

CREDITING EXPERIENCE FOR PAY PURPOSES

"PROCEDURES FOR COMPENSATION ADMINISTRATION" HUMAN RESOURCES FORSYTH COUNTY SCHOOLS

V.8 – July 1, 2014
REPLACES V.6 – July 1, 2005

6.00 - Credit for Experience

We believe as a school district that being able to recruit and keep highly effective employees is a key to our success. Not only must we offer pay rates that enable us to compete for good talent, but our rates must also recognize and reward the *value* of loyalty, dedication and the enhanced abilities individuals typically acquire with length of service.

Our belief in the importance of *dedicated* employees is the primary reason why all of our pay scales reward employees for length of service with our district. Simply stated, we believe length of service with FCS uniquely expands and enhances the knowledge and skills of employees, thus making each employee increasingly valuable to our success.

This does not mean in any way that we regard experience with *other* employers as unimportant. In fact, successful "outside" experience is often the reason why one applicant will be selected over others competing for jobs. Instead, it is intended to recognize that "outside" experience usually does not have the same *value* to FCS as experience gained as an FCS employee.

In certain situations, however, experience gained in outside jobs so closely matches the nature, usefulness and value of experience with FCS that it may be counted in whole or in part for pay purposes as if it had been earned with us.

The FCS HUMAN RESOURCES department is responsible for reviewing prior experience and for determining the extent to which it may be credited for pay purposes based upon local and state regulations, procedures and guidelines designed to ensure fairness and consistency. Determinations of experience credit for certificated educators are made according to rules published by the State of Georgia. Determinations for non-certificated employees and for some situations not covered by state rule are guided by FCS procedures and practices. The FCS procedures described in this section were designed generally to parallel the key concepts of experience-assessment embodied in state rules for education professionals. Our procedure – CREDITING EXPERIENCE FOR PAY PURPOSES – outlines the primary processes and criteria we observe in situations not covered by state rules.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

"Current period of employment" – The number of consecutive creditable years of service to the district beginning with the most recent date on which an

individual was approved or actually started working, whichever is later. Service rendered under annual employment contracts is considered "continuous" service unless interrupted by separation (voluntary or involuntary termination of the employment relationship).

"Creditable Year": (A "creditable year" for certificated professional employees is determined as referenced in Section 6.02.) For all other employees: One "year" of experience as an employee of the school district is considered to have been earned for purposes of pay scale advancement when the employee was in active service on a full-time* basis (or on *approved leave of absence*) for at least 63 percent of the total number of workdays designated on the annual work calendar applicable to the employee. One year of work experience *outside* the school district is defined as a period of 12 consecutive months of continuous employment by the same employer or consecutive and substantially uninterrupted periods of employment with more than one employer when each period continued for a minimum of six months and is otherwise creditable.

If employed for a year (as defined previously) for at least four hours daily but less than full-time, credit may be granted for one-half of a year. A one-half year credit earned through this provision may be combined with any other one-half credit similarly earned to yield one full year of credit for pay purposes.

Credit may *not* be granted for any period of employment in which the individual was engaged to work **fewer than four** hours daily (or on an alternative schedule that yields at least twenty work hours in a typical five-day week).

Credit may be granted for temporary or substitute service only if explicit requirements are met. Specifically, the individual must have: been engaged **continuously**: **1**) for a **full year** (as defined by these procedures); **2**) on a **full-time** basis (minimum of 7.5 hours daily); **3**) in the same job or position; **4**) with the same employer; and **5**) with duties, responsibilities and performance expectations of the individual that are *all* indistinguishable from a non-temporary individual in the job or position in every respect but job *title*.

6.01 - SUBMISSION OF RECORDS

All experience must be verified in writing by the designated official of each former employer before it may be evaluated by FCS HUMAN RESOURCES for possible credit. Forms and instructions for experience verification are available from HUMAN RESOURCES. While HUMAN RESOURCES will gladly assist employees as

needed in verifying experience, it is each employee's responsibility to distribute verification forms and to ensure completed forms are submitted for evaluation.

Verification forms must be supplied in a timely manner. Experience accepted by FCS will be credited during the payroll month submitted, and the employee's pay rate will be adjusted back to the employee's first workday of the fiscal year (July 1 – June 30) in which verification forms are submitted. In no case may pay rate changes be backdated *beyond* July 1 of the fiscal year in which verification forms are submitted.

6.02-CERTIFICATED PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES

For all employees holding jobs for which professional certification is required by the *Georgia Professional Standards Commission* or by FCS, placement at salary steps representing years of experience will be based upon properly verified experience utilizing experience determination rules established by the State of Georgia.

6.03 NON-CERTIFICATED PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES

(This category applies to all FLSA-exempt jobs that are required by FCS to hold a bachelor's degree or higher but are not required by the Professional Standards Commission to hold professional certification.)

Placement for experience purposes on salary bands is based upon years of experience in the field or profession in which the person is employed by FCS. If a certificated employee holds a position for which he or she possesses a valid and appropriate in-field certificate, but the position, per se, does not *require* certification, then the employee will be placed on the salary scale based upon State of Georgia rules for certificated employees or the years of creditable experience the individual has in the position's field of expertise, whichever is higher. Experience creditable under state rules and experience eligible for credit based on non-educational professional expertise may be added together only if the education component was in a supervisory (administrative) role and the non-education professional experience was at an organizational level comparable to the school district position.

6.04 - TRANSPORTATION

Subject to limitations, credit may be awarded for certain

For purposes of transitioning to the new pay system in 1995 paraprofessional employees retained whatever credit for completed college courses was recorded in the payroll system at that time, even if the courses did not meet the criteria established by current procedures. Courses submitted after February 1, 1995, must meet current criteria in order to be credited.

full-time experience earned in comparable jobs outside the school district. Service with other public school districts in pupil transportation positions having the same,

essentially the same or higher level responsibilities as the position held in Forsyth County may be credited without limits. Full-time and regular experience transporting passengers in buses for a public or private employer (e.g., MARTA, Greyhound, etc.) may be credited at the rate of one-half year for each verified year of service; however, the total credit may not exceed *seven* years.

6.05 - PARAPROFESSIONALS

Regular full-time employees in paraprofessional positions will be placed within the appropriate pay band corresponding to their highest level of education as recognized by the district. (See table below.)

PAY BAND	MINIMUM LEVEL OF EDUCATION
P-1	High School diploma or equivalency
P-2	45QH / 27SH of acceptable college credit (see paragraph below)
P-3	Associate's degree or at least 90QH/54SH of acceptable college credit (see paragraph below)
P-4	135QH/81SH of acceptable college credit (see paragraph below)
P-5	Bachelor's degree or higher

QH = QUARTER HOURS SH = SEMESTER HOURS

Types of college courses and programs that may be credited toward advancement from P-1 to P-5 are limited to acceptable college credit as defined by Professional Standards Commission (PSC) Rules 505-2-.02 (Classification – Category, Title, Type, Field, Level), 505-2-.22 (PSC-Accepted Accreditation; Validation of Non-Accredited Degrees). Courses considered “remedial” in nature (generally numbered below the “100” level) are not eligible for credit.

Official transcripts must be submitted to establish eligibility for any pay level higher than P-1. The district does not accept copies of diplomas, grade reports, unofficial transcripts or similar documents for pay purposes. Transcripts will be credited during the payroll month submitted, and the employee's pay rate will be adjusted back to the employee's first workday of the fiscal year (July 1 – June 30) in which the transcripts are submitted. In no case may pay rate changes be backdated *beyond* July 1 of the fiscal year in which transcripts are submitted.

Experience credit for pay purposes may be granted to individuals employed as paraprofessionals if compatible with the following guidelines: 1) full-time employment in accredited schools or lottery-funded prekindergarten programs performing *essential duties* highly comparable to those of performed by FCS paraprofessionals; or 2) service in *professional* positions (e.g., teacher, administrator, etc.) that meets eligibility requirements for credit under State Board of Education rules.

6.06 – SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS

The required standard credential for all personnel providing educational sign language interpreting for children who are deaf or hard of hearing shall hold a current Georgia Quality Assurance Screening (G-QAS) rating of Level III or higher in both interpreting and transliterating, as approved and maintained by the Georgia Department of Labor/Vocational Rehabilitation Program (DOL/VR), and/or documentation of advanced interpreting skills and qualifications through current national certification from the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID), and/or documentation of advanced interpreting skills and qualifications through current national certification from the National Association of the Deaf (NAD) Levels III, IV, or V, and/or documentation of advanced interpreting skills and qualifications through a current Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment (EIPA) rating of Level 3.5 or higher. The EIPA rating cannot be more than five years old. (160-4-7-.14, 7-1-07). Interpreters holding the required standard credential, as defined above, will be placed on the teacher/professional compensation schedule. Experience credit for pay purposes may be granted for full-time employment as a sign language interpreter in a school or other professional setting, while holding the required standard credential during the service time.

6.07 - MAINTENANCE

Persons employed in jobs identified as “skilled trades” such as electrician, plumber and HVAC technician may be credited with the full number of years of experience performing at the “journeyman” level or equivalent in the skilled trade subject to conditions described below. To be considered, the employee must ensure the school district is provided with written verification by the owner (or supervisor authorized to verify experience). The verification must include the dates of employment and describe the nature and scope of duties and responsibilities performed during the employment. If different jobs were held for the same employer, then *each* job should be documented.

Experience generally may be credited *only* when performed under one of the following conditions: **1)** the employee held a professional trade license or certificate issued by an entity whose purpose is to evaluate and endorse skill and ability levels through testing, monitoring, etc.; **2)** completion of a formal apprenticeship program or comprehensive training program such as those offered by trade and technical schools; **3)** experience in comparable jobs with educational or other governmental institutions; or **4)** situations where unique or highly specialized skills are required that, as a minimum, meet the general *intent* of other requirements.

In most cases, experience credit is *not* granted for “generalist” skills.

Note: Determination as to whether or not a training program satisfies the intent of this procedure will be made on a case-by-case basis.

6.08 – SCHOOL NURSE

Experience in nursing positions may be credited for pay purposes if it meets the following criteria and limitations: 1) the employee held a valid LPN or RN nursing license when the experience was earned; 2) the primary responsibility of the individual was to perform general nursing duties; and 3) the position was full-time.

To be considered, the employee must ensure the school district is provided with written verification by the supervisor or anyone authorized to verify experience. The verification must include the dates of employment and describe the nature and scope of duties and responsibilities performed during the employment. If different jobs were held for the same employer, then each different job should be documented.

6.09 – TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

(HARDWARE, SOFTWARE & SYSTEMS TECHNICIANS)

An individual employed for the primary purpose of installing, servicing, troubleshooting and repairing advanced-technology systems and equipment may be granted pay-scale credit for prior work experience limited only to the extent that such experience is deemed highly comparable to the primary requirements, duties and responsibilities of the job to be performed for Forsyth County Schools (FCS).

While all relevant prior experience may be evaluated for credit, it is a fundamental prerequisite to granting credit that it must have been gained through *full-time* service in technology-support roles similar in both nature and scope to the district’s job. It is not required, per se, that every element of prior experience be *identical* to the FCS job; however, the characteristic depth and breadth of technical skill, effort and responsibility demanded routinely by former jobs must be essentially the same type and level as those he/she would have had if he/she had been serving as a technical support specialist for FCS.

For experience to be considered, the employee must ensure the school district is provided with written verification of experience by the owner or supervisor of the former employer who is authorized to verify experience. The verification must include the dates of employment and describe the nature and scope of duties and responsibilities performed. If more than one job was performed for an employer, then each different job should be described and defined as to dates served, etc.

CREDITING EXPERIENCE FOR PAY PURPOSES

AS PRESENTED IN SECTIONS 6 AND 7 OF
"PROCEDURES FOR COMPENSATION ADMINISTRATION"
HUMAN RESOURCES FORSYTH COUNTY SCHOOLS

V.7 – July 1, 2006
REPLACES V.6 – July 1, 2003

6.10 - CLERICAL

Experience in clerical positions may be credited for pay purposes depending upon the level and applicability of specialized knowledge. The district will grant credit based upon the following general criteria and limitations: 1)

Experience - no limit - in highly comparable administrative support jobs with other public school systems; 2) Experience - maximum of seven years - in generally comparable administrative support positions with other academic or governmental institutions.

The district may also credit experience for specialized knowledge when identified as critical to continued operations, in short supply or otherwise of exceptional benefit to FCS. In most cases, the range of specialized knowledge for which credit may be considered is limited to technical and highly advanced skills (e.g., computer operator, payroll specialist, etc.)

To be considered, the employee must ensure the school district is provided with written verification by the owner (or supervisor authorized to verify experience). The verification must include the dates of employment and describe the nature and scope of duties and responsibilities performed during the employment. If different jobs were held for the same employer, then each different job should be documented.

6.11 -FOOD SERVICE , CUSTODIAL AND WAREHOUSE

These classifications may be credited with an unlimited number of years of experience for verified full-time service in public schools. They may also be credited with up to seven years of service in highly comparable jobs with other educational institutions, hospitals or well-established and recognized entities. Experience in food service in commercial settings where the individual is involved in all aspects of broad-menu preparation may be credited to a maximum of seven years. The district usually does not credit experience in "fast food" restaurants, other operations with highly limited menus or food industry experience in which the individual is not fully involved in food preparation. Custodial experience with commercial cleaning agencies is potentially creditable to a maximum of seven years. The district generally will not consider any form of household or private residence cleaning. Up to seven years of prior experience may be credited for warehouse workers if gained in jobs having similar responsibilities as the FCS jobs working in operations comparable in nature and scope to the FCS warehouse and distribution function.

6.12 - LOCAL EXPERIENCE – PROFESSIONALS

Professional positions not designated to be paid from the Teacher Scale will be paid for experience according to Procedures 6.02 and 6.03.

6.13 - EXPERIENCE - NON-PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES

Except for positions requiring a professional certificate or bachelor's degree as referenced in Procedures 6.02 and 6.03, all positions will be paid at the experience step of the appropriate local pay scale and band corresponding to the total number of creditable years of experience with FCS in regular positions **during the current period of employment** with FCS, regardless of the relevance of such experience to the current position.

6.14 – TRANSFERS

An employee who transfers or is reassigned to another position in this district will continue to receive credit for all experience earned through employment with FCS. If an employee is credited with "outside" experience in one classification, then transfers voluntarily to another classification where the experience would not normally have been credited, then such outside credit must be withdrawn.

6.15 – FORMER EMPLOYEES

Former employees of FCS may, when reemployed, be credited with all previous full-time experience with the district but limited to experience specifically in the same field of service as the new position for which they are being employed. If the former employee has "outside" experience in the same field as the new job as well as highly comparable experience with FCS, then the amount of outside experience that may be credited may not exceed any other limitations specified in these procedures for outside employment (Procedures 6.02 - 6.09).

If a former employee rejoins the system and later becomes reclassified into a position for which he or she had prior experience in the school system that was not originally creditable based on irrelevance, then such experience may be substituted (but not *added to*) current experience if greater than experience in the current period. If prior experience is substituted in this manner for current experience and the employee is later reclassified, then the credit for prior experience to be carried forward to the new classification is limited to the higher of: the number of years in the current period of service; or the years that would be creditable for "outside" experience under the procedure for the new classification.

CREDITING EXPERIENCE FOR PAY PURPOSES

AS PRESENTED IN SECTIONS 6 AND 7 OF
"PROCEDURES FOR COMPENSATION ADMINISTRATION"
HUMAN RESOURCES FORSYTH COUNTY SCHOOLS

V.7 – July 1, 2006
REPLACES V.6 – July 1, 2003

7.00 - APPEALS AND REQUESTS

While no formal rights of appeal are extended by virtue of these procedures, any employee may request reconsideration of any decision, request reevaluation of a position or communicate concerns and complaints by completing forms designed for those purposes. Forms are available from *HUMAN RESOURCES*.

All requests for review of job evaluations or other decisions affecting an employee's compensation will be reviewed by *HUMAN RESOURCES* and acted upon in the manner deemed appropriate. Findings will be communicated to the employee as soon as possible.

