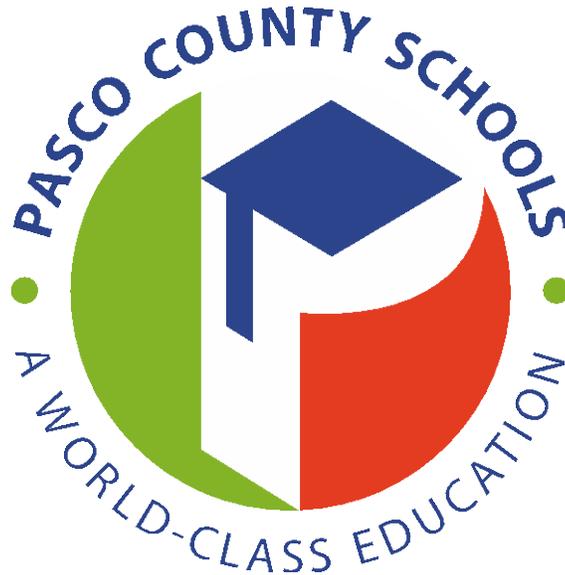


*Effectively Addressing Employee Behavior and Performance
Concerns*

Taking Action



Noninstructional

Pasco County Schools

Office for Employee Relations

Introduction

Taking Action

It is expected that all employees function at a high level of performance and behavior; however, there may be times when the performance or professional behavior of an employee reduces his/her effectiveness in the classroom, school, worksite, and/or community.

It is imperative that an administrator has a skilled professional who is committed to providing quality education for each student in every position – instructional or noninstructional. Therefore, it is important that the administrator take corrective action when behavioral or performance deficiencies arise. It is equally important that the action be appropriate to the situation. If possible, the action should focus on continuous professional growth by providing guidance, support, supervision, and resources.

The purpose of this manual is to provide administrators with assistance in making timely decisions and prescribing the appropriate action to be taken.

Due to some of the inherent differences between instructional and non-instructional staff, there is an instructional manual and a non-instructional manual. Each manual has been divided into sections for templates and information appropriate for all categories of employees: instructional employees, and other noninstructional staff including school related personnel (SRP) and non-instructional non-bargaining (NNB).

Walking through the Steps

Step 1: Determine if the concern should be addressed with the employee

In most cases the report or existence of a concern will create the need for some type of investigation and ultimately a discussion with the employee. There are some cases, however, where the concern will be so small and/or isolated that a simple notation of the concern, paired with a future monitoring plan, will suffice.

Use your best professional judgment in answering this question. If you are unsure, call Employee Relations for assistance.

Step 2: Select and execute data gathering activities

The type of concern that you are dealing with will often dictate the types of data gathering techniques most appropriate in addressing the concern.

Example: If you have concerns with a teacher's effectiveness in the classroom, a combination of classroom observations, student assessment data review, and lesson plan evaluation will probably be most helpful. However, if you are dealing with a teacher who has been accused of inappropriate language with a student, the staff member and student interview will probably prove most helpful.

Regardless of your data collection method, you should document it.

Step 3: Classify the problem(s)

Identify the general category of problem that you are encountering. These categories include:

- **Work Habits** (Missing paperwork deadlines or consistently arriving late to work.)
- **Personal Behavior At Work** (Gossiping about others, or being uncooperative.)
- **Classroom Performance** (Students off-task or a high number of students performing unsatisfactorily.)
- **Personal Behavior Away From School** (Discussing confidential student information within the community.)
- **Outside Agency Referral** (Child abuse allegation, or arrest by law enforcement.)

It is quite possible that a concern might fall into more than one of these categories, or that you will be dealing with multiple concerns that fall into a variety of categories.

Step 4 – Review information and formulate a written statement of the problem(s)

Use the data you have collected to develop an effective statement of the problem. Summarize the information that supports your conclusions. Ensure that the statement is clear, precise, and unambiguous. Your statement should stick to the facts you have collected as much as possible and should provide a detailed explanation of what the problem is and why it is a problem.

Step 5 – Meet with the employee

Now that the problem has been defined, the administrator will need to give notice of meeting to the employee. When calling a meeting with a bargaining unit (Instructional or SRP) employee that could lead to discipline, the supervisor has two options:

1. **Inform the employee of the purpose of the meeting and let the employee make a decision about requesting representation; or,**

2. Not inform the employee about the purpose of the meeting, but inform the employee prior to the meeting that he/she has the right to representation.

It is not necessary to go into great detail when informing an employee about the purpose of a meeting. For example:

“Please plan to meet on January 21st at 3:00 PM in my office to discuss a concern that has been brought to my attention. You may feel free to bring representation.”

Employees have what is known as “Weingarten rights” during investigatory interviews. An investigatory interview occurs when a supervisor or member of management, e.g. the Principal or a representative from the Office for Employee Relations, questions an employee to obtain information which could be used as basis for discipline or asks an employee to defend or explain his or her conduct. An employee does not have to be a member of the union to be entitled to representation. Additionally, the representative does not need to be a union representative and can be a family member, friend, co-worker or attorney. That being said, remember that you have the right to suspend any meeting if an employee’s representative, union or otherwise, is rude or disruptive during a meeting.

Step 6 – Select appropriate corrective action based on progressive discipline.

The final step involves analyzing the problem or concern and deciding what is the least severe, yet still appropriate, action that should be taken. Making this decision involves looking at not only the severity of the immediate problem or concern, but also looking at whether or not the employee has had difficulties in this same area in the past.

Progressive discipline does not require that you always start with the least severe consequence, or that you follow every step on the progressive discipline continuum, and there is no guarantee that progressive discipline will be appropriate in every situation. The administrator should evaluate all the facts and context involved to make an informed decision. Employee Relations can provide guidance in this area if needed.

An **informal written warning** is a written letter to an employee that addresses the employee's performance/behavior that is considered to be unsatisfactory, unacceptable, or inappropriate. An informal written warning serves to bring a concern about the employee's behavior to the attention of the employee, states what needs to be done immediately to eliminate the concern, and specifies the possible further disciplinary consequences of a repeat of the behavior. An informal written warning is an informal disciplinary action and is usually issued when an administrator has reason to believe that such a warning will be sufficient to bring an end to the behavior that is addressed.

A **formal letter of reprimand** is a written letter that documents the employee's performance/behavior that is considered to be unsatisfactory, unacceptable, or inappropriate. A formal letter of reprimand serves to bring a concern about the employee's behavior to the attention of the employee, states what needs to be done immediately to eliminate the concern, and specifies the possible further disciplinary consequences of a repeat of the behavior. The formal letter of reprimand memorializes the incident in written form by issuing a formal letter of reprimand to the employee with the original to be placed in the employee's personnel file in the Office for Human Resources and Educator Quality.

Addressing Performance Deficiencies The NEAT Process

The NEAT process is generally appropriate for all categories of employees who are not performing satisfactorily. Templates for the categories of employees are included in the sections at the end of this manual.

1. NEAT: Notice of the performance deficiencies:

The Notice component specifies the exact area(s) of the evaluation form in which the employee's performance is deficient/unsatisfactory.

2. NEAT: Explanation of the performance deficiencies and suggested corrections:

The Explanation component provides a "full and complete" explanation of performance deficiencies and suggested corrections. The explanation follows the exact area(s) in which the employee's performance is deficient/unsatisfactory, and in which the employee has been given notice.

In determining how to explain performance deficiencies, the administrator should review the area(s) in which the employee is deficient/unsatisfactory, and refer to definitions of the area(s) on the evaluation. The administrator may also refer to specific rules or procedures established (and explained to employees) by a school or department, or to other items which coincide with the areas of the domains of the instructional evaluation form.

This explanation should include specific information, including times, dates, places, context or setting, related to performance deficiencies, such as: projects not completed; timelines not met; numbers of absences within certain time frames; examples of uncooperativeness, for example. This part of the letter also needs to specify suggestions to correct the deficiencies and to bring performance to a satisfactory level. This is the area of the assessment process that most often comes under attack. However, complete and accurate information will sustain most critical reviews of the administrator's explanation of the performance deficiencies.

3. NEAT: Assistance:

In this component, the employee's supervisor offers assistance to the employee, and may detail what assistance has already been offered and/or provided. The important thing to remember in this component is that "reasonable" offers of assistance need to be made. Few administrators have ever lost a complaint over an unsatisfactory evaluation because too much assistance was offered or provided to the employee.

At the very least, the following statement is an example which meets the minimum contractual requirement to offer assistance:

If I can be of assistance to help you improve your attendance and reduce your tardiness to work, please let me know.

4. NEAT: Time: The time frame in which improved performance or correction of the deficiency is to be expected. Both the SRP and the Instructional Master Contract specify that the administrator will "...provide reasonable time for correction of deficiencies."

5. Signature Block: For a formal NEAT letter, following your signature and title, there is a space for the employee's signature (or witness if the employee refuses to sign) and the statement below. If you plan to issue a formal NEAT letter, please contact the Office for Employee Relations for assistance.

My signature indicates that I received this letter and understand that any written statement I wish to make regarding this letter will be attached to the copy filed in my official personnel file located in the Office for Human Resources and Educator Quality. My signature also indicates that I understand that this letter is subject to disclosure under Florida's public records laws.

Signature of Employee or Witness

Date

This document is subject to review under provisions of F.S. 1012.31 and 119.07.

Please contact the Office for Employee Relations for guidance if you have any teacher, regardless of contract status, who receives a Needs Improvement or Unsatisfactory status score or a summative evaluation of Needs Improvement or Unsatisfactory.

Probationary SRP

60-day probation period; 24-hour minimum notice of meeting required

<u>Performance/Behavior</u>	<u>Attendance*</u>
Probationary First Notice of Concern (p. 8)	Probationary First Notice of Attendance Concerns (p. 10)
Probationary Notice of Continued Concerns (p. 9)	Probationary Notice of Continued Attendance Concerns (p. 11)
Possible Probationary Release *authorized only by Superintendent	Possible Probationary Release *authorized only by Superintendent

Non-probationary SRP

24-hour minimum notice of meeting required

<u>Performance/Behavior</u>	<u>Attendance*</u>
Conference Summary (p. 12)	Conference Summary (p. 16)
Notice of Concern (p. 13) <i>Contact Emp Relations</i>	Notice of Attendance Concerns (p. 17) <i>Contact Emp Relations</i>
Notice of Continued Concerns/Informal NEAT Letter (p. 14) <i>Contact Emp Relations</i>	Notice of Continued Attendance Concerns/Informal NEAT Letter (p. 18) <i>Contact Emp Relations</i>
Formal NEAT Letter w/ Unsatisfactory Eval (p. 15) <i>Emp Relations MUST be present at mtg</i>	Formal NEAT Letter w/ Unsatisfactory Eval (p. 19) <i>Emp Relations MUST be present at mtg</i>

Probationary NNB

97-day probation period if hired prior to 11/01/2019

1-year probation period effective 11/01/2019; no notice of meeting required

<u>Performance/Behavior</u>	<u>Attendance*</u>
Probationary First Notice of Concerns (p. 20)	Probationary First Notice of Attendance Concerns (p. 22)
Probationary Notice of Continued Concerns (p. 21)	Probationary Notice of Continued Attendance Concerns (p. 23)
Possible Probationary Release *authorized only by Superintendent	Possible Probationary Release *authorized only by Superintendent

Non-probationary NNB

No notice of meeting required

<u>Performance/Behavior</u>	<u>Attendance*</u>
Conference Summary (p. 24)	Conference Summary (p.28)
Notice of Concern (p. 25) <i>Contact Emp Relations</i>	Notice of Attendance Concerns (p. 29) <i>Contact Emp Relations</i>
Notice of Continued Concerns/Informal NEAT Letter (p. 26) <i>Contact Emp Relations</i>	Notice of Continued Attendance Concerns/Informal NEAT Letter (p. 30) <i>Contact Emp Relations</i>
Formal NEAT Letter w/ Unsatisfactory Eval (p. 27) <i>Emp Relations MUST be present at mtg</i>	Formal NEAT Letter w/ Unsatisfactory Eval (p.27) <i>Emp Relations MUST be present at mtg</i>

* Note that attendance is a behavior concern; however, specific templates are provided to address attendance so that FMLA and EAP are relayed to the employee.

*Employee Relations can be contacted to discuss where on the chart to start, depending on the issue/concern.

Sample Letter
Probationary First Notice of Concerns (SRP)
Transfer template to letterhead

Date

Employee Name
Job Title
School

Re: Notice of Concerns

Dear Name:

This letter is to inform you of my concerns relative to your behavior/performance as a/an *(position)* at *(worksite)* in the area(s) of *(identify area(s) from the evaluation instrument)*. Specifically, *(identify specific incidents or concerns)*.

We met on *(date)* along with *(list all others present at meeting)* to discuss this and review specific behaviors that you need to make your focus at this time. In our meeting, you stated that *(describe employee's statements, including any acceptance of responsibility or pledge to improve performance)*.

My suggestions that may assist you with improving your performance are *(identify supports that will be provided to improve behavior/performance)*.

(Employee name), if you are to continue your employment, you must show satisfactory performance/behavior as described above. I am reminding you that your employment status is probationary during the first sixty (60) workdays of your employment. During this probationary period, you may be dismissed without cause or resign without notice and be released without prejudice.

Sincerely,

Name of Administrator
Title

Sample Letter
Probationary Notice of Continued Concerns (SRP)
Transfer template to letterhead

Date

Employee Name
Job Title
School

Re: Notice of Continued Concerns

Dear Name:

This letter is to inform you of my continued concerns relative to your behavior/performance as a/an *(position)* at *(worksite)* in the area(s) of *(identify area(s) from the evaluation instrument)*. Specifically, *(identify specific incidents or concerns)*.

We met on *(date)* along with *(list all others present at meeting)* to discuss this and review specific behaviors that you need to make your focus at this time. In our meeting, you stated that *(describe employee's statements, including any acceptance of responsibility or pledge to improve performance)*.

I am concerned because this is not the first time that we have had to meet regarding your performance/behavior. On *(date)*, we met because *(fill in previous concern)*. As a result, you were issued *(fill in letter title)*.

My suggestions that may assist you with improving your performance are *(identify supports that will be provided to improve behavior/performance)*.

(Employee name), if you are to continue your employment, you must show satisfactory performance/behavior as described above. I am reminding you that your employment status is probationary during the first sixty (60) workdays of your employment. During this probationary period, you may be dismissed without cause or resign without notice and be released without prejudice.

Sincerely,

Name of Administrator
Title



Sample Letter
 Probationary First Notice of Attendance Concerns (SRP)
Transfer template to letterhead

Date

Employee Name
 Job Title
 School

Re: Notice of Attendance Concerns

Dear Name:

This letter is to inform you of my concerns relative to your behavior/performance as a/an *(position)* at *(worksite)* in the area(s) of reliability. Specifically, your excessive absences.

We met on *(date)* along with *(list all others present at meeting)* to discuss to discuss my concern regarding your attendance. I explained that satisfactory performance in the area of attendance is generally defined by being at work a sufficient number of days to accomplish the essential tasks of the position, without having to distribute to other employees or to delay those essential tasks. Satisfactory performance is generally characterized by not exceeding during an annual period the combined number of sick or vacation days which are earned by an employee during that period, with the exception of approved FMLA or other district leaves. While unexpected illnesses or other circumstances which may entail prolonged absences are understandable, frequent absences and/or questionable absences which result in hardship to other employees or which result in the delay of essential tasks can result in documentation of unsatisfactory performance.

During our meeting, I shared with you the summary of your absences for the last year(s) (if attendance issue is a pattern). You stated that *(describe employee's statements, including any acceptance of responsibility or pledge to improve attendance)*.

Below is a summary of the hours that you have missed during the school year:

School Year	Total Hours	Total School/Work Days

I am reminding you that your employment status is probationary during the first sixty (60) workdays of your employment. During this probationary period, you may be dismissed without cause or resign without notice and be released without prejudice. Accordingly, it is critical that your attendance improve.

If I can be of assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me. If you have any questions regarding leave eligibility under provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), please call the Leaves Division of the Office for Human Resources and Educator Quality at 813-794-2353. If you believe that the Employee Assistance Program may be of assistance to you, please call extension 813-794-2366.

Sincerely,

Administrator Name
 Title

Sample Letter
 Probationary Notice of Continued Attendance Concerns (SRP)
Transfer template to letterhead

Date

Employee Name
 Job Title
 School

Re: Notice of Continued Attendance Concerns

Dear Name:

This letter is to inform you of my continued concerns relative to your behavior/performance as a/an (*position*) at (*worksite*) in the area(s) of reliability. Specifically, your excessive absences.

We met on (*date*) along with (*list all others present at meeting*) to discuss to discuss my concern regarding your attendance. I explained that satisfactory performance in the area of attendance is generally defined by being at work a sufficient number of days to accomplish the essential tasks of the position, without having to distribute to other employees or to delay those essential tasks. Satisfactory performance is generally characterized by not exceeding during an annual period the combined number of sick or vacation days which are earned by an employee during that period, with the exception of approved FMLA or other district leaves. While unexpected illnesses or other circumstances which may entail prolonged absences are understandable, frequent absences and/or questionable absences which result in hardship to other employees or which result in the delay of essential tasks can result in documentation of unsatisfactory performance.

During our meeting, I shared with you the summary of your absences for the last year(s) (if attendance issue is a pattern). You stated that (*describe employee's statements, including any acceptance of responsibility or pledge to improve attendance*).

I am concerned because this is not the first time that we have had to meet regarding your attendance. On (*date*), you were issued a (*fill in letter title*) because of excessive absences.

Below is a summary of the hours that you have missed during the school year:

School Year	Total Hours	Total School/Work Days

I am reminding you that your employment status is probationary during the first sixty (60) workdays of your employment. During this probationary period, you may be dismissed without cause or resign without notice and be released without prejudice. Accordingly, it is critical that your attendance improve.

If I can be of assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me. If you have any questions regarding leave eligibility under provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), please call the Leaves Division of the Office for Human Resources and Educator Quality at 813-794-2353. If you believe that the Employee Assistance Program may be of assistance to you, please call extension 813-794-2366.

Sincerely,

Administrator Name
 Title

Sample Letter
Non-probationary Conference Summary (SRP)
Transfer template to letterhead

Date

Employee Name
Job Title
School

Re: Conference Summary

Dear Name:

We met on *(date)* along with *(list all others present at meeting)* to discuss performance/behavior concerns. Specifically, *(list concerns)*. In our meeting, you stated that *(describe employee's statements, including any acceptance of responsibility or pledge to improve behavior)*.

You agreed that you will _____ by *(date)*. I offered you assistance *(describe assistance)*.

Please let me know if you have any questions or if there is anything else that I can do to assist you.

Sincerely,

Administrator Name
Title

Sample Letter
Non-probationary Notice of Concerns (SRP)
Transfer template to letterhead

Date

Employee Name
Job Title
School

Re: Notice of Concerns

Dear Name:

This letter is to inform you of my concerns relative to your behavior/performance as a/an *(position)* at *(worksite)* in the area(s) of *(identify area(s) from the evaluation instrument)*. Specifically, *(identify specific incidents or concerns)*.

We met on *(date)* along with *(list all others present at meeting)* to discuss this and review specific behaviors that you need to make your focus at this time. In our meeting, you stated that *(describe employee's statements, including any acceptance of responsibility or pledge to improve performance)*.

My suggestions that may assist you with improving your performance are *(identify supports that will be provided to improve behavior/performance)*.

Please begin to implement the above suggestions immediately. I will continue to monitor your performance/behavior in an effort to provide assistance. Failure to improve may result in further administrative action.

Sincerely,

Name of Administrator
Title

Sample Letter
Non-probationary Notice of Continued Concerns/Informal NEAT Letter (SRP)
Transfer template to letterhead

Date

Employee Name
Job Title
School

Re: Notice of Continued Concerns/Informal NEAT Letter

Dear Name:

This letter is to inform you that your progress as a/an *(position)* at *(worksite)* is unsatisfactory in the area(s) of *(identify area(s) from the evaluation instrument)*. Specifically, *(identify specific incidents or concerns)*.

We met on *(date)* along with *(list all others present at meeting)* to discuss this and review specific behaviors that you need to make your focus at this time. In our meeting, you stated that *(describe employee's statements, including any acceptance of responsibility or pledge to improve performance)*.

I am concerned because this is not the first time that we have had to meet regarding your performance/behavior. On *(date)*, we met because *(fill in previous concern)*. As a result, you were issued *(fill in letter title)*.

My suggestions that may assist you with improving your performance are *(identify supports that will be provided to improve behavior/performance)*.

Please begin to implement the above suggestions immediately. I will continue to monitor your performance in an effort to provide assistance. If I can be of assistance, please contact me. If your performance does not improve, further administrative action, which could include an unsatisfactory evaluation, may result.

Sincerely,

Name of Administrator
Title

Sample Letter
Non-probationary Formal NEAT Letter w/ Unsatisfactory Evaluation (SRP)
Transfer template to letterhead

Date

Employee Name
Job Title
School

Re: Formal Notice of Performance Concerns/ NEAT Letter

Dear Name:

The purpose of this letter is to notify you of your unsatisfactory performance as a/an *(position)* at *(worksite)* in the area(s) of *(identify area(s) from the evaluation instrument)*. Specifically, *(identify specific incidents or concerns)*.

As you will recall, we previously met on *(list all previous dates in chronological order)* regarding your performance/behavior. On *(oldest disciplinary date)*, we met because *(fill in oldest concern)*. As a result, you were issued *(fill in letter title)*.

Then, on *(date)*, we met because *(fill in previous concern)*. As a result, you were issued *(fill in letter title)*.

Despite having been addressed for similar concerns in the past, you still display deficiencies that reduce your effectiveness as a/an *(position)*. My suggestions that may assist you with improving your performance are *(identify supports that will be provided to improve behavior/performance)*.

Please begin to implement the above suggestions immediately. I will continue to monitor your performance in an effort to provide assistance. If I can be of assistance, please contact me. Should significant improvement not occur, additional administrative action, which may include the issuance of a second unsatisfactory evaluation and a recommendation for the termination of your employment, may result.

Sincerely,

Name of Administrator
Title

Original: Personnel File

Cc: Assistant Superintendent *(fill in appropriate name)*
Director/Supervisor, Office for Employee Relations *(fill in appropriate name)*

My signature indicates that I received this letter and understand that any written statement I wish to make regarding this letter will be attached to the copy filed in my official personnel file located in the Office for Human Resources and Educator Quality. My signature also indicates that I understand that this letter is subject to disclosure under Florida's public records laws.

Signature of Employee or Witness

Date

This document is subject to review under provisions of F.S. 1012.31 and 119.07.

Sample Letter
Non-probationary Attendance Conference Summary (SRP)
Transfer template to letterhead

Date

Employee Name
Job Title
School

Re: Conference Summary

Dear Name:

We met on *(date)* along with *(list all others present at meeting)* to discuss attendance concerns. Specifically, *(list concerns)*. In our meeting, you stated that *(describe employee's statements, including any acceptance of responsibility or pledge to improve attendance)*.

You agreed that you will improve attendance immediately. I offered you assistance by *(describe assistance)*.

Please let me know if you have any questions or if there is anything else that I can do to assist you.

Sincerely,

Administrator Name
Title

Sample Letter
 Non-probationary Notice of Attendance Concerns (SRP)
Transfer template to letterhead

Date

Employee Name
 Job Title
 School

Re: Notice of Attendance Concerns

Dear Name:

This letter is to inform you of my concerns relative to your behavior/performance as a/an *(position)* at *(worksite)* in the area(s) of reliability. Specifically, your excessive absences.

We met on *(date)* along with *(list all others present at meeting)* to discuss to discuss my concern regarding your attendance. I explained that satisfactory performance in the area of attendance is generally defined by being at work a sufficient number of days to accomplish the essential tasks of the position, without having to distribute to other employees or to delay those essential tasks. Satisfactory performance is generally characterized by not exceeding during an annual period the combined number of sick or vacation days which are earned by an employee during that period, with the exception of approved FMLA or other district leaves. While unexpected illnesses or other circumstances which may entail prolonged absences are understandable, frequent absences and/or questionable absences which result in hardship to other employees or which result in the delay of essential tasks can result in documentation of unsatisfactory performance.

During our meeting, I shared with you the summary of your absences for the last year(s) (if attendance issue is a pattern). You stated that *(describe employee's statements, including any acceptance of responsibility or pledge to improve attendance)*.

Below is a summary of the hours that you have missed during the school year:

School Year	Total Hours	Total School/Work Days

Please begin to correct your attendance immediately. Failure to improve may result in further administrative action.

If I can be of assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me. If you have any questions regarding leave eligibility under provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), please call the Leaves Division of the Office for Human Resources and Educator Quality at 813-794-2353. If you believe that the Employee Assistance Program may be of assistance to you, please call extension 813-794-2366.

Sincerely,

Administrator Name
 Title

Sample Letter
Non-probationary Notice of Continued Attendance Concerns/Informal NEAT Letter (SRP)
Transfer template to letterhead

Date

Employee Name
Job Title
School

Re: Notice of Continued Attendance Concerns/Informal NEAT Letter

Dear Name:

This letter is to inform you of my continued concerns relative to your behavior/performance as a/an (*position*) at (*worksite*) in the area(s) of reliability. Specifically, your excessive absences.

We met on (*date*) along with (*list all others present at meeting*) to discuss my concern regarding your attendance. I explained that satisfactory performance in the area of attendance is generally defined by being at work a sufficient number of days to accomplish the essential tasks of the position, without having to distribute to other employees or to delay those essential tasks. Satisfactory performance is generally characterized by not exceeding during an annual period the combined number of sick or vacation days which are earned by an employee during that period, with the exception of approved FMLA or other district leaves. While unexpected illnesses or other circumstances which may entail prolonged absences are understandable, frequent absences and/or questionable absences which result in hardship to other employees or which result in the delay of essential tasks can result in documentation of unsatisfactory performance.

During our meeting, I shared with you the summary of your absences for the last year(s) (if attendance issue is a pattern). You stated that (*describe employee's statements, including any acceptance of responsibility or pledge to improve attendance*).

I am concerned because this is not the first time that we have had to meet regarding your attendance. On (*date*), you were issued a (*fill in letter title*) because of excessive absences.

Below is a summary of the hours that you have missed during the school year:

School Year	Total Hours	Total School/Work Days

Please begin to implement the above suggestions immediately. I will continue to monitor your performance in an effort to provide assistance. If I can be of assistance, please contact me. If your performance does not improve, further administrative action, which could include an unsatisfactory evaluation, may result.

If I can be of assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me. If you have any questions regarding leave eligibility under provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), please call the Leaves Division of the Office for Human Resources and Educator Quality at 813-794-2353. If you believe that the Employee Assistance Program may be of assistance to you, please call extension 813-794-2366.

Sincerely,

Administrator Name
Title

Sample Letter
Non-probationary Formal NEAT Letter w/ Unsatisfactory Evaluation (SRP)
Transfer template to letterhead

Date

Employee Name
Job Title
School

Re: Formal Notice of Performance Concerns/ NEAT Letter

Dear Name:

The purpose of this letter is to notify you of your unsatisfactory performance as a/an *(position)* at *(worksite)* in the area(s) of reliability. Specifically, excessive absences.

As you will recall, we previously met on (list all previous dates in chronological order) regarding your performance/behavior. On (oldest disciplinary *date*), we met because (*fill in oldest concern*). As a result, you were issued (*fill in letter title*).

Then, on (*date*), we met because (*fill in previous concern*). As a result, you were issued (*fill in letter title*).

Despite having been addressed for similar concerns in the past, you still display deficiencies that reduce your effectiveness as a/an *(position)*.

Below is a summary of the hours that you have missed during the school year:

School Year	Total Hours	Total School/Work Days

My suggestions that may assist you with improving your performance are (*identify supports that will be provided to improve behavior/performance*).

Please begin to implement the above suggestions immediately. I will continue to monitor your performance in an effort to provide assistance. If I can be of assistance, please contact me. Should significant improvement not occur, additional administrative action, which may include the issuance of a second unsatisfactory evaluation and a recommendation for the termination of your employment, may result.

Sincerely,

Name of Administrator
Title

Original: Personnel File

Cc: Assistant Superintendent (*fill in appropriate name*)
Director/Supervisor, Office for Employee Relations (*fill in appropriate name*)

My signature indicates that I received this letter and understand that any written statement I wish to make regarding this letter will be attached to the copy filed in my official personnel file located in the Office for Human Resources and Educator Quality. My signature also indicates that I understand that this letter is subject to disclosure under Florida's public records laws.

Signature of Employee or Witness

Date

Sample Letter
Probationary First Notice of Concerns (NNB)
Transfer template to letterhead

Date

Employee Name
Job Title
School

Re: Notice of Concerns

Dear Name:

This letter is to inform you of my concerns relative to your behavior/performance as a/an *(position)* at *(worksite)* in the area(s) of *(identify area(s) from the evaluation instrument)*. Specifically, *(identify specific incidents or concerns)*.

We met on *(date)* along with *(list all others present at meeting)* to discuss this and review specific behaviors that you need to make your focus at this time. In our meeting, you stated that *(describe employee's statements, including any acceptance of responsibility or pledge to improve performance)*.

My suggestions that may assist you with improving your performance are *(identify supports that will be provided to improve behavior/performance)*.

(Employee name), if you are to continue your employment, you must show satisfactory performance/behavior as described above. I am reminding you that your employment status is probationary during the first *(insert number of workdays or year depending on date of hire)* of your employment. During this probationary period, you may be dismissed without cause or resign without notice and be released without prejudice.

Sincerely,

Name of Administrator
Title

Sample Letter
Probationary Notice of Continued Concerns (NNB)
Transfer template to letterhead

Date

Employee Name
Job Title
School

Re: Notice of Continued Concerns

Dear Name:

This letter is to inform you of my continued concerns relative to your behavior/performance as a/an *(position)* at *(worksite)* in the area(s) of *(identify area(s) from the evaluation instrument)*. Specifically, *(identify specific incidents or concerns)*.

We met on *(date)* along with *(list all others present at meeting)* to discuss this and review specific behaviors that you need to make your focus at this time. In our meeting, you stated that *(describe employee's statements, including any acceptance of responsibility or pledge to improve performance)*.

I am concerned because this is not the first time that we have had to meet regarding your performance/behavior. On *(date)*, we met because *(fill in previous concern)*. As a result, you were issued *(fill in letter title)*.

My suggestions that may assist you with improving your performance are *(identify supports that will be provided to improve behavior/performance)*.

(Employee name), if you are to continue your employment, you must show satisfactory performance/behavior as described above. I am reminding you that your employment status is probationary during the *(insert number of workdays or year depending on date of hire)* workdays of your employment. During this probationary period, you may be dismissed without cause or resign without notice and be released without prejudice.

Sincerely,

Name of Administrator
Title

Sample Letter
 Probationary First Notice of Attendance Concerns (NNB)
Transfer template to letterhead

Date

Employee Name
 Job Title
 School

Re: Notice of Attendance Concerns

Dear Name:

This letter is to inform you of my concerns relative to your behavior/performance as a/an *(position)* at *(worksite)* in the area(s) of reliability. Specifically, your excessive absences.

We met on *(date)* along with *(list all others present at meeting)* to discuss to discuss my concern regarding your attendance. I explained that satisfactory performance in the area of attendance is generally defined by being at work a sufficient number of days to accomplish the essential tasks of the position, without having to distribute to other employees or to delay those essential tasks. Satisfactory performance is generally characterized by not exceeding during an annual period the combined number of sick or vacation days which are earned by an employee during that period, with the exception of approved FMLA or other district leaves. While unexpected illnesses or other circumstances which may entail prolonged absences are understandable, frequent absences and/or questionable absences which result in hardship to other employees or which result in the delay of essential tasks can result in documentation of unsatisfactory performance.

During our meeting, I shared with you the summary of your absences for the last year(s) (if attendance issue is a pattern). You stated that *(describe employee's statements, including any acceptance of responsibility or pledge to improve attendance)*.

Below is a summary of the hours that you have missed during the school year:

School Year	Total Hours	Total School/Work Days

I am reminding you that your employment status is probationary during the *(insert number of workdays or year depending on date of hire)* workdays of your employment. During this probationary period, you may be dismissed without cause or resign without notice and be released without prejudice. Accordingly, it is critical that your attendance improve.

If I can be of assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me. If you have any questions regarding leave eligibility under provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), please call the Leaves Division of the Office for Human Resources and Educator Quality at 813-794-2353. If you believe that the Employee Assistance Program may be of assistance to you, please call extension 813-794-2366.

Sincerely,

Administrator Name
 Title

Sample Letter
 Probationary Notice of Continued Attendance Concerns (NNB)
Transfer template to letterhead

Date

Employee Name
 Job Title
 School

Re: Notice of Continued Attendance Concerns

Dear Name:

This letter is to inform you of my continued concerns relative to your behavior/performance as a/an (*position*) at (*worksite*) in the area(s) of reliability. Specifically, your excessive absences.

We met on (*date*) along with (*list all others present at meeting*) to discuss my concern regarding your attendance. I explained that satisfactory performance in the area of attendance is generally defined by being at work a sufficient number of days to accomplish the essential tasks of the position, without having to distribute to other employees or to delay those essential tasks. Satisfactory performance is generally characterized by not exceeding during an annual period the combined number of sick or vacation days which are earned by an employee during that period, with the exception of approved FMLA or other district leaves. While unexpected illnesses or other circumstances which may entail prolonged absences are understandable, frequent absences and/or questionable absences which result in hardship to other employees or which result in the delay of essential tasks can result in documentation of unsatisfactory performance.

During our meeting, I shared with you the summary of your absences for the last year(s) (if attendance issue is a pattern). You stated that (*describe employee's statements, including any acceptance of responsibility or pledge to improve attendance*).

I am concerned because this is not the first time that we have had to meet regarding your attendance. On (*date*), you were issued a (*fill in letter title*) because of excessive absences.

Below is a summary of the hours that you have missed during the school year:

School Year	Total Hours	Total School/Work Days

I am reminding you that your employment status is probationary during the (*insert number of workdays or year depending on date of hire*) workdays of your employment. During this probationary period, you may be dismissed without cause or resign without notice and be released without prejudice. Accordingly, it is critical that your attendance improve.

If I can be of assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me. If you have any questions regarding leave eligibility under provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), please call the Leaves Division of the Office for Human Resources and Educator Quality at 813-794-2353. If you believe that the Employee Assistance Program may be of assistance to you, please call extension 813-794-2366.

Sincerely,

Administrator Name
 Title

Sample Letter
Non-probationary Conference Summary (NNB)
Transfer template to letterhead

Date

Employee Name
Job Title
School

Re: Conference Summary

Dear Name:

We met on *(date)* along with *(list all others present at meeting)* to discuss performance/behavior concerns. Specifically, *(list concerns)*. In our meeting, you stated that *(describe employee's statements, including any acceptance of responsibility or pledge to improve behavior)*.

You agreed that you will _____ by *(date)*. I offered you assistance *(describe assistance)*.

Please let me know if you have any questions or if there is anything else that I can do to assist you.

Sincerely,

Administrator Name
Title

Sample Letter
Non-probationary Notice of Concerns (NNB)
Transfer template to letterhead

Date

Employee Name
Job Title
School

Re: Notice of Concerns

Dear Name:

This letter is to inform you of my concerns relative to your behavior/performance as a/an *(position)* at *(worksite)* in the area(s) of *(identify area(s) from the evaluation instrument)*. Specifically, *(identify specific incidents or concerns)*.

We met on *(date)* along with *(list all others present at meeting)* to discuss this and review specific behaviors that you need to make your focus at this time. In our meeting, you stated that *(describe employee's statements, including any acceptance of responsibility or pledge to improve performance)*.

My suggestions that may assist you with improving your performance are *(identify supports that will be provided to improve behavior/performance)*.

Please begin to implement the above suggestions immediately. I will continue to monitor your performance/behavior in an effort to provide assistance. Failure to improve may result in further administrative action.

Sincerely,

Name of Administrator
Title

Sample Letter
Non-probationary Notice of Continued Concerns/Informal NEAT Letter (NNB)
Transfer template to letterhead

Date

Employee Name
Job Title
School

Re: Notice of Continued Concerns/Informal NEAT Letter

Dear Name:

This letter is to inform you that your progress as a/an *(position)* at *(worksites)* is unsatisfactory in the area(s) of *(identify area(s) from the evaluation instrument)*. Specifically, *(identify specific incidents or concerns)*.

We met on *(date)* along with *(list all others present at meeting)* to discuss this and review specific behaviors that you need to make your focus at this time. In our meeting, you stated that *(describe employee's statements, including any acceptance of responsibility or pledge to improve performance)*.

I am concerned because this is not the first time that we have had to meet regarding your performance/behavior. On *(date)*, we met because *(fill in previous concern)*. As a result, you were issued *(fill in letter title)*.

My suggestions that may assist you with improving your performance are *(identify supports that will be provided to improve behavior/performance)*.

Please begin to implement the above suggestions immediately. I will continue to monitor your performance in an effort to provide assistance. If I can be of assistance, please contact me. If your performance does not improve, further administrative action, which could include an unsatisfactory evaluation or a recommendation for non-reappointment, may result.

Sincerely,

Name of Administrator
Title

Sample Letter
Non-probationary Formal NEAT Letter w/ Unsatisfactory Evaluation (NNB)
Transfer template to letterhead

Date

Employee Name
Job Title
School

Re: Formal Notice of Performance Concerns/ NEAT Letter

Dear Name:

The purpose of this letter is to notify you of your unsatisfactory performance as a/an *(position)* at *(worksite)* in the area(s) of *(identify area(s) from the evaluation instrument)*. Specifically, *(identify specific incidents or concerns)*.

As you will recall, we previously met on *(list all previous dates in chronological order)* regarding your performance/behavior. On *(oldest disciplinary date)*, we met because *(fill in oldest concern)*. As a result, you were issued *(fill in letter title)*.

Then, on *(date)*, we met because *(fill in previous concern)*. As a result, you were issued *(fill in letter title)*.

Despite having been addressed for similar concerns in the past, you still display deficiencies that reduce your effectiveness as a/an *(position)*. My suggestions that may assist you with improving your performance are *(identify supports that will be provided to improve behavior/performance)*.

Please begin to implement the above suggestions immediately. I will continue to monitor your performance in an effort to provide assistance. If I can be of assistance, please contact me. Should significant improvement not occur, additional administrative action, which may include the issuance of a second unsatisfactory evaluation and a recommendation for the termination of your employment or a recommendation for non-reappointment may result.

Sincerely,

Name of Administrator
Title

Original: Personnel File

Cc: Assistant Superintendent *(fill in appropriate name)*
Director/Supervisor, Office for Employee Relations *(fill in appropriate name)*

My signature indicates that I received this letter and understand that any written statement I wish to make regarding this letter will be attached to the copy filed in my official personnel file located in the Office for Human Resources and Educator Quality. My signature also indicates that I understand that this letter is subject to disclosure under Florida's public records laws.

Signature of Employee or Witness

Date

This document is subject to review under provisions of F.S. 1012.31 and 119.07.

Sample Letter
Non-probationary Attendance Conference Summary (NNB)
Transfer template to letterhead

Date

Employee Name
Job Title
School

Re: Conference Summary

Dear Name:

We met on *(date)* along with *(list all others present at meeting)* to discuss attendance concerns. Specifically, *(list concerns)*. In our meeting, you stated that *(describe employee's statements, including any acceptance of responsibility or pledge to improve attendance)*.

You agreed that you will improve attendance immediately. I offered you assistance by *(describe assistance)*.

Please let me know if you have any questions or if there is anything else that I can do to assist you.

Sincerely,

Administrator Name
Title

Sample Letter
 Non-probationary Notice of Attendance Concerns (NNB)
Transfer template to letterhead

Date

Employee Name
 Job Title
 School

Re: Notice of Attendance Concerns

Dear Name:

This letter is to inform you of my concerns relative to your behavior/performance as a/an *(position)* at *(worksite)* in the area(s) of reliability. Specifically, your excessive absences.

We met on *(date)* along with *(list all others present at meeting)* to discuss my concern regarding your attendance. I explained that satisfactory performance in the area of attendance is generally defined by being at work a sufficient number of days to accomplish the essential tasks of the position, without having to distribute to other employees or to delay those essential tasks. Satisfactory performance is generally characterized by not exceeding during an annual period the combined number of sick or vacation days which are earned by an employee during that period, with the exception of approved FMLA or other district leaves. While unexpected illnesses or other circumstances which may entail prolonged absences are understandable, frequent absences and/or questionable absences which result in hardship to other employees or which result in the delay of essential tasks can result in documentation of unsatisfactory performance.

During our meeting, I shared with you the summary of your absences for the last year(s) (if attendance issue is a pattern). You stated that *(describe employee's statements, including any acceptance of responsibility or pledge to improve attendance)*.

Below is a summary of the hours that you have missed during the school year:

School Year	Total Hours	Total School/Work Days

Please begin to correct your attendance immediately. Failure to improve may result in further administrative action.

If I can be of assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me. If you have any questions regarding leave eligibility under provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), please call the Leaves Division of the Office for Human Resources and Educator Quality at 813-794-2353. If you believe that the Employee Assistance Program may be of assistance to you, please call extension 813-794-2366.

Sincerely,

Administrator Name
 Title

Sample Letter
Non-probationary Notice of Continued Attendance Concerns/Informal NEAT Letter (NNB)
Transfer template to letterhead

Date

Employee Name
Job Title
School

Re: Notice of Continued Attendance Concerns/Informal NEAT Letter

Dear Name:

This letter is to inform you of my continued concerns relative to your behavior/performance as a/an (*position*) at (*worksite*) in the area(s) of reliability. Specifically, your excessive absences.

We met on (*date*) along with (*list all others present at meeting*) to discuss my concern regarding your attendance. I explained that satisfactory performance in the area of attendance is generally defined by being at work a sufficient number of days to accomplish the essential tasks of the position, without having to distribute to other employees or to delay those essential tasks. Satisfactory performance is generally characterized by not exceeding during an annual period the combined number of sick or vacation days which are earned by an employee during that period, with the exception of approved FMLA or other district leaves. While unexpected illnesses or other circumstances which may entail prolonged absences are understandable, frequent absences and/or questionable absences which result in hardship to other employees or which result in the delay of essential tasks can result in documentation of unsatisfactory performance.

During our meeting, I shared with you the summary of your absences for the last year(s) (if attendance issue is a pattern). You stated that (*describe employee's statements, including any acceptance of responsibility or pledge to improve attendance*).

I am concerned because this is not the first time that we have had to meet regarding your attendance. On (*date*), you were issued a (*fill in letter title*) because of excessive absences.

Below is a summary of the hours that you have missed during the school year:

School Year	Total Hours	Total School/Work Days

Please begin to implement the above suggestions immediately. I will continue to monitor your performance in an effort to provide assistance. If I can be of assistance, please contact me. If your performance does not improve, further administrative action, which could include an unsatisfactory evaluation or a recommendation for non-reappointment, may result.

If I can be of assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me. If you have any questions regarding leave eligibility under provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), please call the Leaves Division of the Office for Human Resources and Educator Quality at 813-794-2353. If you believe that the Employee Assistance Program may be of assistance to you, please call extension 813-794-2366.

Sincerely,

Administrator Name
Title

Sample Letter
 Non-probationary Formal NEAT Letter w/ Unsatisfactory Evaluation (NNB)
Transfer template to letterhead

Date

Employee Name
 Job Title
 School

Re: Formal Notice of Performance Concerns/ NEAT Letter

Dear Name:

The purpose of this letter is to notify you of your unsatisfactory performance as a/an *(position)* at *(worksite)* in the area(s) of reliability. Specifically, excessive absences.

As you will recall, we previously met on (list all previous dates in chronological order) regarding your performance/behavior. On (oldest disciplinary *date*), we met because (*fill in oldest concern*). As a result, you were issued (*fill in letter title*).

Then, on (*date*), we met because (*fill in previous concern*). As a result, you were issued (*fill in letter title*).

Despite having been addressed for similar concerns in the past, you still display deficiencies that reduce your effectiveness as a/an *(position)*.

Below is a summary of the hours that you have missed during the school year:

School Year	Total Hours	Total School/Work Days

My suggestions that may assist you with improving your performance are (*identify supports that will be provided to improve behavior/performance*).

Please begin to implement the above suggestions immediately. I will continue to monitor your performance in an effort to provide assistance. If I can be of assistance, please contact me. Should significant improvement not occur, additional administrative action, which may include the issuance of a second unsatisfactory evaluation and a recommendation for the termination of your employment or a recommendation for non-reappointment, may result.

Sincerely,

Name of Administrator
 Title

Original: Personnel File
 Cc: Assistant Superintendent (*fill in appropriate name*)
 Director/Supervisor, Office for Employee Relations (*fill in appropriate name*)

My signature indicates that I received this letter and understand that any written statement I wish to make regarding this letter will be attached to the copy filed in my official personnel file located in the Office for Human Resources and Educator Quality. My signature also indicates that I understand that this letter is subject to disclosure under Florida's public records laws.

 Signature of Employee or Witness

 Date

APPENDIX

The templates on the previous pages are provided to aid or to ensure consistency and equitability when taking corrective action with employees.

Some general considerations are the following:

- Sometimes the templates may need to be edited or combined. If the template does not meet your concern, contact Employee Relations
- The purpose of the meeting is to offer the employee due process, an opportunity to respond to the concern. As such, the letter must not be written until *after* the meeting and must include the employee's response
- The language of the templates is designed to ensure progressive discipline is utilized
- Employee Relations is always willing to discuss situations to determine the level of discipline and read letters to provide feedback

Attendance Monitoring

The principal or supervisor has a responsibility to take action when it is necessary and ensure that the action is appropriate to the situation. If possible, this action should focus on professional growth and improved performance while providing assistance in the form of guidance, support, supervision, and other resources.

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is available to all employees to assist them with issues that may or may not be work related. It may be particularly helpful when non-work factors are having a negative effect on job performance. Don't pry or be judgmental, but do not hesitate to discuss the program and encourage the employee to use the services if it may be helpful.

Problems with attendance cannot always be simply measured by the number of hours or days an employee is absent. A planned absence of twenty (20) consecutive days for an employee to have surgery has a much different impact than twenty (20) days of sporadic unscheduled absences. Employees with different lengths of annual work calendars earn different amounts of leave time. Employees in vacation earning positions earn vacation leave time based on length of service. Absences that are part of an American with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodation or absences that are classified as leave under provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) cannot be used to justify a negative employment action. Injury-in-line-of-duty, workers' compensation, judicial, military, etc. are not indicative of poor performance.

What is satisfactory attendance?

In very general terms, if an employee's absences during a school year do not exceed the combined amount of sick and vacation time earned by the employee during an annual period, the overall attendance is satisfactory.

The following statement is used to generally describe satisfactory attendance.

***ATTENDANCE:** Satisfactory performance is characterized by being at work a sufficient number of days to accomplish the essential tasks of the position without having to distribute to other employees or to delay those essential tasks. Satisfactory performance is generally characterized by not exceeding during an annual period the combined number of sick or vacation days which are earned by an employee during that period with the exception of approved FMLA or other district leaves. While unexpected illnesses or other circumstances which may entail prolonged absences are understandable, frequent absences and/or questionable absences which result in hardship to other employees or which result in the delay of essential tasks can result in documentation of unsatisfactory performance.*

Identifying an Attendance Problem

Maintaining an accurate record of each employee's attendance and reviewing it on a regular basis is a good method of identifying questionable attendance before it becomes a problem. This early identification of a potential problem allows timely intervention that might avoid a more serious problem later.

A **record of attendance calendar** is to be used to document individual employee attendance. Use of this form (on the Office for Employee Relations website) will allow a quick review of attendance and early detection of problems. It will not only show numbers and types of absences, it will also show patterns of absences that may cause concern. This visual representation of an employee's record of attendance will make it easy to share this information with the employee.

Using the absence codes listed at the top of the form makes it easy to record the different types of absences. If the absence is for less than a full day, there is room in each cell to list the number of hours absent. Always verify the accuracy of an attendance record before discussing concerns with an employee that might lead to disciplinary action. Contact the Leaves Section of the Office for Human Resources and Educator Quality if you need assistance with this.

What would indicate an attendance problem?

A Principal or Supervisor should suspect there is a performance problem in the area of attendance when an employee has used all available paid leave and absences continue, or if an employee is incurring absences at a rate that will far exceed the amount of paid leave the employee will earn in the annual period. Periods of extended absence for expressed documented reasons are not generally an indication of poor performance. Please remember that absences that are part of an American with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodation or absences that are classified as leave under provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) or other approved district leave cannot be used to justify a negative employment action. Absences of a suspicious nature, e.g. patterns of Monday or Friday absences, may also be addressed.

It is a good idea to look at all of your employees' attendance and set some form of a threshold to use when considering whether employees have an attendance problem. For example, you could meet with each employee who has missed five (5) days as of November 1 in a school year. When doing so, please remember not to count absences that are part of an ADA accommodation or FMLA or other district leaves. Additionally, five (5) absences due to one situation or illness can be quite different from missing five (5) Fridays. There are many factors and nuances to consider, so please call the Office for Employee Relations if you have any questions.

Child Protective Investigations and Law Enforcement

Child Protective Investigations

Teachers, support staff, and other school personnel play a critical role in forming a trusting relationship with children and helping to protect them from abuse and neglect. Per Chapter 39 of Florida Statutes, school personnel are obligated to know and follow procedures for reporting suspected child abuse, abandonment, or neglect to Department of Children and Families/Child Protective Investigations (CPI). At the moment there is suspicion, school personnel, as mandatory reporters, are required to call CPI immediately without delay, without investigation, and without need for approval.

This requirement applies to all suspicions, including allegations against parents or other family members, co-workers/school staff, or other students. Best practice is for the person with the most firsthand knowledge to call CPI to make the report. If reports are communicated to school personnel from parents or community members, school personnel should first encourage the reporter to call, but then also to call it in themselves. Do not discuss this with the person accused of the alleged abuse.

The most reliable way to report suspected abuse, abandonment, and neglect is to call the hotline at 1-800-96-ABUSE. Using this method, you will be provided the intake specialist's name, ID number, and screening decision.

In addition, there are three other ways to report child abuse:

- Call TDD (for the hearing impaired) at 1-800-453-5145
- Fax the completed reporting form (from Child Abuse sourcebook on pages 110-111 of <http://www.fldoe.org/ese/pdf/chiabuse.pdf>) to 1-800-914-0004
- Complete the online web report at <http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/abuse/report/>

Please notify the Office for Employee Relations immediately if you report a concern to the hotline regarding an employee or once you become aware that CPI and/or law enforcement is investigating an employee. Please remember that reporting suspected abuse, abandonment or neglect on the part of an employee to the Office for Employee Relations does not satisfy your obligation as a mandatory reporter. If you are undecided about whether to report a concern to CPI or have questions, please call the Office for Employee Relations.

Law Enforcement

If you learn of allegations or evidence of criminal behavior, you should report the matter to law enforcement. Please notify the Office for Employee Relations immediately if you report a matter to law enforcement regarding an employee. You are also welcome to consult with the Office for Employee Relations prior to contacting law enforcement.