

COACE Frequently Asked Questions

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Why should I join COACE?

COACE works with the Diocese to help make an agreement every three years that principals and teachers can go to when there are questions or issues, without this agreement there would be no guide to go to and issues and contracts would be between just the teacher and their school. In order for COACE to help the teachers we need to participate and become members to help us help them. Our members are the ones who give the board issues need to be addressed or problems to be fixed that the board members themselves may not know are happening in schools. Numbers are what make the organization strong.

How do I join?

In order to join go to COACE.com and click on Membership, here you will find a form to fill out. The cost is \$300 for full time teachers and \$150 for part time teachers and religious.

Who can I call or email if I have a question about the agreement?

Here are the steps to follow:

1. Contact your school's COACE building representative if you are concerned there is an issue, for smaller issues or to find answers.
2. If you are unsure or would like to not discuss an issue with a coworker in your building, **using your personal email**, you can contact the Elementary Vice-President Lori Schnegg at (614) 588-3036/coaceelemvp@gmail.com or the High School Vice-President Adam Smith at (614) 653-9665/ coacehsvp@gmail.com , they can help with issues and also contact the President Erica Gowitzka for you.

If I need to file a grievance where do I start?

If you have an issue please contact your building representative or the elementary or High School COACE vice-president and he/she can help you move on to the next appropriate step.

Where can I find out what my school should provide in regards to supplies and teaching environment?

Article 7 in the COACE Agreement discusses building environment issues such as what items and equipment that should be available to teachers, teacher lounges, cleanliness of teacher and student areas and what materials should be provided. This section also discusses class size.

How many meetings can a principal require?

For more information regarding staff or committee meetings please refer to the COACE Agreement Article 8.

What is kept in my personnel file?

Every school is in charge of maintaining the personnel file for each teacher, Article 9 in the agreement can explain what is allowed to be in the file. It is encouraged to periodically check your file for accuracy. Article 9.3 and 9.4 addresses what steps to take if an inaccurate item is in a teacher's personnel file.

How many days can my principal require me to work?

The following articles in the COACE Agreement address this question:

- Article 10.4 outlines how many events outside of the school day a principal can require a teacher's presence.
- Article 10.4 outlines the time a teacher's day can start and end.
- Article 10.5 outlines the provisions of the calendar for student and professional development days.

Am I entitled to a lunch period?

Article 10.2 in the COACE Agreement states that a teacher must have a scheduled 30 uninterrupted, duty free and consecutive minutes for lunch between the hours of 10:30 and 1:30.

Does a principal have to post a job opening internally?

Yes, please refer to Article 11 in the COACE Agreement

Does a school have to have a Principal Advisory Committee (PAC)?

Yes, Article 12.3 outlines that the advisory council must meet at least once a year with additional meetings as needed.

Is financial help available for graduate level courses?

Yes, Article 13 outlines the provisions for fee waivers and tuition reimbursement.

What types of paid/unpaid leave are available?

Article 14.1 outlines general rules to sick leave accumulation, usage and retention

Article 14.2 outlines bereavement leave

Article 14.3 outlines personal business and special circumstance leave days

Article 14.4 outlines emergency leave

Article 14.5 outlines recognition leave

Article 14.6 outlines professional leave

Article 14.7 outlines jury duty/subpoena response leave

Article 14.8 outlines maternity, paternity and adoption leave

Article 14.9 outlines miscellaneous provisions for sick leave

For unpaid leave please refer to Article 15

How do I handle extended leave? i.e. maternity leave, military leave, medical leave

Articles 14 and 15 break down types of leave a teacher may need to take.

How many personal days do I get and how do I use them? What if I don't use it?

Article 14.3 outlines that a teacher is credited with 1 personal day per school year which can be carried over or paid out at the substitute rate of your building. Please refer to the article for specific dates and guidelines. *As a reminder two weeks notice must be given to use a personal day in December, May and June.*

What is a recognition day and how do I use it? What if I don't use it?

A teacher who completes 10 years of active service shall be entitled to 1 day of recognition leave each school year. Please refer to Article 14.5 for further information as these days may not be accumulated from year to year.

What is a special circumstance day?

Please refer to Article 14.3b

My school is permanently closing, what happens to me now?

In the event a school must close a teacher must be notified no later than April 15th, guidelines and provisions may be found in Article 16

My principal did not renew my contract, can they do that? When do they have to tell me?

Teacher on a limited teaching contract are not guaranteed renew at the end of a school year. For guidelines please to Article 20

My principal wants to put me on an improvement plan, what does this mean?

If a principal determines at anytime that a teacher is underperforming an improvement plan may be put in place. *All improvement plans MUST be approved and signed by the COACE President and Superintendent of Schools.*

What is the difference between a limited and continuing contract?

Refer to Article 20 for definitions of contracts

How can I get a continuing contract?

Continuing contracts will only be given only upon the request of the teacher. To qualify for a continuing contract a teacher meet the guidelines in Article 20.6.

Can I qualify for a multi-year contract?

No, no new multi-year contracts will be given. All current multi-year contracts will be honored until their termination date as stated in Article 20.7

Where can I get information on the insurance benefits teachers get?

Article 22 discusses insurance for teachers, if you have any specific questions please contact Dominic Prunte at the downtown office.

Where can I check that my salary is correct?

Article 24 outlines the salary scale for each school year.

If I do extra responsibilities can I be paid?

Article 25 outlines the supplemental pay categories and salary scale.

If I'm taking classes and will move on the pay scale, how do I change categories?

If you are going to move on the salary scale the teacher must inform the school by April 15th that the move will take place on the next contract.

I have children in Catholic school, do I get a discount?

If your child is a student at a COACE Diocesan school within Franklin County, Article 26 outlines the guidelines for elementary and high school tuition.

What is the separation bonus program?

Eligible teachers with 30 or more Diocesan full time teaching experience may choose to voluntarily resign their employment under the Separation Bonus Program outlined in Article 27./