devotion to the public interest.

Following are those principles which have not been mentioned previously, and must be observed.

1. There shall be no discrimination in any VCOE activity because of race, religion, sex, age, national origin, physical handicap or political affiliation.
2. No officer or employee shall accept any fee, compensation, gift, payment of expenses, or any other thing of monetary value in circumstances in which acceptance may result in, or create the appearance in: "Use of Public Office for private gain, preferential treatment of any person, impeding governmental efficiency or economy, any loss of complete independence or impartiality or any adverse effect on the confidence of the public in the integrity of VCOE."

3. Persons in the public service shall not disclose confidential information acquired by or available to them in the course of their employment with VCOE or use such information for speculation or personal gain.

## **COMPLAINT POLICY**

The complaint procedure is the channel through which employees seek adjustment of complaints arising out of alleged violations of established VCOE rules, administrative regulations, policies or procedures. For more information, refer to Administrative Regulation No. 4144 and 4244. For the Sexual Harassment Policy and Complaint Procedure, refer to Superintendent Policy No. 4119.11.

The County Superintendent recognizes the need for providing the public and employees with a complaint process.

The County Superintendent expects that employees and supervisors will make every effort to resolve complaints and disagreements informally before resorting to formal complaint procedures.

The following outlines the policy established which allows the public and employees to appeal to the County Superintendent.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS - VENTURA COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION POLICY - COMPLAINTS CONCERNING EMPLOYEES POLICY**

The following guidelines shall prescribe the manner in which Ventura County Office of Education complaints are handled:

1. A "complaint" shall be defined as an alleged misapplication of the policies, regulations, rules, or procedures of the Ventura County Office of Education. Procedures for employee complaints provide a route of appeal through administrative channels to the County Superintendent, if necessary. If the complaint is related to discrimination, the Ventura County Office of Education's procedure for complaints concerning discrimination should be used.
2. If a complaint involves sexual harassment, the initial complaint should be made directly to the offending employee's immediate supervisor. An employee is not required to resolve sexual harassment complaints with the offending person.
3. So as not to interfere with school schedules, meetings related to a complaint shall be held before or after the complainant's regular working hours.
4. All matters related to a complaint shall be kept confidential. Only those individuals directly involved in resolving the complaint shall be informed of the complaint.
5. All documents, communications, and records dealing with the complaint shall be placed in a Ventura County Office of Education complaint file. No such material shall be placed in an employee's personnel file.

6. No reprisals shall be taken against any participant in a complaint procedure by reason of such participation.
7. Time limits specified in these procedures may be reduced or extended in any specific instance by written mutual agreement of the parties involved. If specified or adjusted time limits expire, the complaint may proceed to the next step.
8. Any complaint not taken to the next step within prescribed time limits shall be considered settled on the basis of the answer given at the preceding step.

**INFORMAL COMPLAINTS**

Complainants are encouraged to resolve complaints informally. Formal complaint procedures shall not be initiated unless informal efforts to resolve the complaint have been exhausted and the complainant has provided a written description of such efforts.

**FORMAL COMPLAINT PROCEDURE – Step 1**

NOTE: The 60-day Time Period below coincides with that provided in Government Code 53297, which establishes the employee's right to file with the Ventura County Office of Education a written complaint containing evidence regarding gross mismanagement or a significant waste of funds, an abuse of authority, or a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety. Reprisal action against an employee for filing such a complaint is prohibited by Government Code 53298 and subject to penalties established in Government Code 53298.5.

If a complaint has not been satisfactorily resolved by informal procedures, the complainant may file a written complaint with the immediate supervisor or principal within 60 days of the act or event which is the subject of the complaint.

Within five working days of receiving the complaint, the immediate supervisor or principal shall conduct any necessary investigation and meet with the complainant in an effort to resolve the complaint.

The immediate supervisor or principal shall present all concerned parties with a written answer to the complaint within ten working days after the meeting.

**FORMAL COMPLAINT PROCEDURE – Step 2**

If a complaint has not been satisfactorily resolved at Step 1, the complainant may file the written complaint with the Director of Human Resources within five working days of receiving the answer at Step 1. All information presented at Step 1 shall be included with the complaint, and the immediate supervisor or principal shall submit to the Director of Human Resources a report describing attempts to resolve the complaint at Step 1.

Within five working days of receiving the complaint, the Director of Human Resources shall conduct any necessary investigation and meet with the complainant in an effort to resolve the complaint.

The Director of Human Resources shall present all concerned parties with a written answer to the complaint within ten working days after the meeting.

**FORMAL COMPLAINT PROCEDURE – Step 3**

If a complaint has not been satisfactorily resolved at Step 2, the complainant may file a written appeal to the County Superintendent within five working days of receiving the answer at Step 2. All information presented at Steps 1 and 2 shall be included with the appeal, and the Director of Human Resources shall submit to the County Superintendent a report describing attempts to resolve the complaint at Step 2.

An appeal hearing before the County Superintendent shall be scheduled within 10 days after the appeal is filed.

The Superintendent shall make a decision within 30 days of the hearing and shall mail the decision to all concerned parties. The Superintendent's decision shall be final.

**CONVICTION OF NARCOTICS OR SEX OFFENSE**

Conviction of a sex offense or narcotics offense as defined in California Education Code Sections 44010 and 44011 will result in immediate termination of employment.

**EMERGENCIES**

Each site has a disaster plan in case of an earthquake or other major disaster. Assure you are familiar with the plan for your site. It is available to each employee and is on file in your school's office or department. Contact Pamela Heron, Risk Manager, for additional copies.

In the event of a bomb threat, learn as much as you can while on the phone. Complete the bomb threat checklist. This is available in the Disaster Drill Handbook available at all sites and departments.

Call 911 (9-911 from facilities on the County of Ventura phone system) without delay. Be sure to identify yourself and location. Notify your supervisor immediately.

In the event of a medical emergency, immediately call 911 (9-911 from facilities on the VCOE phone system), and administer appropriate first aid (if trained) or make the individual as comfortable as possible without being moved until first aid can be administered.

**EMPLOYEE IDENTIFICATION BADGE**

All VCOE employees are required, for security purposes, to wear a photograph identification badge. The badge must be prominently displayed on the front of the employee's body at all times. Employees will be photographed by the Human Resources Department when hired and asked to surrender their badge when separating from the Organization. Contact the Human Resources Department for more information.

**EMPLOYMENT OF RELATIVES**

You may not be employed in any position where you are directly or indirectly supervised by a relative.

**GIFTS TO EMPLOYEES**

No employee is to receive any commission, expense-paid trip, or anything of value from individuals or companies selling equipment, materials, or services used in the operation of the public schools. This would include the purchase and use of all materials, supplies or other items needed for the repair, maintenance, or operation of school facilities, office or cafeterias, for school transportation, or materials used to conduct classes, activities, and organizations.

**GRAPHICS REPRODUCTION SERVICES**

A complete Graphic Reproduction Department (Print Shop) is available to serve the printing needs of all departments. New employees whose responsibilities include preparation of material to be printed, are encouraged to contact the Graphics Department at 437-1310 for an overview of the types of services offered and procedures required for submitting printing request forms.

**MAIL****PERSONAL MAIL POLICY**

You should arrange to have all personal mail sent to your home. Do not send your personal mail through the VCOE mail system. You are welcome to place your outgoing mail in a U.S. mailbox near your facility.

**E-MAIL POLICY**

By using the email system, the employee expressly consents to VCOE's email policy. The user agrees not to misuse or abuse the email system, agrees to comply with all limitations on the use of the email system and understands that the email system is not a private communication medium.

The email system is a business tool owned and paid for by VCOE, therefore, the email system is VCOE's property. All email messages, including personal messages sent or received by VCOE resources, are the property of VCOE and are subject to office policy, procedures and control. As such, VCOE has the right to view them at any time. VCOE respects the individual privacy of its employees. However, that privacy does not extend to the employee's work-related conduct or to the use of VCOE provided technical resources or supplies. Therefore, employees have no right of privacy as to any information transmitted or stored through VCOE's email system. To ensure proper use, VCOE may monitor its technological resources at any time without advance notice or consent.

Employees shall use the email system for purposes related to their employment with VCOE. Use of the email system that promotes unethical practices, or any activity prohibited by law, the Education Code and/or any other statutes, or VCOE policy is strictly prohibited. Except as otherwise indicated in this policy, commercial or political use of the email system is also strictly prohibited. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities are strictly prohibited and will be reported to VCOE authorities and may be reported to legal authorities.

Employees may use the email system for occasional personal email communications and life-long learning outside of assigned work hours, provided that all provisions of the policy are followed. Personal activities should be limited and should in no way interfere with educational and professional responsibilities. Employees are reminded that they have no right of privacy in correspondence that is sent or received using VCOE technology. This includes personal correspondence via services such as America Online or Hotmail accessed using VCOE technology.

Employees should be aware that computer files and communications over electronic networks, including email are not private. This technology should not be used to conduct personal commercial business.

The transmission of information about students or VCOE affairs shall adhere to the following:

- Confidential information should never be sent or forwarded to outside individuals or outside agencies not authorized to receive that information; Confidential messages and information should never be sent or forwarded to others, including faculty, staff and students who do not need to know the information;
- Confidential information should not be forwarded to multiple parties unless there is a clear and legitimate need to do so;
- Confidential email should not be retained in an employee's personal mailbox, but should be deleted as soon as possible; and
- Confidential messages from or to legal counsel should not be forwarded to others without counsel's authorization, since such messages may constitute privileged communications between VCOE and its attorney.

Users shall not use email in ways that violate any copyright laws. This includes but is not limited to copyrighted information, graphics and software.

The email system is not provided as a public, student, or employee forum. Sending unnecessary messages to a large number of people (chain mail) is prohibited. Appropriate work related email may be sent to a group of VCOE users, such as Education Services Center or All Elementary Secretaries. The sender should select the appropriate group. Since email is not provided as a public forum, it should not be used to broadcast personal opinion or personal information.

Email shall not include the transmission of the type of material that is threatening, disruptive, sexually explicit, obscene, or that could reasonably be perceived as harassment or disparagement of others based on their race, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, or political belief, or which is otherwise inconsistent with VCOE policies, regulations or procedures, or which is contrary to law.

Email shall not be used to produce, distribute, access, use or store information which would subject VCOE or the individual to criminal, civil or administrative liability for its use, production, distribution, access or storage. Electronic communication on VCOE computers could reflect upon VCOE since all messages sent from VCOE include the name of VCOE in the electronic address.

For VCOE employees provided with email, the email is considered a primary avenue of communication and should be checked by employees frequently.

Guests may receive an individual account with the approval of a VCOE administrator if there is a specific, VCOE-related purpose requiring such access. Use of the system by a guest must be limited specifically to the VCOE-related purpose. Guest accounts will not be included in any email groups or distribution lists without authorization from Information Technology Services.

Users must comply with the provisions of Education Code section 7054, which includes email when it states that, no public funds, services, supplies or equipment shall be used for the purpose of urging the support or defeat of any ballot measure or candidate including, but not limited to, any candidate for election to the governing board. Any email sent or received using VCOE system or resources, whether VCOE business or personal, may be inadvertently viewed, printed, forwarded, and/or saved. Users are advised that information and communication deleted by the user may be restored and retrieved from the computer by VCOE or a legal authority.

Security on the network is a high priority. The person in whose name an account is issued is responsible at all times for its proper use. Employees are responsible for preventing unauthorized access to the email system by:

- Logging off or taking other measures when they are away from their workstation;
- Ensuring that email windows are not left open on the screen when the workstation is unattended; and
- Keeping account passwords confidential and not allowing others to use them.

No employee shall send email that either masks the employee's identity or indicates that the email was sent by someone else. No employee shall access the email system using another employee's password.

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

VCOE does not consider conduct in violation of this policy to be within the course and scope of employment or the direct consequence of the discharge of one's duties. Accordingly, to the extent permitted by law, VCOE reserves the right not to provide a defense or pay damages assessed employees for conduct in violation of this policy. VCOE requires employees to comply with the terms of the VCOE Email Policy.

In addition, the following guidelines should be considered in order to avoid unfortunate situations when using email:

- Be polite. Never send, or encourage others to send, abusive messages;
- Remember that humor and satire is often misinterpreted;
- Use appropriate language. Remember that you are a representative not only of yourself, but also your school or VCOE on a publicly accessible system. Never swear or use vulgarities or any other inappropriate language;
- Be brief. Few people bother to read a long message;

- Minimize spelling errors and make sure your message is easy to understand and read;
- Forgive the spelling and grammatical errors of others;
- Use standard upper and lowercase letters (not all capital letters);
- Do not repost a message that was sent to you privately without permission of the person who sent you the message;
- Respect the originator of communications. Use good judgment and follow all limitations identified in this regulation when forwarding email messages; and
- Be selective when providing your email address to others. The wider you send out your email address, the more opportunity you provide for unwanted messages. Internet sites that offer daily emails, promotions such as contests, and online shopping areas will often rent their lists of email addresses to others who will send you mail you may not wish to receive.

## **MAINTENANCE AND REPAIRS - VCOE PROPERTY**

### **Care of VCOE Property**

Every job in the organization requires the use of supplies and some type of equipment. All employees are charged with the responsibility of maintaining this property in the best possible condition and making the most efficient use of supplies issued to them. You can help keep costs down by exercising reasonable care over the property for which you are responsible.

Unsafe, inappropriate or wasteful use of the VCOE's property or equipment is grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

### **Copy Machines / Printers**

Copy machines and printers are available in most of the VCOE facilities. Copiers and printers are provided for official use only, and are not to be used for reproduction of personal material. In order to reduce excessive wear and staff time, all large copying jobs are to be sent to the Graphic Department for reproduction.

### **Maintenance / Repairs**

Report any building or maintenance problems to the Director of Facilities for VCOE.

Report any building or maintenance problems to your supervisor.

### **Office Equipment Repairs**

Copiers and typewriters are generally under maintenance contracts and the vendor may be called directly. The Purchasing Office can confirm the vendor and procedure. Other equipment repair is accomplished by submitting a requisition to Purchasing, indicating the following information:

1. Make of equipment (IBM, NCR, Victor, etc.)
2. Type of equipment (calculator, typewriter, etc.)
3. Inventory tag number.
4. Model and serial number of equipment.
5. Malfunction to be corrected.
6. Location of equipment.
7. Person to be contacted by repair person.



**Repairing / Replacing Employee's Property**

You may claim reimbursement for repair or replacement of personal property, necessarily worn or carried, when damaged in the line of duty, through no fault of your own.

This applies to items such as eyeglasses, watches, and certain articles of clothing. This policy does not include personal electronic devices. In the event of a loss, contact the Risk Manager and request a claim form.

**Requisition Supplies and Materials**

When possible, supplies are purchased in quantities. Each department shall notify the Business Office of its needs on an as needed basis. These requests are grouped and ordered from the best source. Requisitions and the vendor supply list are available from the Business Office.

**Telephone System Changes / Repairs**

Requests for telephone changes shall be reported to the Business Office for action. These include:

1. Need for adding or deleting phones.
2. Any staff moves involving moving phones.
3. Any reassignment of staff to a new extension.

For repairs to telephones, contact Purchasing at 383-1951 and provide specific information regarding the problem.

**Transfer of Property**

When property or equipment is identified as surplus or obsolete, the site administrator shall complete a "Request for Change of Inventory" form. The form will be submitted to the Purchasing Department to request removal of the item(s) from the present location (from one site to another). The Purchasing Department will authorize appropriate disposition of the item(s) and initiate the work order to effect removal of the item(s). Equipment may not be removed from its assigned location without proper authorization.

The site administrator may authorize equipment to be moved within the location (from one room to another.) If the equipment has an inventory tag, a "Request for Change of Inventory" form must be completed and submitted to the Purchasing Department.

Accurate equipment inventory records will assure prompt and accurate settlement should an insurance claim be necessary.

**Use of Equipment Off the Premises**

Ventura County Office of Education' equipment may be taken from the office by staff members for use in their regular duties with school districts or professional personnel in Ventura County, provided that permission is obtained from the head of the department from which the equipment is borrowed; and provided further, that an accurate record of such use is made by that department. The record shall include the inventory tag number assigned to the equipment and the serial number, if the item has a serial number. Use of VCOE equipment for personal reasons is prohibited.

**In all cases, the staff member is personally responsible for the proper care and return of the equipment.**

## PERSONNEL FILES

The personnel file maintained in the Human Resources Department is the only official and legal permanent record that can be maintained on employees. A major purpose of the file is to protect employees against arbitrary and prejudicial personnel decisions. The personnel file is governed by Education Code 44031 which requires a procedure whereby employees can correct or rebut incomplete or inaccurate information in the hands of their employers which might affect their employment status. Additionally, no information of a derogatory nature can be entered or filed unless and until the employee is given notice and an opportunity to review and respond. To this end, any document relating to an employee's performance, whether it is a formal evaluation, observation, report, memorandum, commendation, written warning, reprimand, or otherwise, shall be put in the employee's personnel file.

All employee personnel files are confidential and are available only to the employee and to people with official access permission.

Every employee has the right to inspect his/her personnel file upon request, provided that the request is made when the employee is not required to render services to VCOE.

## OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

Regular management assignments are considered to be full-time professional positions requiring knowledge, skills and the necessary time to fulfill responsibilities satisfactorily. Management employees may not engage in outside employment if it impairs their efficiency with VCOE, or if the nature of the outside work would create a conflict of interest. In furtherance of this concept, managers should apply the following principles and guidelines when they consider engaging in activities outside of office employment:

1. Employees should always give the highest priority to the activities of VCOE.
2. Managers may not be paid by another employer for work or service performed during their normal hours of employment by VCOE.
3. Managers may not be paid for work or service to any school district or the community college district in Ventura County unless a contract for the work or services is agreed to between the district and VCOE and approved by the appropriate Associate or Assistant Superintendent.
4. VCOE encourages management staff members to assume leadership roles in professional organizations relating to their assignments; however, the ongoing work of VCOE takes priority. Since professional organization responsibilities involve work time and some budget consideration, any such participation must be cleared with the immediate supervisor and appropriate Associate or Assistant Superintendent to ensure that it is consistent with the manager's work plan and the priorities of VCOE.

**Your supervisor must be notified in writing, of any outside work activity.** The supervisor or the Human Resources Department may refuse the right to engage in such activity if a conflict is anticipated or job performance is adversely affected. Failure to notify your supervisor of outside employment may be cause for disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

For additional information for Certificated Management Employees, refer to Superintendent's Policy 4113.12.

For additional information for Classified Management Employees, refer to Superintendent's Policy 4213.12.

## **POLITICAL ACTIVITIES**

As an employee you have the right and privilege to take or refrain from taking a stand on a political issue and to support or oppose any issue or candidate. Such activities, however, must be conducted on your own time and off the premises of VCOE. You cannot use VCOE property and/or resources, bulletin boards and letterhead/stationary to express your opinion on a political matter. You can wear political badges or buttons and display political stickers on privately owned cars while at work and express opinions and campaign during non-working hours. You are expected to exercise reasonable care to show that you are acting in the capacity of a private citizen and not as a member of the staff of VCOE.

## **PUBLIC RELATIONS**

Because you are employed by VCOE, you have an important public relations responsibility. Your work, attitude and appearance are all subject to close inspection by your employers and the taxpaying public. In many cases, you are the only VCOE employee a certain individual may know, and total judgment of the efficiency and character of the organization is based on the way you perform. For this reason, it is important that you give a good day's work and courteous treatment to people you have agreed to serve. Courtesy means, among other things: being prompt to wait on people; being patient and a good listener, and taking a personal interest in seeing that calls, requests or complaints are properly handled.

## **RELEASE OF INFORMATION TO A FAMILY MEMBER**

All employee information related to employment with VCOE can only be discussed with the employee, unless the employee authorizes or designates a person (spouse/partner/dependent adult) to obtain information and such request must be provided in writing.

## **RULES AND REGULATIONS**

In conjunction with and in addition to the Code of Ethics, a list of rules has been established so that each employee might know exactly what is or is not permissible.

In addition to the "Causes for Disciplinary Action" listed in the Disciplinary Action Policy, the following acts will result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal:

1. Falsifying personnel records or VCOE records.

If you receive a call, complaint or request about something that you cannot or should not handle, take a personal interest in seeing that the call, request or complaint gets to the proper office. You are employed to serve the public.

2. Making false, vicious, profane or malicious statements concerning any employee, VCOE or the public.
3. Removing from the premises, without proper authorization, any public property or the property of any employee.
4. Willfully delaying work, wasting time or disobeying orders.
5. Gambling on VCOE property.
6. Possession of or trafficking in illegal drugs or narcotics on VCOE time or premises.
7. Threatening, intimidating, coercing, or interfering with fellow employees or the public.
8. Engaging in horseplay, scuffling or creating a disturbance on VCOE property.
9. Engaging in any immoral or indecent conduct.
10. Using VCOE telephones or credit cards for personal long distance calls.
11. Failing to maintain production standards.
12. Inability or unwillingness to work harmoniously with other employees.
13. Removing of records or release of confidential information.
14. Disregarding safety rules, codes of safe practice or failure to wear personal protective safety equipment.
15. Failing to report injury or accident.
16. Sleeping during working hours.
17. Use of VCOE letterhead for personal correspondence or other non-business purposes.
18. Smoking on VCOE property.

The above listing of rules shall not be considered all inclusive. Disciplinary action may be initiated for reasons not listed in this handbook, as deemed appropriate by the County Superintendent of Schools.

## **TRANSPORTING STUDENTS**

No students may be transported in an employee's private vehicle without completing the necessary documents. See Appendix B.

## TRAVEL

### Automobile Insurance / Private Automobiles

Employees who are using private automobiles for official business for which mileage reimbursement is claimed, shall show evidence that such automobiles are insured for property loss and damage and personal liability in excess of the minimum amount required by California State law:

- (a) \$100,000 for bodily injury to or death of each person as a result of any one accident;
- (b) \$300,000 for bodily injury to or death of all persons as a result of any one accident; and
- (c) \$5,000 for damage to property of others as a result of any one accident.

This evidence shall be in the form of a sworn statement from each employee. It will be necessary to file this annually, or anytime an automobile is replaced, deleted from, or added to your policy. The employee must advise the Business Office of a cancellation of coverage. It will remain the responsibility of the employee to maintain an up-to-date record of insurance coverage to assure receiving reimbursement for private car use. If at any time such insurance coverage is not valid, mileage claims shall be returned to the employee without processing. The statement shall be filed in the Business Office.

### Travel Expenses

In the event it is necessary for you to travel in the duties of your position, you will be reimbursed for mileage and other expenses based on the reimbursement rate currently in effect. You must file a Certification of Insurance Coverage with the Business Office before mileage claims can be processed for payment.

When air travel is necessary within California, utilize the carrier with the lowest fare, such as Southwest Airlines. Whether using Southwest or other carriers, make the reservations and submit a requisition indicating the vendor, airline and detailed flight information including purpose of travel and cost of ticket.

No personal travel costs can be included in this arrangement.

All travel expenses (meals, lodging, parking, etc.) that are reasonable, actual and necessary in the performance of job duties will be reimbursed and must be claimed on the Travel Expense Voucher with all required **itemized** receipts attached. The total cost of daily expenses cannot exceed the IRS allowed amount for the area of travel. To be reimbursed, the Travel Expense Voucher must be complete and include date, time and location of the start and end of travel, specific purpose and destination of travel and have copies of meeting, workshop or conference notices attached. This is the verification used to approve payment to the travel agency.

## VENTURA COUNTY FAST ACTION SCHOOL TRANSIT (VCFAST)

The primary purpose of VCFAST is to provide the service and other items necessary and appropriate for a countywide distribution system for the carrying of letters and other such materials as the participants in the Joint Powers Agreement may require to be carried in order to conduct business.

Service will be provided daily to VCOE departments at the Camarillo Airport, and three times per week (Monday, Wednesday, and Friday) to all participating school districts and other VCOE sites.

Each school district not participating has indicated they will have a courier pick up at the Administrative Service Center on a regular basis; therefore, participating districts may send mail for those districts through VCFAST. The mail will then be placed in the non-participating district box for their courier to pick up.

Contact your supervisor for a complete set of VCFAST operating rules, regulations and guidelines.

## VISITORS

Whenever possible, discourage friends, relatives or others from visiting you while you are on the job. This is obviously necessary in order to prevent possible confusion and work stoppage. If such visits are necessary, they should be made as short as possible and **must be pre-approved by your supervisor**. Abuse of this privilege will result in disciplinary action. Under no circumstances should children be brought to work in lieu of obtaining appropriate child care.