

JCDI VERSION

Handbook Information for **Students** and **Families** MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL

Vision: Gwinnett County Public Schools will become a system of world-class schools where students acquire the knowledge and skills to be successful in college and careers.

Mission: The mission of Gwinnett County Public Schools is to pursue excellence in academic knowledge, skills, and behavior for each student, resulting in measured improvement against local, national, and world-class standards.

Defining World Class

In Gwinnett County Public Schools, “world-class” describes any product, service, or organization that is judged by qualitative and quantitative measures as one of the best in its class, and that is recognized accordingly by customers, stakeholders, professional peers, and competitors alike. In the context of this definition, schools that are considered to be “world-class” are characterized by the following:

- Rigorous academic standards and high expectations for all students;
- A comprehensive, challenging, and relevant curriculum;
- Effective, engaging instructional strategies;
- Reliable, appropriate, and meaningful assessments;
- High-performing and inspiring employees committed to professional development, training, and lifelong learning;
- A safe, secure, and positive learning environment;
- A culture of continuous improvement;
- Accountability for results at all levels of the organization;
- Productive and engaging partnerships with families and the community;
- Effective use of technological resources to advance teaching and learning;
- Innovative and productive approaches to management, operations, and use of resources;
- Behavioral standards that promote teaching and learning;
- An inclusive environment that acknowledges and values differences and encourages positive interactions between members of a diverse community;
- Students who are prepared for the next grade level and graduate ready for college and careers;
- Communication with internal and external audiences as a priority; and
- A shared vision for success.

Achieving the Mission

The Gwinnett County Board of Education adopted seven Strategic Goals for the school system that clearly connect to the vision and mission—the “world-class” status we intend to achieve.

Gwinnett County Public Schools will:

- Ensure a world-class education for all students by focusing on teaching and learning the Academic Knowledge and Skills (AKS) standards.
- Ensure a safe, secure, and orderly environment for all.
- Optimize student achievement through responsible stewardship of its financial resources and the proactive pursuit of all resources necessary to meet current and future demands.
- Recruit, employ, develop, and retain a workforce that achieves the mission and goals of the organization.
- Support instructional and operational needs with technological systems and processes that support effective performance and desired results.
- Provide and manage the system’s facilities and operations in an exemplary manner as determined by programmatic needs and best management practices.
- Apply continuous quality improvement strategies and principles as the way the organization does business.

Core Beliefs and Commitments of the Gwinnett County Board of Education

(Adopted March 17, 2016)

Believing, as we do, that public education is an integral part of the seamless fabric of the American experience, we, the Gwinnett County Board of Education, derive our core beliefs and commitments for public education in Gwinnett County from the foundational principles of the United States of America, specifically those espoused in the Declaration of Independence. “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness,” and “That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed....”

America’s public schools exist to undergird and advance these principles. They are the one place where all children and youth in our great, diverse country are provided a common, free education. They must educate every child for success in life and for the responsibilities of American citizenship.

Thus, we commit ourselves to a world-class education that meets the needs of individual students, to a sharp focus on the traditions and values at the heart of our constitutional democracy and the rule of law, and to the civic virtues that bind together communities of many cultures, faiths, viewpoints, interests, and histories into a unified nation. *E pluribus unum*. Out of many, one.

Therefore, the Gwinnett County Board of Education will:

- Ensure our core business of teaching and learning is built on a rigorous curriculum, effective instruction, and high-value assessments
- Educate every student to world-class standards and individual potential
- Provide a safe and secure learning environment
- Optimize the school effect to have a positive impact on every child
- Govern the district fairly and openly, seeking the engagement of the many stakeholders we serve.

It is the policy of Gwinnett County Public Schools not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, or disability in any employment practice, educational program, or any other program, activity, or service.

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Gwinnett County Board of Education



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The Gwinnett County Board of Education has authorized the publication of this handbook information in accordance with School Board policies and procedures and Georgia laws. It contains important information for parents, students, school personnel, visitors, and citizens.

Our Blueprint for the Future: Building the Bridge from Empathy to Excellence



Our Blueprint for the Future

Our Blueprint for the Future: Building the Bridge from Empathy to Excellence is our district plan, outlining the transformational work of Gwinnett County Public Schools (GCPS) over the next five years. We are committed to shifting the culture of GCPS to one that is whole learner-focused, where each and every child is known by name, by face, by individual strength, and need. We are school climates where students and staff feel valued and accepted—no matter their race, gender, ethnicity, native language, disability, or religion—so that no learner is marginalized. GCPS students live in a world where diversity is a fact, as evidenced by Gwinnett County’s status as one of the most diverse counties in the United States. Our efforts to be future-driven must include preparing our children to live and work with people who may be quite different from them.

Our Blueprint for the Future defines our strategic priorities in four areas: **empathy**, **equity**, **effectiveness**, and **excellence**. We know that empathy is key to our understanding of others and to creating a powerful sense of belonging in our GCPS culture. Empathy is a gateway to equity—ensuring that each and every child has what they need to reach their full potential. Effectiveness is our ability to achieve the results we desire. Equity and effectiveness form the bridge from empathy to excellence. Our district will demonstrate excellence in our work—that notable standard to which we should all aspire... behaviorally, academically, and operationally.

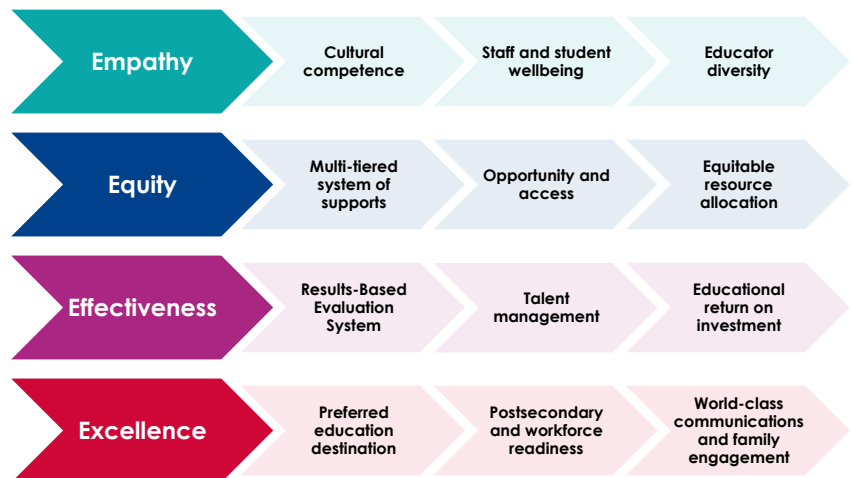
Making our Strategic Plan Operational

Each strategic priority includes three goals, with objectives and district key performance indicators (KPIs). KPIs are the way we will measure success for each goal. We initially considered a broad set of potential measures and finalized these metrics after gathering stakeholder feedback. The 2022 data will be the baseline year for this five-year strategic plan, and each KPI will have annual targets set from 2023 to 2027.

These strategic priorities, goals, and objectives will be the basis of each

department’s and division’s operational management plan (OMP). The *Blueprint* defines the “what” in terms of high-level goals and objectives. The OMPs will detail the “how,” including specific initiatives and action steps that align with this strategic plan. The final plan adopted by the Board includes available baseline data and annual targets for the approved set of KPIs associated with each goal. District leaders will provide regular updates during Board work sessions, sharing the operational progress toward the strategic plan priorities, goals, and objectives.

GCPS will provide annual reports with staff, students, families, and the community to share our accomplishments and results compared to yearly targets set for final KPIs in the *Blueprint*.



improvement. For more about your school’s LSPI, contact your local school principal.

Academic Knowledge and Skills (AKS) Standards

The mission of Gwinnett County Public Schools is to pursue excellence in academic knowledge, skills, and behavior for each student, resulting in measured improvement against local, national, and world-class standards. Instructional goals and objectives will be accomplished through the implementation of the Academic Knowledge and Skills (AKS) standards. The AKS represents the Board of Education’s accepted content standards for excellence in academic knowledge and skills for all students. The AKS includes all of the state-adopted Georgia Standards of Excellence (K-12) in the areas of mathematics, language arts, science, and social studies. State and local assessments measure student learning of the standards. The AKS for each grade level and subject area are available on the school system’s website (www.gcpsk12.org).

Digital Learning Days

GCPS periodically conducts Digital Learning Days (DLDs) when school buildings must be closed on a scheduled school day. Individual local schools also periodically schedule Digital Learning Days as part of specific school initiatives. On a called Digital Learning Day, teachers continue instruction via their online course pages and other digital resources, and students are expected to participate and complete instructional activities with these resources. Schools and teachers will communicate the specific expectations for completing and submitting activities and work. Any students who are unable to participate should work directly with their teachers on alternative activities and assignments.

In addition, the school district has four Digital Learning Days built into the 2022-23 school calendar—Sept. 16, Nov. 8, Feb. 3, and March 17. On these four planned DLDs, all students will learn from home, completing assignments at their own pace. Students should plan ahead to ensure they have their district-issued devices at home for planned DLDs.

Local School Plan for Improvement (LSPI)

Accountability and flexibility are hallmarks of Gwinnett County Public Schools’ success. Under the Board’s Theory of Action for Change to Improve Student Achievement, Gwinnett schools gain flexibility by meeting certain accountability measures outlined through the district’s Results-Based Evaluation System (RBES). Each school is responsible for the development of a local school plan for improvement (LSPI), using the priorities and goals within the *Blueprint for the Future*, the district’s strategic plan. Using data, schools determine areas needing improvement and action steps that are focused on the identified areas. The LSPI development process involves teachers, parents, and community members, so the entire school community has the opportunity to be involved in conversations about school

Grading

For students in grades 6–12, student performance is graded using the following scale:

90% and above	A	excellent progress
80%-89%	B	above average progress
70%-79%	C	average progress
Below 70%	F	unsatisfactory progress

Understanding the High School Transcript

The high school transcript is a record of all the grades a student has earned in classes taken in high school. The high school transcript will also include high school classes taken in 8th grade that were accepted by the student and their parent, as well as high school classes taken during the summer prior to the start of the 9th grade year. Grades are presented in both a weighted and an unweighted format. In addition, grade point averages (GPAs) also are provided in an unweighted (4-point scale) format and in a weighted (5-point scale) format. In Gwinnett, students who take Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and higher-level math and science courses have 10 points added to their grades, weighting their grades to account for the more rigorous content and course. Because colleges calculate GPAs differently for the purposes of admission, GCPS has chosen to include weighted and unweighted grades and GPAs to aid colleges in better evaluating academic records.

Attendance Policies and Procedures

Statement of Policy

The responsibility of school attendance is that of both parents/families and students. School attendance is important as it underscores the significance of learning and obtaining an education in our ever-evolving society. Regular school attendance also correlates strongly with improved grades and it helps students develop good work habits that will carry over in life. To aid students in being academically successful, attendance is required for attainment of the Academic Knowledge and Skills (AKS) standards. The Superintendent has designated the minimum levels of attendance in procedure consistent with state standards.

Definitions

Truant— Any child subject to compulsory attendance who during the school calendar year has more than 10 days of unexcused absences.

Compulsory Attendance—Attendance in a public school, private school, or home school program is required for children between their 6th and 16th birthdays. Every parent, guardian, or other person residing in this state having control

or charge of any child between their 6th and 16th birthdays shall be responsible for enrolling and sending such child to a public school, private school, or home school program. Attendance in a public school, private school, or a home school program is required regardless of the fact that a child has been suspended or expelled from school by the local board of education. Official Code of Georgia (O.C.G.A.) 20-2-690.1

Tardy— Students are considered tardy to school or class if the student arrives at a designated location after a school bell, chime, or buzzer has sounded. (Local schools will include specific information relevant to their facility to identify the designated location for student arrival.)

Early Checkout— When a parent, guardian, or other person having charge or control of a student authorizes a student to leave the facility before the end of the school day. School day hours are published in local school handbooks.

Excused Absences— State Board of Education Rule 160-5-1-.10 defines the following as excused absences:

- Personal illness or attendance in school endangers a student's health or the health of others. (i) Local boards of education may request students to present appropriate medical documentation regarding the family member upon return to school for the purpose of validating that the absence is an excused absence.
- A serious illness or death in the student's immediate family necessitating absence from school. (i) In the event of a serious illness in a student's immediate family, local boards of education may request students to present appropriate medical documentation regarding the family member upon return to school for the purpose of validating that the absence is an excused absence.
- A court order or an order by a government agency, including pre-induction physical examinations for service in the armed forces, mandating absence from school.
- Observing religious holidays, necessitating absence from school.
- Conditions rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to student health or safety. (For Gwinnett County Public Schools, the closure of schools for hazardous conditions may only be made by the Superintendent for the purposes of excused absences.)
- A period not to exceed one day is allowed at the discretion of the local unit of administration for registering to vote or voting in a public election.
- Local boards of education shall count students present when they are serving as pages for the Georgia General Assembly.
- Public school students visiting with a parent or legal guardian prior to or during leave from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting as a member of the armed forces of the United States or the National Guard are allowed five excused absences per school year.
- Students who are in a foster home or otherwise in the foster care system under the Division of Family and Children Services of the Department of Human Services will be counted present for any day, portion of a day, or days

missed from school when attending court proceedings related to that student's foster care.

- A student who participates in the Student Teen Election Participant (STEP) program will be counted as present and given full credit for the school day during which the student served in the STEP program.
- A student who participates in an activity or program sponsored by 4-H will be counted as present for any day, portion of a day, or days missed from school to participate in the 4-H sponsored activity or program.

Procedures

Parents or guardians are encouraged to contact the school on the day of the student absence to indicate the reason for the absence. Parents or guardians also must send a signed and dated written note when the student returns to school explaining the reason for the absence, the date(s) of the absence(s), and a daytime phone number. In order to ensure the opportunity of the student to complete make-up work and for local schools to record excused absences, it is best if a parent note or third-party excuse be delivered to the school the day that the student returns after being absent.

If a parent note or third-party excuse is not delivered to the school, the absence will be regarded as unexcused. Local schools can employ proven best practices to improve student attendance for both excused and unexcused absences. This includes, but is not limited to, local schools requesting appropriate medical documentation from the parent/guardian of a student with excessive absences (excused or unexcused). Parents or guardians will receive written notice when a student has (5), ten (10) and fifteen (15) unexcused absences. When such student has 10 or more unexcused absences, the school will make contact with parent, guardian or person having charge or control of the student to notify them of the additional unexcused absences along with possible consequences and interventions. This includes, but is not limited to, a referral to the combined Student Support Team (SST)/Student Attendance Review Committee (SARC) meeting. Schools shall send written notice inviting the parent or guardian to the SST/SARC meeting.

After the school system notifies the parent, guardian, or other person who has control or charge of a child that such child has ten (10) days of unexcused absences, each additional unexcused absence may result in misdemeanor charges against the parent or guardian (O.C.G.A. 20-2-690.1). Prior to any action to commence judicial proceedings to impose a penalty for violating this subsection on a parent, guardian, or other person who has control or charge of a child, the school system shall send a notice to such parent, guardian, or other person by Certified Mail, return receipt requested, or by First-Class Mail. Upon conviction, any parent, guardian, or other person who has control or charge of a child shall be subject to a fine not less than \$25 and not greater than \$100, or imprisonment not to exceed 30 days, community service, or any combination of such penalties, at the discretion of the court having jurisdiction. A student subject to compulsory attendance laws

who fails to attend school may be subject to a referral to Juvenile Court for disposition in accordance with Georgia law.

State law provides that at the time a student under the age of 18 applies for an instruction permit or driver's license the individual must be enrolled in and not under expulsion from a public or private school or be enrolled in a home education program.

To facilitate prompt, appropriate communication between the home and school, parents, guardians, or persons having charge or control of a student should notify the school immediately when there is a change in the student's address and/or phone number as listed in school records.

Student check-in and check-out procedures are determined at the local school level.

Possible interventions to resolve attendance issues may include, and are not limited to:

- Detention
- Saturday School
- Revocation of School Transfer
- Community Service
- Loss of Parking Permit
- Student/Parent Conferences
- Referral to Support Staff (School Social Worker, School Counselor, Parent Instructional Coordinator, etc.)
- Referral to Juvenile Court (unexcused absences)
- Referral to Community Agencies
- Assign Student to School-based Mentor
- Referral to Academic Assistance Program
- Attendance Contract/Attendance Support Plan
- Referral to the Student Support Team
- Small Group Participation
- Disciplinary Action

Absences and Grading

Absences shall not penalize student grades if the absences are justified and validated for excused reasons and make-up work for all absences is completed satisfactorily. Although an absence may be considered "unexcused," make-up work for approved, prearranged absences will be permitted. Procedures for doing so may be acquired from the local school.

When students are suspended short-term (1–10 days), work missed will generally not count for or against their final grade. Suspended students shall make up those tests and assignments that the teacher determines will have an impact on the student's final grade and mastery of course content. Assignments that the teacher does not require to be made up will not count toward a student's final grade. Students are responsible for making arrangements and completing make-up work within the timeline specified by the local school.

Students not subject to compulsory school attendance laws who are enrolled for the current school year and do not attend school for ten (10) consecutive days without notification of the absence reason by the parent/guardian are subject to withdrawal. These students shall be withdrawn following the school's attempt to notify the parent/guardian. Students determined to no longer be a resident of the system may be withdrawn even if the student is subject to compulsory school

attendance laws. The withdrawal shall be retroactive to the first day of the consecutive absences.

For currently enrolled students who are subject to compulsory school attendance laws, it is required that schools make a good-faith effort to obtain documented information that the student no longer resides in the school's attendance zone before the student is withdrawn.

Students who have emergencies necessitating their absence from school for a portion of the school day must have been present for the majority of the school day in order to be counted present. **Students must attend school for at least the equivalent of half the school day in order to be counted for the whole day.** This does not have to be continuous time.

When there is cause necessitating students to be released from school, they may only be released to their parent(s), to a person properly identified to school authorities, or upon request by letter or telephone call from the parents.

Title I, Family and Community Engagement Plan

The Board recognizes that a child's education is a responsibility shared by the school and family. To educate students effectively, the school and parents must work together as equal partners. We know families and communities play an integral role in the education of children, and we want to encourage and support active involvement in our schools. Our district receives Title I, Part A funds to help meet the needs of all students. The funds are used to hire additional teachers in our Title I schools, purchase technology and resources, and train school personnel to serve as ambassadors for families and the school community. All schools receiving funds from the Title I grant are required to have a Family and Community Engagement Plan that meets the guidelines established by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015. In GCPS, our schools call this The Plan & The Promise. Our goals, as we partner with you, are to:

- establish expectations for meaningful and effective family engagement, and
- strengthen the academic achievement of all students by engaging and supporting our families in the education of their children.

Family engagement provides parents, families, and school personnel with opportunities to participate in two-way, meaningful communication for the common goal of supporting students. Parents and families of all students in our schools are invited to attend meetings to share ideas and suggestions about the district's and school's improvement plans. Below are several ways you can engage with us:

1. **Monthly Board Meetings**— School Board meetings are typically held on the third Thursday of every month at 7 p.m. All meetings are open to the public and may be viewed online on the district website (www.gcpsk12.org). The meeting schedule is found on the school district website. These meetings offer an opportunity for parents and community members to learn about districtwide news and initiatives. The agenda is prepared in advance of each meeting. Anyone wishing to speak before the Board must

fill out the Request Form on the district website. The form to speak at the *next* month's meeting is available the Friday after each month's meeting. Citizens needing interpretation services should note that when completing the form.

2. Local School Councils— The primary goal of the local school council is to bring communities and schools closer together. The council makes recommendations to improve academic achievement, provides support for teachers and administrators, and brings parents into the decision-making process for the school.
3. Parent Advisory Committee (PAC)— All parents are invited to participate in the PAC. PACs meet several times each year to:
 - a. establish how the district should use funds set aside for family engagement activities,
 - b. provide input on the District Improvement Plan, and
 - c. develop the GCPS Family and Community Engagement Plan.
4. Local School Planning Meetings— Before the beginning of each school year, Title I schools host meetings for families and community members to provide input on local school and district improvement goals and the Title I budget. These meetings are for families and other interested community members to jointly develop The Plan & The Promise. We encourage all families to participate in the planning meetings at the local school. We work to remove as many barriers as possible to maximize participation in our planning meetings. Whenever possible, we will provide childcare, interpreters, and translations of documents. We will communicate in a variety of languages and family-friendly formats and offer a variety of meeting times, dates, and locations.

Parents are invited to communicate with their child's teacher, visit their Title I school's Parent Center, or speak with the Parent Instructional Coordinator (PIC) or Parent Outreach Liaison (POL) to see how they may get involved in their child's school.

The Office of Federal Programs provides ongoing support, guidance, and monitoring to ensure that Title I schools are working in partnership with families. Our Title I schools collaborate with other federal programs to improve the academic achievement of all students. Based on input from our families and communities, we use 1% of Title I grant funding to ensure that all Title I schools have either a certified PIC or a POL to assist families. The PIC or the POL takes the lead in providing opportunities for families to learn academic strategies that can be used at home as well as training of school staff on effectively communicating and building positive working relationships with families. Several schools in the district implement Academic Parent-Teacher Teams (APTT), which is an evidence-based model where families learn activities and strategies to reinforce skills at home and set student academic goals. GCPS has a core group of school leaders— the Family Engagement Leadership Team— who coordinate training for the entire staff of APTT schools to ensure this model is implemented with fidelity. All schools offer activities that align to the school goals, opportunities for shared decision-making, and assistance to families in the

transition process from one school level to the next. In addition, each Title I school has a Parent Center containing resources for use at home.

To promote school readiness for our future students, GCPS offers Play 2 Learn in all of the district's Title I elementary schools. Parents in the program bring their child(ren), birth to age 5, to a weekly 90-minute session. During these sessions, activities are modeled and facilitated by a certified staff member using best practices for readiness skills. The program is focused on building the capacity of parents to be their child's first teacher and providing an opportunity for students to be in a high-quality school environment.

We encourage parents to attend district-level and school-level meetings to provide input on improvement strategies for schools that have been identified as Comprehensive Support and Improvement Schools and Targeted Support and Improvement Schools.

To determine the effectiveness of the Family and Community Engagement Plan and Title I programs, we ask parents and family members to complete a survey. This feedback helps us to better understand the needs of the school community and how we can improve our partnership with families. The results of the survey are posted on both the district and school websites. During the annual needs-assessment process, we review the data from the survey, along with other input from all stakeholders gathered throughout the year, to update and revise our Family and Community Engagement Plan.

This plan was reviewed and revised with the input of GCPS staff, families, and community members for the 2022–23 school year. The plan is available in Parent Centers of Title I schools as well as on school and district websites.

Complaint procedures for Federal Programs are located on the district website.

School Nutrition Program (SNP) Information

As a partner in education, the school system's School Nutrition Program contributes to a successful academic experience and encourages a lifetime of healthy eating by providing each student with the affordable opportunity to consume meals that are nutritious, appealing, and served by caring professionals in a pleasant environment.

Middle and high school students pay \$1.50 for breakfast and \$2.50 for lunch. Free and reduced-price meals also are available. Qualifications and/or application procedures for free and reduced meals are available at the local school or on the school system's website (www.gcpsk12.org). You may pay for meals at the school, or you may place money in your child's account using check or credit card by going to www.mypaymentsplus.com.

GCPS uses the following procedure regarding school meal charges.

- Middle school students will be allowed to charge up to \$12.00.
- High school students will be allowed to charge up to \$4.00.

- Charges are not allowed for supplemental or a la carte items.
- Once the charge limit has been met, the student may receive a designated alternate meal at no charge as defined by the School Nutrition Program.
- A charge notice will be completed for each occurrence and notification will be sent home to the parent/guardian through the student.
- Additionally, once the charge limit has been met, the parent/guardian will be notified by the local school via phone call and/or email.
- Charging for meals will not be allowed after April 30.
- The charge policy will be communicated via Handbook Information for Students and Families, SNP and local school websites, and letter.

Refunds from the School Nutrition Program may be processed at the local school level up to \$50. Any refund over \$50 shall be processed through the SNP Central Office by submitting a Refund Request Form.

Professional Qualifications of Teachers

In compliance with the requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), parents are entitled to request information about the professional qualifications of their child's teacher. The following information may be requested:

- Whether the teacher met the state requirements from the Georgia Professional Standards Commission for certification for the grade level and subject area which they teach;
- Whether the teacher is teaching under temporary status through which Georgia qualifications or certification criteria have been waived;
- What undergraduate or graduate degree(s) the teacher holds, including graduate certificates and additional degrees, and major(s) or area(s) of concentration; and
- Whether your child is provided services by paraprofessionals, and if so, their qualifications.

If you wish to request information concerning the qualifications of your child's teacher and/or paraprofessional, please contact the school principal.

Family Changes

If the status of a student's custody changes after the student is enrolled, the enrolling parent/guardian or agency shall notify the local school of the new address and contact phone numbers. Parents/guardians may be required to facilitate and obtain appropriate guardianship or custody of their child to avoid referral to an outside agency or withdrawal. State law generally prohibits attempts to make a change of custody of a minor child by removing the child from the premises of the school without permission of the person who enrolled the student. This prohibition applies even if there is a court order granting custody of the child to the person seeking to make the change.

Educational Equity Policy

The Gwinnett County Board of Education is committed to educating all students and to providing the resources needed to support high-quality teaching and learning. The district's focus on increasing student achievement, access, and opportunities through the implementation of equitable and inclusive educational and workplace policies and practices reduces barriers and builds the district's capacity to deliver innovative, effective, and culturally relevant services.

The Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent and/or his designee to design or redesign systemic programs and initiatives to address and reduce educational inequity, providing students and staff with targeted supports and enrichment that increase opportunities to succeed.

Educational Equity: Providing access to ensure that all students have the knowledge and skills to succeed as contributing members of a global society, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic background, English proficiency, faith, socioeconomic status, or disability.

Device Accessibility

All GCPS students will have a Chromebook assigned to them for the 2022-23 school year. Students can also checkout a hotspot for internet access based on demonstrated need. Families may contact their schools to discuss options. If a GCPS technology resource is assigned to a student and taken home, it is the family's responsibility to monitor the use of the device to ensure the student is following the Student Conduct Behavior Code and to ensure that the device is returned in the condition in which it was received.

Harassment Statement

It is the policy of the Gwinnett County Board of Education not to discriminate on the basis of sex, age, race, color, disability, religious belief, or national origin in the educational programs and activities, or admissions to facilities operated by the Gwinnett County Board of Education, or in the employment practices of the school system. It is the express policy of the Gwinnett County School Board to comply with all laws and regulations relating to discrimination now in effect or hereafter enacted.

The Gwinnett County Board of Education does not and will not tolerate harassment of our students or employees. The term "harassment" includes, but is not limited to, slurs, jokes, and other verbal, graphic, or physical conduct relating to an individual's race, ethnic group, color, sex, religious belief, national origin, citizenship, age, or disability. "Harassment" also includes sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, unwelcome or offensive touching, and other verbal, graphic, or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Violations of this policy will subject an employee to disciplinary action up to and including employment termination. Students violating this policy may be disciplined up to and including exclusion from school.

Notice of Non-Discrimination

It is the policy of the Gwinnett County Board of Education (“Board”) not to discriminate on the basis of sex, age, race, color, disability, religious belief, or national origin in the educational programs and activities, or admissions to facilities operated by the Board. It is the express policy of the Board to comply with all laws and regulations relating to discrimination and harassment now in effect or hereafter enacted. Gwinnett County Public Schools (GCPS) is expressly prohibited from subjecting any person to discrimination or harassment on the basis of their membership in a protected class by the following laws: Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967; Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Age Discrimination Act of 1975; Title I and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; and Title II of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008.

The Board does not and will not tolerate discrimination against or harassment of our students or employees. Violations of this policy will subject an offending student to disciplinary action up to and including permanent expulsion from Gwinnett County Public School (GCPS).

The Executive Director of Internal Resolutions and Compliance-Title IX, Dr. Michele Smith, is responsible for ensuring that applicable anti-discrimination laws, rules, and Board policies are applied equitably to all students across the GCPS community. Contact information for Dr. Smith is provided below.

Dr. Michele Smith
Executive Director of Internal Resolutions and Compliance-
Title IX
Division of Human Resources and Talent Management
Gwinnett County Public Schools
437 Old Peachtree Road, NW
Suwanee, GA 30024-2978
Phone: 678-301-6811
Email: Michele.Smith@gcpsk12.org

Student Complaints and Grievances Procedure

The Gwinnett County Board of Education (“Board”) is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and/or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, or disability. If you believe you or your child is being treated unfairly based on any of these impermissible grounds, you have a complaint and a remedy. To file a complaint of discrimination or harassment, students and/or parents should utilize the Student Complaints and Grievances procedure, Procedure P.JCE, which is summarized below.

Step I: Contact the local school’s Title IX Coordinator to file a complaint and provide a factual basis for any allegation(s) of unfair treatment. The local Title IX Coordinator will conduct an investigation and issue a written letter of findings. If dissatisfied with the resolution of the matter, the student or parent may request a meeting with the school principal.

Step II: If, after meeting with the school principal, the student and/or parent is not satisfied with the local school’s decision, a written appeal may be submitted to the Department of Internal Resolutions and Compliance-Title IX using the contact information provided on this page. Appeals must be submitted within ten (10) business days after notice of the local school’s final decision. The appeal must give specific reasons for reconsideration, state precisely the reasons for dissatisfaction with the decision, and be limited to the matter under review. The decision of the Department of Internal Resolutions and Compliance-Title IX shall be final.

Student Title IX Complaint Procedure

Notice to Students and Parents/Legal Guardians:
Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 prohibits the District from discriminating on the basis of sex in its education programs or activities. Information regarding filing a formal complaint of sexual harassment under Title IX, including the District’s related policies and procedures and the contact information for each school’s Title IX Coordinator, may be found online on the District’s website (www.gcpsk12.org) on the “Non-discrimination Policies” webpage. After receipt of a formal sexual harassment complaint, the local school’s Title IX Coordinator will investigate the allegations, providing all parties an equal opportunity to provide, inspect, and examine evidence. After the decision-maker reviews the evidence presented, he/she will issue a written determination. On the basis of the existence of a procedural irregularity, new evidence not reasonably available at the time of the investigation or dismissal, or the bias/conflict of interest of an investigator or decision-maker, any party may file an appeal with the Department of Internal Resolutions and Compliance. Appeals should be addressed to the Executive Director of Internal Resolutions and Compliance-Title IX, Dr. Michele Smith, and submitted by using the following contact information:

Dr. Michele Smith
Executive Director of Internal Resolutions and Compliance-
Title IX
Division of Human Resources and Talent Management
Gwinnett County Public Schools
437 Old Peachtree Road, NW
Suwanee, GA 30024-2978
Phone: 678-301-6811
Email: Michele.Smith@gcpsk12.org

Dr. Michele Smith or her designee will promptly address all appeals received. The decision of the Department of Internal Resolutions and Compliance-Title IX shall be final.

Retaliation on account of filing a complaint of discrimination or harassment or for participating in the investigation of any complaint at any level is strictly prohibited.

Impaired/Handicapped Access

Gwinnett County Public Schools wishes to meet the needs of all of its students and families. If any member of your family needs assistance or has any questions regarding

mobility impaired issues or handicapped access, please contact the principal of your local school.

Preparing for Inclement Weather

During inclement weather, GCPS usually announces plans for a Digital Learning Day or full-day cancellation by 6 a.m. Once a decision is made, the district posts the announcement on the district website (www.gcpsk12.org); GCPS TV; via SchoolMessenger; on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram; and via metro-Atlanta radio and television stations. School closings are determined by the Superintendent, not by the local school.

In cases when bad weather moves in during the school day, district leaders determine the safest and most efficient way to get students home. Should GCPS schools release early or cancel afternoon or evening activities, notifications to families are made using the communication vehicles mentioned previously.

School is open or will remain open unless it is specifically announced otherwise. The school system does not issue announcements when school will be in session as scheduled.



Find Gwinnett County Public Schools on Facebook



Follow us on Twitter at GwinnettSchools



Follow us on Instagram at [gwinnettschools](https://www.instagram.com/gwinnettschools).

Family Notification in Times of Emergency/SchoolMessenger

GCPS endeavors to notify families in a timely manner relative to any schoolwide or districtwide emergencies or campus safety concerns. While letters may be sent home to families affected by the occurrence, when circumstances require a more immediate notification, this information, as it becomes available, will be posted on the GCPS website (www.gcpsk12.org), Facebook page, and Twitter account (@GwinnettSchools). In addition, the district and local schools will communicate to families using phone numbers and email addresses provided by the parent/guardian. This contact information is used by GCPS to send emergency notifications such as school closings and safety alerts by phone, text, and/or email via SchoolMessenger. General/non-emergency notifications will be sent by email using SchoolMessenger.

Families should verify the accuracy of their contact information at the beginning of each school year or they can update this information in the Parent Portal. **In addition, if changes to contact information occur during the school year, families should contact the school office to let staff**

know of those changes, or update via the Portal. This will improve communication throughout the year and ensure that your family will receive messages sent through SchoolMessenger.

In addition to verifying that your cell phone number is accurate in the system, you also will need to subscribe to the text message service if you wish to receive emergency texts from the school system. You can do so by texting the word "SUBSCRIBE" to the number 67587. You will receive an immediate response by text. If you do not, please contact your wireless provider, as some providers do not accept texts that use short code (SMS) messages. (**Note:** If you subscribed to receive text messages last year, there is no need to resubscribe unless your number changed.)

SchoolMessenger messages from Gwinnett County Public Schools will come from the number 1-844-248-6644. Please add this phone number to your contacts so you can easily identify the call as coming from Gwinnett County Public Schools. If you miss a phone message, you can call this number back to retrieve and replay phone notifications.

Please note that an individual can opt out of receiving SchoolMessenger messages at any time. Press "5" on your phone while listening to a phone message broadcast through SchoolMessenger to initiate the opt-out process. Parents also can go to go.schoolmessenger.com, logging in with the email address they provided to the school, and select "Preferences" to make changes regarding the various types of messages that may be sent.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a federal nondiscrimination statute that prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability. Specifically, Section 504 states:

No qualified handicapped person shall, on the basis of handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity which benefits from federal financial assistance.

Under Section 504 a person with a disability is anyone who has a mental or physical impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities, such as caring for oneself; performing manual tasks; walking; seeing; hearing; speaking; breathing; learning and working; eating; sleeping; standing; lifting; bending; reading; concentrating; thinking; communicating; and major bodily functions (i.e. immune systems, cell growth, digestive, bowel, or bladder functions). The term "substantially limits" means the person is unable to perform a major life activity or major bodily function that a non-disabled person can do, or the person is more restricted in the performance of a major life activity in comparison to a non-disabled person.

It is the policy of GCPS to comply with the provisions of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 in providing a free appropriate public education for students with disabilities who qualify under the definition of the law. No student or other qualified individual shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination in any program or activity, on the basis of disability.

GCPS has specific responsibilities under Section 504, including the requirement to identify and evaluate students with disabilities. Any student or other disabled individual who is qualified for services under Section 504 will receive appropriate accommodations providing equal access to educational programs, services, and facilities.

If a parent, guardian, or adult student has a question about parental or student rights under Section 504, contact the district's designated Section 504 representative at 678-301-7110.

Georgia Special Needs Scholarship (GSNS)

The Georgia Special Needs Scholarship Program (GSNS) is a school choice program available for special needs students attending Georgia public schools who are served under an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan.

Students with an IEP (Senate Bill 10)

If a student meets the eligibility criteria for the GSNS, a parent/guardian has the right to request a transfer from the student's current public school to:

- another public school within their district of residence; or
- another public school district outside their district of residence; or
- one of the state schools for the blind or deaf; or
- a private school authorized to participate in the GSNS.

To qualify for the Georgia Special Needs Scholarship award with an IEP, the student must meet specific requirements. Funds received through the GSNS Program only can be used to pay for tuition and fees at a private school authorized by the State Board of Education to participate in the program.

Students with a 504 Plan (Senate Bill 47)

To qualify for the Georgia Special Scholarship award with a 504 Plan, the student must meet all three requirements:

- **Student Criteria 1-** A student must have a parent who currently resides in Georgia and has been a Georgia resident for at least one calendar year, however, the one-year requirement shall not apply if the student's parent is an active-duty military service member stationed in Georgia within the previous year; AND
- **Student Criteria 2-** The student spent the prior school year in attendance at a Georgia public school. Prior school year in attendance means that the student was enrolled and reported by a public school system or school systems for funding purposes at the time of at least one FTE program count, conducted each school year in October and March. Prior school year in attendance shall not apply if:
 - The student's parent is an active-duty military service member stationed in Georgia within the previous year; OR
 - The student has been adopted or placed in a permanent guardianship from foster care pursuant to

an order issued by a court of competent jurisdiction within the previous year; OR

- The student previously qualified for a scholarship as provided in state law; AND
- **Student Criteria 3-** The student had a 504 plan in effect during the previous school year relating to one or more of the conditions below:
 1. Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), attention deficit disorder (ADD);
 2. Autism spectrum disorder;
 3. Bipolar disorder;
 4. Cancer;
 5. Cerebral palsy;
 6. Cystic fibrosis;
 7. Deafness;
 8. Down syndrome;
 9. Drug or alcohol abuse;
 10. Dual sensory impairment;
 11. Dyslexia;
 12. Emotional or behavioral disorder;
 13. Epilepsy;
 14. Hearing impairment;
 15. Intellectual disability;
 16. Muscular dystrophy
 17. Specific learning disability;
 18. Spina bifida;
 19. Traumatic brain injury;
 20. Visual impairment; or
 21. Any rare disease identified by the National Institutes of Health's Genetic and Rare Diseases Information Center's list of rare disease disorders.

Child Find

Gwinnett County Public Schools has an obligation under the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to identify, locate, and evaluate all students with disabilities or students suspected of having a disability residing in the district who are in need of special education and related services from ages 3 through 21 years of age. This includes students attending public, private, or home schools in Gwinnett County. If you have a child, or know of a child, who has a disability or is suspected to have a disability, please contact the Executive Director of Special Education and Psychological Services at 678-301-7110.

Vehicular Traffic Plans

Every Gwinnett County public school has a vehicular traffic plan for its campus. We ask that you be familiar with your school's plan, following the suggested traffic patterns to help ensure the safety of students, staff, and visitors to our schools. If you are not aware of your school's plan, ask your school administration for more information.

Please observe the fire lanes in front of each Gwinnett County school. We ask that you help us ensure the safety of our campus by keeping these areas clear at all times. Parked vehicles in the fire lanes may be ticketed or towed.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

Parents have certain rights with respect to student educational records pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). These rights transfer to the student when the student becomes an “Eligible Student” upon reaching the age of 18 or attending a school beyond the high school level. The rights of Parents and/or Eligible Students are summarized as follows:

- The right to inspect and review student educational records maintained by the school. A Parent or Eligible Student seeking to inspect and review educational records should submit a written request to the Principal of the school in which the student is enrolled or last attended.
- An opportunity to seek amendment of educational records alleged to be inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy rights. In the event a parent/guardian wishes to challenge a student’s educational record, they can review Policy JR on the school district’s website. They also may request a hearing or a copy of the procedures for conducting the hearing by contacting the Executive Director for Administration and Policy at 678-301-6005.
- The right to notice of what information the school has designated as directory information and a reasonable time after such notice to inform the school that the designated information should not be released without prior consent. See the following section for information on the release of directory information.
- The right to consent to the disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in student educational records (other than directory information), except to the extent FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. Disclosures for which the consent of the Parent or Eligible Student is not required include the following:
 - (A) to School Officials with a legitimate educational interest. A school official is any school employee or any contractor, consultant, volunteer, or other party to whom school system services or functions that would otherwise be performed by school employees has been outsourced or assigned. A legitimate educational interest is a need that arises out of a school official’s role in providing educational services, including instruction, evaluation, therapy, etc., to a student, or out of the performance of administrative, supervisory, clerical, or other responsibilities prescribed by the school system;
 - (B) to other school systems in which the student seeks or intends to enroll as long as the disclosure is for purposes related to the student’s enrollment or transfer;
 - (C) to specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
 - (D) in connection with the student’s application for financial aid;
 - (E) to state and local officials pursuant to State law;

- (F) to organizations conducting studies on behalf of the school;
 - (G) to accrediting organizations;
 - (H) to parents of a dependent student as defined in section 152 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986;
 - (I) to appropriate parties in connection with an emergency if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other persons; and
 - (J) in compliance with judicial order or pursuant to any lawfully issued subpoena when the educational agency makes reasonable effort to notify the Parent or Eligible Student in advance of the compliance. In limited circumstances, an order or subpoena may require the District to disclose information without notifying the Parent or Eligible Student.
- A Parent or Eligible Student who believes their rights under FERPA may have been violated may file a complaint by writing the Family Policy Compliance Office. Complaints must contain specific allegations of fact giving reasonable cause to believe that a violation of FERPA occurred. Complaints should be addressed as follows:

**Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-5920**

Release of Directory Information

FERPA permits the District to disclose information designated as Directory Information without the consent of the Parent or Eligible Student. Directory Information is information, the disclosure of which is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy. Among the purposes that the Directory Information exception facilitates is the release of student information in athletic and extracurricular programs, yearbooks, honor roll and other recognition lists, graduation programs, etc.

Gwinnett County Public Schools has designated the following information as “Directory Information”: name, address, telephone number, date of birth, electronic mail (email) address, photograph, audio recordings, video recordings, grade level, years of attendance, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight, and height of members of athletic teams, and honors and awards received. Unless the Parent or Eligible Student opt out of the disclosure of “Directory Information,” the information designated as Directory Information above may be disclosed in District publications or to appropriate legitimate agencies, entities, or individuals identified by the District, including, but not limited to, PTA, colleges, and military recruiters. The District will not regard agencies, entities, or individuals submitting Open Records Requests as appropriate legitimate agencies, entities, or individuals for the purpose of disclosure of Directory Information.

You have the right to refuse to allow “Directory Information” to be disclosed. In order to opt out of the disclosure of Directory Information, you must notify the principal of the school the student attends in writing within 10 days of receipt of this handbook information. The written notice must: (1) include the name of the student; (2) include a statement that the parent/guardian or eligible student is opting out of the disclosure of Directory Information under FERPA; and (3) be signed and dated by the parent, guardian, or eligible student.*

**Please note that your written notice will be effective for the current year only and must be renewed on an annual basis should you wish to continue to opt out of the release of Directory Information.*

Media Release

Gwinnett County Public Schools uses and releases photographs, audio recordings, and/or video recordings taken or recorded at its facilities and events for educational, instructional, or promotional purposes as determined by Gwinnett County Public Schools for use in broadcast and media formats now existing or created in the future, including social media. These photographs and recordings often include depictions of students and/or parents engaged in instruction, school functions, and school activities. Any such photographs, audio recordings, and/or video recordings shall become the property of Gwinnett County Public Schools and may be used or disclosed by Gwinnett County Public Schools or others with the consent of Gwinnett County Public Schools and/or its representatives to students, parents, community members, or media outlets. By acknowledging receipt of this Handbook Information, you consent to the foregoing. As the parent of a student or as an eligible student (18 years of age or older), you may elect to withhold your consent for Gwinnett County Public Schools’ use of photographs, audio recordings, and/or video recordings of you and/or your child. In order to withhold your consent for the disclosure of your and/or your child’s photographs, audio recordings, and/or video recordings, you (the parent/guardian of the student) or the eligible student must notify the principal of the school the student attends in writing within 10 days of receipt of this handbook information. The written notice must: (1) include the name of the student; (2) include a statement that the parent/guardian or eligible student is opting out of the release of photographs, audio recordings, and/or video recordings depicting the student; and (3) be signed and dated by the parent, guardian, or eligible student. Please note that your written notice will be effective for the current school year only and must be renewed on an annual basis should you wish to continue to opt out of the release of photographs and recordings. Finally, please note that Gwinnett County Public Schools will not be responsible for, and cannot control, photographs, audio recordings, or video recordings captured by individuals who are not employed by, affiliated with, or under contract with Gwinnett County Public Schools. Please contact your local school administration or technology team if you have further questions regarding this topic.

Video/Voice Recording of Students

A parent may provide written notice that photographs or video or voice recordings of his or her minor child are not permitted, subject to applicable public safety and security exceptions, by notifying the principal of the minor child’s school in writing within ten (10) days of enrollment. The written notice must: (1) include the name of the minor child; (2) include a statement that photographs or video or voice recordings of the minor child are not permitted; and (3) be signed and dated by the parent of the minor child. Please note that your written notice will be effective for the current school year only and must be renewed on an annual basis. Please note that a minor child for whom photographs or video or voice recordings are not permitted may not be able to participate in or attend academic classes, or extracurricular clubs, programs, or activities for which photographs or video or voice recordings are essential. Finally, please note that the Gwinnett County School District will not be responsible for, and cannot control, photographs, audio recordings, or video recordings captured by individuals or entities while they are not acting as an employee, or agent of the Gwinnett County School District.

Privacy: Parents and Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment affords Parents and Eligible Students rights and protections regarding instructional materials used in educational programs, surveys administered to students, and the conduct of certain physical examinations. The rights and protections established by the PPRA include:

- **Instructional Materials.** The Parent or Eligible Student has the right to inspect any instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum for the student; and
- **Surveys.** The Parent or Eligible Student has the right to inspect any survey created by a third party, prior to the administration or distribution of the survey and the right to opt the student out of participation in any such survey. In addition, before a student may be required to submit to a survey revealing “Protected Information,” the written consent of the Parent or the consent of the Eligible Student is required. Finally, a minor student may not volunteer to submit to a survey revealing “Protected Information” without providing the Parent of the student with prior written notice of the administration of the survey and an opportunity to opt out of the survey. “Protected Information” is information in the following categories:
 1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student’s parent;
 2. Mental and psychological problems of the student or the student’s family;
 3. Sex behavior and attitudes;
 4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, and demeaning behavior;

5. Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
 6. Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers;
 7. Income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program); or
 8. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents.
- **Physical Examinations.** Parents have the right to notice of any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law.

A Parent or Eligible Student may contact the Executive Director for Administration and Policy at 678-301-6005 to obtain a copy of Gwinnett County Public Schools' policies and procedures developed pursuant to the PPRA.

A Parent or Eligible Student who believes their rights under PPRA may have been violated may file a complaint by writing the Family Policy Compliance Office. Complaints must contain specific allegations of fact giving reasonable cause to believe that a violation of PPRA occurred.

Student Dress Code

Students are required to dress appropriately for school. Each local school will establish and publish a dress code applicable to that school. In addition to the requirements established by the local school, prohibited dress shall include any attire that depicts, promotes, or advertises gang affiliation, illegal activity, illegal drugs, alcohol or tobacco, sexual references, offensive words or designs, and other clothing which is disruptive to the learning environment.

Electronic Communications Devices

The Gwinnett County Board of Education (BOE) permits students to possess communication devices on a limited basis and provides local school principals with the authority to set forth rules pertaining to student possession and use of such devices at local schools.

Rights and Responsibilities

Responsibilities of GCPS Staff

GCPS staff members will work to create positive, effective, and equitable school environments for each and every student, staff member, and community partner. They will build positive relationships with students to help facilitate a sense of

belonging and reduce the likelihood of inappropriate behaviors.

GCPS staff members will do the following:

1. Establish clear expectations for appropriate behavior and take an overall empathic, instructional, and restorative approach to discipline;
2. Acknowledge and/or reward positive behavior;
3. Endeavor to eliminate discipline disproportionality and administer behavior responses consistently, progressively, fairly, and equitably;
4. Involve parents, families, students, staff members, and community members in the process of establishing behavioral expectations for stakeholders;
5. Ensure age and/or development are considered when responding to inappropriate behaviors;
6. Ensure behavioral responses for students with disabilities meet federal and state requirements; and
7. Remove students from the classroom only after several attempts at interventions to address behaviors and return students to class as soon as possible, except in cases of severe behavior, including behavior that poses a threat of serious physical, mental, or emotional harm to others.

Rights of Students

Students shall have the right to:

1. Pursue a successful education in a learning environment that is emotionally, socially, and physically safe without disruption;
2. Receive fair and equitable treatment;
3. Be treated respectfully; and
4. Be informed of their rights, responsibilities, discipline policies, and this Code of Conduct.

Responsibilities of Students

All students share with staff and community members the responsibility to develop a safe learning environment within the school. Students shall have the responsibility to:

1. Attend school regularly, arrive on time, set academic and behavioral goals, and bring materials;
2. Respect the personal, civil, and property rights of others;
3. Put forth conscientious effort in and out of the classroom including homework;
4. Groom and dress appropriately;
5. Have knowledge of and conform to school rules, resolve conflicts peacefully and strive to be excellent digital citizens;
6. Refrain from bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, sexual harassment, using indecent, obscene, racially insensitive, or foul language; and
7. Report incidents or activities that may threaten or disrupt the school environment.

Rights of Parents/Guardians

Parents/Guardians shall have the right to:

1. Receive regular official reports on their child's academic progress;
2. Receive an explanation for the basis of any grade given by the teacher;
3. Request a conference with the teacher and/or principal;
4. Receive a prompt report of their child's attendance to class or school;
5. Bring, or have GCPS provide, an interpreter during disciplinary conferences or tribunals, when a parent/guardian or student has limited English proficiency and the parent/guardian or student requests an interpreter or the school observes that a parent/guardian's or student's limited English proficiency would deny them an opportunity to meaningfully participate in the conference or tribunal; and
6. Appeal disciplinary responses of suspensions of 10 days or more.

Responsibilities of Parents/Guardians

Parents/guardians shall have the responsibility to:

1. Ensure that their children between the ages of 6 and 16 enroll in and attend school regularly, on time, and for the whole school day in accordance with the laws of the State of Georgia;
2. Enroll their child in a non-GCPS school or homeschool program if their child is expelled from GCPS;
3. Speak, behave, and/or present to school officials any concern in a calm, respectful, and reasoned manner;
4. Work with the school on academic, attendance, disciplinary, or other matters pertaining to their child;
5. Plan the time and place for homework assignments and provide necessary supervision;
6. Talk with their child about school activities and expected behavior;
7. Know the expectations set forth in this Code and review them with their child; and
8. Ensure that their child receives the periodic student health examinations that are required by law.

Rights of Victims in School-Related Offenses

Any person victimized by a GCPS student's violation of the Student Conduct Behavior Code may be called to testify to the facts of the incident as it relates to them if a student discipline tribunal is held. Furthermore, any victim of a crime committed by a member of the GCPS community has the right to pursue criminal charges through the proper authorities.

Student Services

The Gwinnett County Board of Education is committed to supporting the whole child and utilizing equitable and evidenced-based practices, intervention, and strategies that develop the skills our students need to build strong relationships, foster self-confidence, identify ways to repair and restore these relationships, and establish a positive supportive school culture and climate. In doing so, both the physical and emotional safety of students and staff members will be addressed. GCPS has created an organizational structure, led by the **Department of Student Services**, to build staff capacity in creating supportive school communities of educators and stakeholders focused on prevention, intervention, and post-response support for behavior and student well-being. Researched-based programs, frameworks, interventions, and strategies will be leveraged to best support each and every student to ensure that they reach their full potential.

The Department of Student Services supports all students as they grow and learn in Gwinnett County Public Schools. Student Services establishes processes, procedures, and best practices to support positive behavior and school culture and to promote academic success and social-emotional development. The department is comprised of four offices, including the Office of Behavior Supports and Interventions; the Office of Counseling, College, and Career Services; the Office of Health and Social Services; and the Office of Social Emotional Learning. Each office is staffed with specialized personnel to address and support school climate, positive behavior, social-emotional wellness, counseling, wraparound support, and healthcare needs. When students are challenged with non-academic concerns that prevent or impair school success or threaten their well-being, personnel within the department provide or connect students and families to the appropriate supports and/or services. The department works collaboratively with all schools and divisions across the district as well as community organizations to deliver services and programs that support each and every student and create positive learning environments in all of our schools.

Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act ensures certain educational rights and protections for children and youth experiencing homelessness. This law identifies any student who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence as homeless. It provides legal protections for children and youth in homeless situations to immediately enroll in, attend, and succeed in school and qualifying public preschool programs. The law further provides support for student records maintenance and transfer, school of origin transportation, and appropriate dispute resolution for children and youth experiencing homelessness. In accordance with this law, Gwinnett County Public Schools affords children and youth experiencing homelessness equal access to the same free, appropriate public education—including comparable services, such as Title I support, special education, gifted, English Learners (EL), vocational/technical, and public

preschool education— as provided to other non-homeless students. Children and youth experiencing homelessness will have access to needed services to support their academic achievement as they work to meet the same challenging standards to which all students are held. When a child is identified as experiencing homelessness, the parent or school personnel completes the Student Residency Questionnaire (SRQ) at the local school. The local school submits the form to the GCPS Homeless Education Program Social Worker (Liaison) within the Office of Health and Social Services. Please contact the Office of Health and Social Services at 678-301-6882 for further information about the Homeless Education Program.

Foster Care

Gwinnett County Public Schools’ foster care program supports all students in DFCS custody placed in out-of-home care who are enrolled in GCPS. When a foster child enters GCPS, the case manager or the foster parent completes the Foster Care Questionnaire (FCQ) form at the local school or school of origin. The school submits the form to the GCPS foster care social worker (liaison) within the Office of Health and Social Services. The school will notate that the student is in foster care via the student management system. This process is repeated at the beginning of every school year and whenever a foster child’s placement changes. Within five days of enrollment, a Case Management Consultation (CMC) is held to determine the best interests of the child and develop a plan to best serve the student. During this meeting, the foster parent, foster care social worker, school counselor, assistant principal, and DFCS worker are invited to discuss the student’s strengths and areas of concern, current and previous supports, and, in accordance with House Bill 855, how trauma has affected the child’s academic performance and behaviors.

Selected Board Policy Information

Search and Seizure (Policy JCAB)

- To maintain order and discipline in the schools and to protect the safety and welfare of students and school personnel, school authorities may search a student, student lockers, or student automobiles under the circumstances outlined below and may seize any illegal, unauthorized, or contraband materials discovered in the search.
- As used in this policy, the term “unauthorized” means any item dangerous to the health or safety of students or school personnel, or disruptive of any lawful function, mission, or process of the school, or any item described as unauthorized in school rules available beforehand to the student.
- A student’s failure to permit searches and seizures as provided in this policy will be considered grounds for disciplinary actions.
- All searches by school employees shall be reasonably related to the objectives of the search and not excessively

intrusive in light of the student’s age and gender and the nature of the infraction.

- In the event the search of a student’s person, their personal possessions, vehicle, or locker reveals a violation of federal, state, or local law, law enforcement authorities may be notified so that they may take appropriate action.

Interrogations

The principal of each school in Gwinnett County Public Schools, or their authorized representative, possesses the authority to conduct reasonable interrogations of students in order to investigate properly and impose appropriate administrative action for student misconduct.

Drug-Free Workplace (Policy GAMA)

The Board of Education provides a drug-free workplace and professes that the use of illicit drugs and the unlawful possession and use of tobacco and alcohol are wrong and harmful. Employees are prohibited from using or displaying drug, alcohol, and tobacco products in front of students while the employee is on duty during the normal school day or while on duty at any school- or system-sponsored function.

Selections from Georgia Code of Laws and GCPS Processes

Georgia Gun and Weapons Laws

O.C.G.A. § 16-11-127.1 provides that it is generally unlawful for any person to carry to or to possess or have under such person’s control while at a school safety zone, school function, or school bus or other transportation furnished by the school any weapon or explosive compound, other than fireworks the possession of which is regulated by Chapter 10 of Title 25. Any person who is not a lawful weapons carrier who violates this subsection shall, upon conviction thereof, be punished by a fine of not more than \$10,000, by imprisonment for not less than two nor more than 10 years, or both. Any lawful weapons carrier who violates this subsection shall, upon conviction thereof, be guilty of a misdemeanor.

For the purposes of this Georgia Code section, the term “weapon” means and includes any pistol, revolver, or any weapon designed or intended to propel a missile of any kind, or any dirk, Bowie knife, switchblade knife, ballistic knife, and any other knife having a blade of two or more inches, straight-edge razor, razor blades, spring stick, metal knucks, blackjack, or any flailing instrument consisting of two or more rigid parts connected in such a manner as to allow them to swing freely, which may be known as a nun chahka, nun chuck, nunchaku, shuriken, or fighting chain, or any disc, of whatever configuration, having at least two points or pointed blades which is designed to be thrown or propelled and which may be known as a throwing star or oriental dart, or any weapon of like kind and any stun gun or taser.

As noted under Rule 6 of our district’s Student Conduct Behavior Code:

A student shall be excluded from school for one calendar year for possessing on school grounds or at a school function a firearm or a dangerous weapon (as defined by O.C.G.A. § 16-11-121), provided that all tribunal officers, tribunals, panels, administrators, the superintendent, and the Gwinnett County Board of Education shall have the discretion to impose a lesser or more harsh, appropriate consequence on a case-by-case basis for any such offense. See O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751; § 20-2-751.1

Acts of Violence against School Personnel

Any person who commits the offense of battery against a teacher or other school personnel, while engaged in the performance of official duties or while on school property shall, upon conviction thereof, be punished by imprisonment for not less than one nor more than five years or a fine of not more than \$10,000, or both (O.C.G.A. § 16-5-23.1).

Chronic Discipline Problems

The law (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-764 and § 20-2-765) allows teachers and principals to identify students as chronic disciplinary problem students. A chronic disciplinary problem student is a student who exhibits a pattern of behavioral characteristics which interfere with the learning process of students around them and which are likely to recur. Any time a teacher or principal identifies a student as a chronic disciplinary problem student, the principal or designee shall notify— by telephone call and by either Certified Mail or statutory overnight delivery with return receipt requested or First-Class Mail— the student’s parent or guardian of the disciplinary problem; invite such parent or guardian to observe the student in the classroom situation; and request at least one parent or guardian to attend a conference with the principal/designee or the teacher or both to devise a disciplinary and behavioral correction plan. A parent or guardian of a student found to have engaged in bullying or physical assault or battery of another person on the school bus must meet with local school officials for the purpose of forming a school bus behavioral correction plan. (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-764; § 20-2-765 and § 20-2-751.5)

Definition of a Disciplinary Referral

For the purposes of determining standing for chronic discipline behaviors, a disciplinary referral shall mean any referral of a student that results in either an in-school suspension (ISS), assignment to the opportunity room (OR), or out-of-school suspension (OSS). ***Note:** For the purposes of Chronic Behavior/Rule 12, tardy referrals shall not count as a referral, regardless of consequence.

Definition of Chronic Misbehavior

The law (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-764 and § 20-2-765) allows teachers and principals to identify students as chronic

disciplinary problem students. A chronic disciplinary problem student is a student who exhibits a pattern of behavioral characteristics which interfere with the learning process of students around them and which are likely to recur.

Summary of the 7-Step Plan

For any given school year, the following steps will be taken to address each disciplinary referral a student receives that involves (results in) a suspension (In-School Suspension or Out-of-School Suspension):

- Referral #1: Parent is given written notification of violation and consequence.
- Referral #2: Parent is given written notification of violation and consequence.
- Referral #3: Parent is given written notification of violation and consequence; notified of consequences for next (4th) referral.
- Referral #4: Invite parent to help develop a Behavioral Correction Plan.
- Referral #5: Possible Rule 12 Notification Charge (principal’s discretion).
- Referral #6: Possible Rule 12 Notification Charge (principal’s discretion).
- Referral #7: Student *must* be placed on a Rule 12.

Additional information on the 7-step plan:

- The 7-step plan is a guideline and it can be modified in individual cases at the discretion of the Office of Student Discipline.
- Modifications to the 7-step plan may be used with students entering the district with lengthy discipline/criminal records. Schools may consult the Office of Student Discipline about an appropriate sequence of steps for these students.

Behavioral Correction Plan

After a student receives their fourth (4th) disciplinary referral during a given school year, the following steps should be taken:

- Notify the parents/guardians that the student has been identified as having a chronic behavior problem.
- With input from the parent, develop a Behavioral Correction Plan.
- Implement the interventions to provide support to the student.
- Monitor the plan and evaluate (formally or informally) the interventions. (Consider assigning a staff member to monitor/mentor the student and their progress with the plan.)

Consequences of Crime and Underage Sexual Conduct

Parents and guardians are encouraged to inform their children regarding the consequences, including potential criminal penalties, of underage sexual conduct and crimes for which a minor can be tried as an adult.

School Clubs and Organizations

In accordance with O.C.G.A. § 20-2-705, information regarding the names of clubs/organizations, mission/purpose of the clubs/organizations, names of faculty advisors, and descriptions of planned activities may be found on the school website. This information also may be obtained, if requested, from the local school. Parents and guardians should review this information and inform the school if they decline permission for their student to participate in a club or organization.

Earning High School Credit by Testing Out

(Changes to the state assessment program may result in changes to the information listed below. Please check with your school for updates.)

A student may demonstrate subject area competency by testing out of any course that has an associated End of Course (EOC) assessment. A unit of course credit is awarded to students who reach the performance level of “Exceeds” on an EOC prior to taking a specific EOC course. Students have only one opportunity per course to test-out. At this time, a student may only earn up to three credits by testing-out. Students must meet the following requirements for earning course credit through testing-out:

- a. Not currently or previously enrolled in the course.
- b. Have earned a grade of B or better in a content area course that is the same content area of the course for which the student is attempting the EOC.
- c. Received a teacher recommendation from a teacher in the same content area.
- d. Received parent/guardian permission as stated by the local Board of Education.

Students who do not reach the performance level of “Exceeds” when attempting to test-out must enroll in and complete the associated course and retake the EOC even if the student makes a passing grade on the EOC during the testing-out attempt. Students who are currently enrolled, or who have been previously enrolled, in a higher-level course are not allowed to earn credit by later attempting to test-out of a lower level course. For example, a student already taking AP Physics may not earn credit for Physical Science by testing out. Course credit of students who test-out of a course is reported in the same way as the course credit earned through completing courses. Local boards of education may develop policies related to utilizing grade equivalent scores in the calculation of the student’s Grade Point Average (GPA). Under NCAA requirements, units of credit earned through testing-out using the EOC will not count as a core course credit for athletic aid for any student seeking NCAA Division I or II athletic scholarships. For more about State Board of Education Rule 160-5-1.15 Awarding Units of Credit and Acceptance of Transfer Credit and/or Grades, go to the Georgia Department of Education website.

Online Learning Options

In accordance with O.C.G.A. § 20-2-319.1 through § 20-2-319.4, parents should be aware of the following items relative to online learning:

- Districts will allow students to take an online course even if the course is offered in the local district.
- Online courses can be accessed through the Georgia Virtual School, local virtual schools, or vendor online schools.
- If the online course is taken in lieu of any of the regular six periods, then the school will pay for the course. If an online course is chosen in addition to the regular school day, the student will be subject to the cost of tuition.
- O.C.G.A. § 20-2-319.3 mandates the creation of an online clearinghouse of online courses and their providers to give parents and students the ability to search the clearinghouse for availability of online courses and providers. Guidelines for what constitutes high-quality online courses also are included.

Accessing Georgia’s Online Clearinghouse

The Georgia Online Clearinghouse provides students and parents with information and access to high-quality academic and career-oriented courses, aligned to state and national standards, through a variety of online providers. To access the information found in the clearinghouse, go to:
http://www.gadoe.org/_layouts/GADOEPublic.SPApp/Clearinghouse.aspx

Step 1: Type in the course you need (for example, Elementary Art).

Step 2: Type in your zip code. You will then see a list of the online providers in Georgia who have the course you selected. The names of program providers have been linked for users to access their site for registration information.

Step 3: Utilize the provider’s site to register the student in the selected online course.

Step 4: Once you have selected an option for your course, contact your local GCPS school counselor for assistance.

School Bus Safety Guidelines and Procedures

Student Behavior Management Plan

GCPS provides bus safety education for students on how to keep themselves safe in and around the school bus. The Student Behavior Management Plan is a three-part program that helps the bus driver achieve appropriate student behavior on the school bus. The following information outlines the plan's three components— prevention, intervention, and consequences.

Prevention

Prevention steps are used by the bus driver to educate the student about safe and appropriate riding behaviors, to clarify the bus driver's expectations for the students, and to assist students in successfully demonstrating safe riding habits every day. The bus driver will communicate and reinforce those expectations which are based on the School Bus Safety Guidelines. These guidelines are posted on all school buses.

Assigned seating provides structure and a consistent routine while aiding in student behavior. All students are assigned seats at the beginning of the school year.

Age-appropriate school bus safety education programs are included in the Health and Physical Education curriculum at the elementary and middle school levels. GCPS school bus drivers conduct simulated emergency evacuation drills with all grade levels on a monthly basis. Students in grades K–5 perform an actual emergency evacuation drill annually.

Intervention

Intervention steps are used by the bus driver to correct unsafe or inappropriate behaviors. The level of intervention will depend on the severity of the misconduct.

- Verbal reminder— The bus driver will remind the student of the rule(s) not being followed.
- Talk individually to the student— The bus driver will discuss the unsafe/inappropriate behavior with the student.
- Reassign bus seat— The student's seat will be reassigned to allow the driver to better monitor the student.
- Communication with parent/guardian:
 - Courtesy call to parent/guardian— A phone call to the parent is made by the bus driver, making them aware of the unsafe or inappropriate conduct, or
 - Parent Notification Form— The bus driver sends written notification of the student's inappropriate or unsafe behavior to the parent/guardian for signature.

Consequences

When prevention and intervention steps are unsuccessful in improving the student's behavior, a Bus Discipline Form is completed and submitted by the bus driver to the school

administrator. The administrator is then responsible for issuing appropriate consequences for the student. Serious offenses may lead to suspension from the bus or from school.

Safety Procedures

The following School Bus Safety Procedures are posted on all GCPS school buses:

- Students will follow directions of the bus driver.
- Students must be at their assigned bus stop five minutes before the **scheduled bus arrival time**, waiting in a safe place, clear of traffic, and 12 feet from where the bus stops.
- Students will wait in an orderly line and avoid playing.
- Students will cross the roadway in front of the bus after the bus has stopped, they have looked at the bus driver for a hand signal, and they have looked in both directions for traffic— left, right, left.
- Students will signal the bus driver with a waving motion if something is dropped and wait for the bus driver to give a signal before picking up object.
- Students will go directly to assigned seat when entering the bus and keep the aisles and exits clear.
- Students will remain properly seated, back against the back of the seat, bottom against the bottom of the seat, and keep hands to themselves.
- Students will not eat, drink, chew gum, or bring tobacco, alcohol, drugs, or any controlled substances on the bus.
- Students will not carry animals, glass objects, nuisance items, hazardous materials, or weapons onto the bus. Students may carry only objects that can be held in their laps.
- Students will refrain from using loud voices, profanity, and/or obscene gestures, and respect the rights and safety of others.
- Students will keep head, arms, and objects inside the bus at all times.
- Students will be totally silent at railroad crossings.
- Students will stay seated until time to get off the bus. The open door is the signal to get up from the bus seat.
- Students are expected to ride the bus to which they have been assigned and to get off at their assigned bus stop. Only in the event of an emergency, as determined by the principal or their representative, will a student be allowed to ride a different bus. Notification of this emergency must be sent to the school in a written note signed by the parent/guardian. The school administrator may provide a Bus Pass granting permission.
- Students will keep their bus clean and in good, safe condition.
- Students are allowed to "Bring Your Own Device" (BYOD), but shall be prohibited from using such device

during the operation of a school bus in a manner that interferes with the communication equipment or the bus driver's operation of the school bus. The bus driver may allow wearing of headphones with an audio system on a case-by-case basis as long as it is in accordance with local school rules.

- Students shall be prohibited from using mirrors, lasers, flash cameras, or any other lights or reflective devices in a manner that might interfere with the school bus driver's operation of the school bus.

Student Bus Stop Assignment

- Students are automatically assigned to the bus stop closest to their home address.
- Parents are responsible for their student's safety while walking to and from the bus stop and while waiting at the bus stop.
- Bus stops are set in Gwinnett County to be used by elementary, middle, and high school students. A student's bus stop may be changed for safety reasons that may include, but not limited to: a sex offender moving into the area, construction, police/gang activity, etc.
- The locations of bus stops are determined by the Transportation Supervisor and the Routing Department. The safety of all students is the first consideration when determining bus stop locations.
- The school bus will travel streets or street segments that are at least 3/10 of a mile long and which provide a safe turnaround area for the bus. Doorside pick-ups and drop-offs will be provided to students who reside on high speed roadways (40+ mph) without sidewalks or a safe walking path. Students are not permitted to cross multi-lane roads.
- Schools will need to require verification of address from parents when a driver, team leader, and/or Transportation Supervisor suspects that a student has moved. For the student's safety, Transportation may return students to school when it is obvious that they no longer live at the address of record.
- Students are to be standing at the bus stop five minutes prior to the bus arrival time. Students are not to be waiting in the house or car. Running to the bus stop is a very dangerous practice and could result in injury.
- Requesting a change to the bus stop for personal preferences is not allowed.
- A Bus Pass may be issued by the school for emergency situations only.
- Drivers are expected to deliver students to their assigned bus stop unless they have an official Bus Pass stating otherwise.
- Alternate Address forms are available for students who attend daycare five days a week. These forms can be found on the GCPS website on the "Transportation" page under "Forms and Information."

Parent Information Regarding Safe Schools

The school district is committed to providing a safe environment for students, staff, and visitors. It works closely with national, state, and local safety personnel— police, fire, emergency medical services, emergency management agencies, and public health—to ensure our schools are well prepared for an emergency.

School Resource Officers, or SROs, are police officers employed by the school system. These officers are housed at all Gwinnett high schools and middle schools and also at some elementary schools. In addition to policing school campuses, these officers focus on educating students and staff on safety issues and working with school administrators on school safety plans.

In addition, GCPS updates its district and school emergency operations plans annually. These plans, which are approved by the Gwinnett County Office of Emergency Management, are the guides to help staff and our public-safety partners respond swiftly should a crisis occur in our schools.

Emergency Preparation in GCPS

As a parent, you can feel confident that when you send your children off to school that you are sending them to a safe, orderly place. Our schools are safe because our school communities work hard to ensure safety.

- Each year, school administrators review and make any necessary modifications to their school's Emergency Management Plans.
- Each school has key staff members with assigned roles and responsibilities to perform during an emergency.
- The school system's emergency response plan is modeled on the National Incident Management System (NIMS) that has been developed by the Department of Homeland Security.
- Every school conducts emergency drills throughout the school year so that students and staff are aware of the most effective and safe emergency responses.
- Students take an active role by following rules and reporting those who do not.

The Board considers the appropriate, sensitive, and timely response by school staff to crisis situations to be of utmost importance. Emergencies may occur at schools at any time. It is the objective of school personnel to respond in a way that will minimize the impact of the situation upon students and staff.

Safe Schools Plans/Required Drills Policy

Each local school is charged with implementing the Safe Schools Plans developed by the district and conducting training for staff to familiarize them with the school emergency plans. Each school has a Safe School Team which provides leadership in carrying out the plans. The team shall be composed of appropriate school personnel, such as principal, assistant principals, counselors, grade level chairs, department heads, coaches, and selected teachers.

Each local school shall develop, periodically update, and implement specific plans for that particular campus. The District Safe Schools Plan shall include, but is not limited to, guidelines for actions to deal with the following specific hazards: injuries and illnesses, fires, thunderstorms, tornadoes, floods, hurricanes, winter storms, hazardous materials, earthquakes, utility failures, bomb threats, civil disturbances, terroristic acts, and nuclear emergencies. The plans also require drills, as appropriate, for emergencies arising from these hazards. It also shall include provisions for communicating information on emergency preparedness procedures to staff and students appropriate for their grade level.

Everyone has a Role

Ensuring school safety is everyone's responsibility— staff, students, parents, and the entire community. Please report any safety concerns you may have to your school principal. In addition, ask your local school about its safety plan.

One important role you can play in keeping schools safe is to tell someone about illegal behavior or concerns you may have. **Gwinnett County Public Schools operates a School Safety Tip Line. Call or text 770-822-6513 to make a report.** You do not have to give your name when providing information via this confidential tip line.

Frequently Asked Questions on Safety

As a parent, how can you prepare for a school emergency?

The number-one step that you can take to prepare for a school emergency is to provide accurate emergency contact information to your child's school and notify the school if your information changes.

What should I do during a school emergency?

During a crisis, your first response might be to pick up the phone to call the school. However, a high volume of calls may bog down the phone system. When a school emergency occurs, a parent can get important information by doing one or all of the following:

- 1) Visit www.gcpsk12.org or your local school website.
- 2) If your school is affected, the district's notification system, **SchoolMessenger**, will send out a notice. Check your messages.
- 3) Monitor local television and radio for news alerts.
- 4) Tune into the school system's cable TV station.

During an emergency, you will want to get important information and directions from school officials before going to the school. You can be confident that accurate and timely information will be released to parents, the public, and the news media during any emergency incident.

What is a lockdown?

During a hard lockdown, all school interior doors are locked,

students are confined to their classrooms and no entry or exit of the school is allowed. This takes place if there is a threat or possible threat inside the school. During a **soft lockdown**, all exterior doors are locked. This takes place if the threat is outside of the school. In some cases, parents could be admitted into the school with proper identification.

If the school is in a soft lockdown, what type of identification will I need to enter the school and/or pick up my child?

If it is deemed safe to allow others to enter the building, you or your designated emergency contact will need to show a proper form of identification, such as a driver's license or valid photo identification.

Who determines whether or not a school should be evacuated?

In the event of an emergency at or near the school, school leaders follow the direction of law enforcement and emergency response agencies in determining whether or not to evacuate the facility.

What does shelter-in-place mean?

Shelter-in-place means taking refuge in a small, interior room in the school, remaining there until it is safe to release students. This is a precaution to keep our students safe from hazardous materials that have been released into the atmosphere. (This is not the same thing as going to a shelter in case of a storm.) This procedure is implemented if it is determined that evacuation or dismissal could possibly place students at risk.

If the school is evacuated, how will I be able to locate my child?

Each school has a procedure for helping parents to reunite with their child during a school emergency. Parents will be directed to a specific location where they will be required to show proper identification. Remember, a student can generally only be released to an adult who is documented as an emergency contact. If you are a noncustodial parent, you must be listed on your child's emergency contact information as a guardian and you will be required to show proper identification.

In regard to school emergencies, what should my child know?

Important rules for students during a school emergency are:

- 1) Follow the directions given by the teacher or principal.
- 2) Before using a cell phone, make sure it is safe to do so.
- 3) Do not leave the school campus unless instructed to do so. In an evacuation situation or if school is dismissed early, follow the directions provided by the principal.

Responsible Use of Technology and Electronic Media for Students

Gwinnett County Public Schools (GCPS) recognizes that the use of technology is prevalent in society. Students and staff have access to the internet, cell phones, games, and a variety of personal technology devices. Students and staff utilize social media websites and applications as well as a variety of other digital resources that allow them to interact, share, create and innovate. Staff members utilize these same resources as a means to effectively engage students, motivate student learning, and collaborate with colleagues.

When using GCPS technology or network access, students are expected to follow the Student Conduct Behavior Code, including respecting others' privacy. Online student accounts to be used for legitimate educational purposes will be subject to monitoring and review, including review of text and attachments that are related to that student or students. At NO TIME should a student consider GCPS email, networked applications, or account or technology access private or confidential in any way.

While the school district does maintain internet filters, there may be times when a student may accidentally or purposefully discover inappropriate materials online. Gwinnett County Public Schools DOES NOT CONDONE the use of such materials. Inappropriate use of any GCPS technology resource or network access is a violation of the Student Conduct Behavior Code.

Gwinnett County Public Schools is a 1:1 district. When a device has been assigned to a student and taken home or a technology resource has been checked out to a student, it is the family's responsibility to monitor its use to ensure the student is following the Student Conduct Behavior Code and to ensure that the device or resource is returned in the condition it was received.

Access is a privilege, not a right, and all students are expected to treat this learning tool with respect. GCPS technology, network access, and electronic resources must not be used to:

- Harm other people.
- Interfere with other people's work.
- Steal property.
- Gain unauthorized access to other people's files or programs.
- Gain unauthorized access to online resources, including obtaining or using someone else's password.
- Make changes to the hardware or software configuration of any machine, including installing or deleting any software.
- Improperly use the network, including introducing software viruses and/or bypassing local school or office security policies.
- Steal, alter, or damage data and/or computers and network equipment.
- Access, upload, download, and/or distribute pornographic, hate-oriented, profane, obscene, or sexually explicit material.

Failure to follow these guidelines can violate O.C.G.A. § 16-9-90, § 16-9-91, § 16-9-93, and § 16-9-93.1 as well as

Title XVII of United States Public Law 106-554, known as the Children's Internet Protection Act. Such use can also lead to disciplinary actions, up to and including loss of access to GCPS technology resources and further disciplinary actions as defined by existing GCPS policies. Such disciplinary actions may include confiscation of technology being used inappropriately if an incident occurs.

Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Network

As Gwinnett County Public Schools transitions to being a 1:1 student device district, it is allowing each school to choose whether to allow student access to the "Bring Your Own Device" (BYOD) network at its location for the 2022–23 school year.

To participate in the use of the BYOD network, all users must agree to use the school network when available, and not personal mobile data service providers, on their devices. GCPS is not responsible for any damages, fees, lost functionality, support, or costs that may be the result of students or staff members using personal devices.

Students in schools participating in the BYOD network must go into Settings on their device and "forget" the GCPS-Mobile network at the beginning of the school year and re-authenticate to the GCPS-Mobile network for the coming school year.

Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA)

COPPA applies to operators of commercial websites and online services and limits their ability to collect personal information from children under the age of 13. COPPA allows the school to act as the parent's agent and consent to the collection of a student's information on the parent's behalf within the educational context— where an operator collects personal information from students for the use and benefit of the school, and for no other commercial purpose. By signing the response form, parents grant consent for Gwinnett County Public Schools, and Gwinnett County Public Schools' employees, to act as the parent's agent in providing consent for the collection of student information within the educational context.

Supplemental Technology and Student Email

GCPS provides access to Google G Suite for Education and Microsoft Office 365 as supplemental resources to the district's adopted Learning Management System for local schools to use if they wish. GCPS will allow the use and issue student email (Google Gmail and Microsoft Outlook) accounts to students for use internal to GCPS only. Students can access the email from any device via the Student Portal. However, for security purposes, students will only be able to send and

receive emails to and from other Gwinnett County Public Schools users.

Partnership with Gwinnett County Public Library

Gwinnett County Public Schools provides the Gwinnett County Public Library with student information for the purpose of establishing a public library account for the student. This account provides access to resources and services provided by the Gwinnett County Public Library System, including, but not limited to, digital books and magazines, research databases, print materials, and homework help. The information provided is: Student first and last name, student ID number, address, date of birth, phone number, and parent/guardian email address. This information is shared solely for the purpose of establishing the library account which may be cancelled at any time by contacting any public library branch. By acknowledging receipt of this Handbook Information for Students and Families, you consent to the foregoing. As the parent/guardian of a student, you may elect to withhold your consent for creation of a public library account.

Student Conduct Behavior Code

Discipline Policy Statement

The Board's Theory of Action for Change to Improve Student Behavior and Outcomes (Policy JCIDI) includes the following tenets:

1. Each and every student shall experience schools that create a culture of belonging, where they are cared for, respected, and affirmed as an individual with innate dignity and value.
2. Students shall be *taught* expectations about how to conduct themselves at school, at school sponsored events, on GCPS buses, and all other times and locations when student behavior is within the application and scope of the code of conduct.
3. Adhering to disciplinary expectations is a developmental process, and effective discipline strategies should meet students varied behavioral and developmental needs with tiered responses and interventions as part of a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS).
4. Schools should view disciplinary incidents as teachable moments and design responses to capitalize on the opportunity to teach life-long lessons of appropriate behavior and self-control.
5. Behavioral interventions should be restorative, educational, and supportive, as well as implemented within a school-wide positive behavior interventions and supports (PBIS) framework.
6. Suspensions or expulsions should only be used as a consequence to the most severe infractions that disrupt the learning environment and/or threaten the safety and security of the school community.

Therefore, in alignment with this Theory of Action, school discipline should be administered in a way to support students in their regular academic program to the greatest extent practicable.

Gwinnett County Public Schools shall employ a continuum of behavior interventions, strategies, and techniques designed to enable students to examine their attitudes and behaviors in a supportive environment while working to repair harm and prevent recurrence of behavior that is inappropriate, disruptive, harmful, dangerous, or interferes with the rights of others.

Gwinnett County Public Schools is committed to building the bridge from empathy to excellence as stated in our Blueprint for the Future by creating an emotionally, socially, and physically safe and effective learning environment for each and every student, staff member, parent, stakeholder, and community partner. GCPS will work to ensure that all students and staff members are highly motivated, fully aware of their potential, and dedicated to pursuing empathy, equity and excellence in academic knowledge, skills, and behavior.

In addition to this Student Conduct Behavior Code ("Code"), GCPS has various policies that govern conduct in the District. Use the Quick Links to find a copy of the Student Conduct Behavior Code on the district website at www.gcpsk12.org. Families also may call the Office of the Executive Director for Administration and Policy at 678-301-6005.

Purpose of the Code

GCPS has adopted this Code to support the creation of a safe, effective, empathetic, restorative, trauma-informed, and equitable learning environment for each and every member of the school community where conflicts are resolved peacefully. The purpose of this Code is to clearly state our expectations for appropriate behavior for students. The Code also explains the behavioral responses for not meeting the expectations. This Code establishes a firm, fair, flexible, and equitable policy for responding to conduct that endangers the safety of the schools and/or disrupts the educational experience for other students. GCPS does not permit corporal punishment.

The Code also sets forth the progressive discipline responses for students who have committed violations of the Code. This Code is not meant to be a contract between GCPS and the students. Therefore, it should be viewed as a "living document" and may be amended at any time. It is a place for GCPS to explain certain policies applicable to students.

Scope of the Code

Everyone is entitled to a safe, secure, and orderly environment in which to learn and work. The rules and regulations in this Code are designed toward that end and are effective during the following times and places:

- a. On school grounds at any time;
- b. Off school grounds at a school bus stop, on a school bus, or other GCPS provided transportation vehicle;
- c. Off school grounds when the misconduct constitutes an act of physical violence against a teacher, school bus driver, or other school official or employee. (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.6)
- d. Off school grounds when the behavior of a student (1) could result in the student being criminally charged with a felony or which could result in a felony criminal charge if committed by an adult; and which (2) makes the student's continued presence at school a potential danger to person or property at school or which disrupts the educational process. (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.5(c)).

- e. Off school grounds at a school-related function. School-related functions include any activity sponsored by or associated with an individual GCPS school or the GCPS system. School-related functions include, but are not limited to, virtual meetings, virtual classes, athletic and extracurricular events, athletic and extracurricular practices, athletic and extracurricular meetings, athletic and extracurricular conferences, field trips, camps, foreign language trips, booster club meetings and events, parent-teacher organization meetings and events, and any activity designed to enhance the school curriculum.
- f. Off school grounds when the misconduct constitutes bullying by use of data or software that is accessed through Gwinnett County Public Schools computer(s), computer system(s), computer network(s), or electronic technology. (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.4)
- g. Off school grounds when the misconduct constitutes cyberbullying. (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.4); and
- h. Off school grounds and during school hours when a student leaves without permission (AWOL) of a school official.

The rules of this Code do not apply to:

- i. Student speech that occurs off campus if the speech is at a non-school-sponsored event and does not cause or is not likely to cause a material and substantial disruption to the school environment or a school activity.

Equal Opportunity Statement

GCPS complies with all federal, state, and local laws, and provides an equal opportunity for each and every student. GCPS prohibits discrimination in admission, grading, discipline, and any other activity based on race, creed, color, national origin, religion, ancestry, age, marital status, sexual orientation (known or perceived), gender identity expression (known or perceived), sex, handicap, nationality, or citizenship. All decisions of GCPS will be administered without regard to any of the categories listed above. Any student who believes that they have been discriminated against, or any parent or guardian who believes that their child has been discriminated against is invited and encouraged to contact their local school Title IX Coordinator or the GCPS Department of Employee Relations (Title IX) to file a complaint.

Statement of Student Misconduct

The rules in this Code are designed to notify students (grades K–12) as to the types of behaviors that are not acceptable; nevertheless, every specific variation of the prohibited conduct may not have been included. A specific rule need not be written for every conceivable variation of behavior that directly affects the orderly mission of the school.

References to the Official Code of Georgia Annotated

References to Title 16 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated (O.C.G.A.) included in the Student Conduct Behavior Code do not require that the elements of the specific criminal code section referenced be proved beyond a reasonable doubt before schools may punish misconduct. Further, these code references do not impose any additional intent requirements upon schools pursuing discipline against students for the violation of this Code.

When a school rule is violated that may also be a violation of the law, the schools may notify the School Resource Officer (SRO) who will review the incident for possible criminal charges or notification of the District Attorney.

Important Student Discipline Information

The following is general information regarding discipline:

1. A principal, or other personnel designated to perform the duties normally performed by the principal, may suspend a student for violation of school rules or for any other act of misconduct or insubordination for a period not exceeding ten (10) school days.

Oral notice and an opportunity to discuss the matter with the principal or an assistant principal must be given to the student as soon as is practicable, and written notice (disciplinary referral) stating the reason for suspension shall be given to parents or guardians within a reasonable time, not to exceed one school day.

2. Students under short-term suspension (1–10 days), long-term suspension (10 or more days), or expulsion are not allowed on any Gwinnett County school campus or to attend any school activity, function, or event. Students assigned to in-school suspension are not allowed to participate in extracurricular activities on the date of their ISS assignment.

3. All dangerous weapons, instruments, or controlled substances confiscated by school authorities are to be turned in to Safety and Security.

4. A student is considered to be in possession of an illegal and/or banned item(s) or substance(s) when such item(s) or substance(s) is found on the person of the student, in their possession, in their locker, in a student's vehicle on school property, or in any vehicle a student brought on school property, on property being used by the school, at any school function or activity, or any school event held away from the school.
5. Students are prohibited from engaging in gang/hate group or hazing related activities in school.
6. School administrators and/or their designated representatives possess the authority to conduct a reasonable search of students, including, but not limited to, their possessions, lockers, and vehicles when on school property, on property being used by the school, at any school function or activity, or at any school event held away from the school if it is established there is reasonable suspicion that the search will reveal a violation of the law, the Student Conduct Behavior Code, or local school rules.
7. A student may be considered a party to a violation of the Student Conduct Behavior Code and disciplined for the underlying offense where the student: (1) Directly violates the Student Conduct Behavior Code; (2) Intentionally causes some other person to commit a violation of the Student Conduct Behavior Code; (3) Intentionally aids or abets another in a violation of the Student Conduct Behavior Code; or (4) Intentionally advises, encourages, hires, counsels, or procures another to commit a violation of the Student Conduct Behavior Code. A student may be considered a party to a violation of the Student Conduct Behavior Code even where the underlying actors are not students subject to the Code.
8. Certain violations of the Student Conduct Behavior Code may also be violations of state law and juvenile authorities or other law enforcement agencies may address the student's misconduct in accordance with state laws, in addition to the school system's administrative procedures and regulations.
9. Students are to notify an administrator or staff member when suspected illegal items, dangerous items, or other items banned from school are found in the school building, on the school campus, or on the school bus. Students are advised not to pick up or handle illegal, dangerous, banned, or unidentified items.
10. Students who are under suspension or expulsion through spring semester will not be allowed to participate in any school-sponsored activities, including the prom, graduation exercises, or baccalaureate ceremonies.
11. Students should recognize their responsibility to know the contents of this student discipline handbook information and to ask the local school administration or staff for any clarification. All students, regardless of age, are subject to the rules and regulations of the Gwinnett County Public Schools. Each local school will review the contents of this handbook information with its students.
12. State law requires that certain criminal offenses committed by a student while on school property or at a school-sponsored activity, function, or event be reported to the principal, school superintendent, appropriate law enforcement authority, and the District Attorney. (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1184).
13. Georgia law makes it unlawful for any person to manufacture, distribute, disperse, or possess with the intent to distribute a controlled substance or marijuana in, on, or within 1,000 feet of any real property owned by or leased to any public or private elementary school, secondary school, or school board used for elementary or secondary education. Any person who violates or conspires to violate this code section shall be guilty of a felony. (O.C.G.A. § 16-13-32.4)
14. Students coming from DJJ (Department of Juvenile Justice) placement-or incarceration for longer than 30 school days will be remanded to transition through the GIVE Centers as a first step back toward their local school. The Office of Student Discipline shall determine the length of the transition.
15. During the regular school year, students who are on long-term suspension from their regular school and who are currently enrolled at the GIVE Centers are allowed to enroll in online courses, with approval of the GIVE Centers' administration. Students not enrolled at the GIVE Centers will not be allowed to enroll. GIVE students must pay for online classes taken during summer school.
16. After a disciplinary tribunal has been held, textbooks, materials, or equipment belonging to the local school must be returned to a school administrator at their local school.
17. The Unsafe School Choice Option provides students at schools classified as "persistently dangerous" with the option of transferring to another school. Major offenses, including, but not limited to, drug and weapon offenses, can lead to a school being named "persistently dangerous" or unsafe pursuant to State Board of Education Rule 160-4-8-.16.

Glossary of Discipline Terms

AWOL: Refers to a student's unauthorized absence and/or leave from class, school, activity, or event.

Behavioral Correction Plan: Refers to a set of behavioral intervention strategies devised for students who have been identified as chronic disciplinary problem students. (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-765)

Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP): A set of strategies to support students with inappropriate classroom behaviors.

Bullying: State law defines "bullying" as: 1) any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person, when accompanied by an apparent present ability to do so; 2) any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily injury or harm; or 3) any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, which a reasonable person would perceive as being intended to threaten, harass, or intimidate that: a) causes substantial physical harm or visible harm; b) substantially interferes with a student's education; c) is so severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating/threatening educational environment; or d) substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the school. Upon finding that a student in grades 6-12 has committed the offense of bullying for the third time in a school year, such student shall be assigned to an alternative school. (O.C.G.A. 20-2-751.4) Retaliation for reports of bullying will not be tolerated and will be subject to independent disciplinary action.

Bus Suspension: The student is suspended from the bus for a specified period of time by the local school administrator. The student is expected to attend school, but the parents are responsible for providing transportation to and from school.

Detention: Keeping a student before or after school for a reasonable time or during school hours, such as lunch time.

Disability: A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of an individual.

District: Gwinnett County Public Schools

Drug/Alcohol Program (CLFC Program): This drug/alcohol education program is for 1st time offenders of Level IV violations in Rule 7 of the Student Conduct Behavior Code. At least one parent must accompany the student at each of the four sessions (lasting two hours each). Not all Rule 7 violations will qualify for this program.

Due Process: A student is afforded oral or written notice of charges against them and is given an opportunity for a review, tribunal, or other procedural rights in accordance with state and federal laws.

Felony Drug Charge: It shall be unlawful for any person to manufacture, distribute, dispense, or possess with intent to distribute a controlled substance or marijuana in, on, or within 1,000 feet of any real property owned by or leased to any public or private elementary school, middle school, secondary school, or school board used for elementary, middle, or secondary education. (O.C.G.A. § 16-13-32.4)

IEP: An Individualized Education Program (IEP) supports a student with disabilities who requires specially designed instruction and related services.

In-School Suspension (ISS): A disciplinary measure that permits the student to attend school but prohibits them from attending their regular classes. Students assigned to ISS are not permitted to participate in extracurricular activities on the date of their ISS assignment.

Interim Alternative Program: Any educational setting that is designed to accommodate the delivery of a special education student's IEP during a period of suspension from school.

Long-Term Suspension: The removal of a student from school for between 4 and 10 days because the student has violated this Code.

Manifestation Determination: A review of a special education/504 student's program and disability to determine if misconduct is caused by, or has a direct and substantial relationship to, the disability, or whether the conduct was the direct result of the school's failure to implement the IEP.

Permanent Expulsion: A student is removed from all GCPS property, activities, and events for an indefinite period of time. This action may be taken only by the Board of Education. School work may not be made up or credit earned.

School Grounds: Any property owned or utilized by the District.

Self-Defense/Justification: The Gwinnett County Board of Education recognizes that students have a right to defend themselves or others by threatening or using force against another when and to the extent that the student reasonably believes that such threat or force is necessary to defend the student or a third person against another's imminent use of unlawful force. Despite the foregoing, students may be disciplined when the student's threat or use of force was not necessary, the level of force or the extent of the threat exceeded what was necessary, the other person's threat or use of force was not imminent, the student's actions initially provoked the altercation, the student was a participant in a mutual physical altercation, or the student was the aggressor. When a student claims their actions were justified, the student carries the burden of proof in establishing that the actions were justified.

Sexting: The sending or knowingly receiving of lewd or pornographic text messages.

Short-Term Suspension: The involuntary removal of a student from class attendance or school attendance for not more than 3 days or less. Suspended students shall make up those assignments that the teachers determine will have an impact on the student's final grade and mastery of the course content. Assignments that the teacher does not require to be made up will not count toward a student's

final grade. Students are responsible for making arrangements and completing makeup work within the timeline specified by the local school.

Student Disciplinary Tribunal: A tribunal in which a tribunal officer(s) or panel hears the evidence presented, determines if the student has violated any rules of the student behavior code, and, if so, issues appropriate consequences.

Student Self-Reporting: A self-report occurs when a student or their parent(s) or guardian(s) promptly and voluntarily discloses to school personnel that the student has violated Rule 6 or 7. The student and/or parent(s) admit the mistake and acknowledge that consequences will follow. There is no indication that the confession occurred because the student's violation was about to be discovered.

Student Support Team (SST): A school-based team usually consisting of a teacher, an administrator, a counselor, psychologist and/or social worker, and parents/guardians, that convenes to discuss issues (and make recommendations) related to a student.

Theft: Includes theft by taking, theft by receiving stolen property, and theft of lost or mislaid property.

Trespass: Entrance onto school grounds when prohibited.

Tribunal Officer: A system administrator, with no prior knowledge of the event, who conducts the proceedings for disciplinary tribunals and makes the determination of rule violations and appropriate consequences.

Waiver of Right to Attend Student Disciplinary Tribunal: Parents may sign a waiver if they cannot attend or do not elect to attend the tribunal. In the event a parent or student does not attend the tribunal, it will proceed as scheduled.

Weapon: Any of the following but not limited to any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, nunchuku, firearm, shotgun, rifle, scissors and any other tool, instrument or object used to or intended to be used to inflict serious bodily injury to another member of the school community. This definition includes, but is not limited to, the use or intended use of pepper spray, mace, or laser pointer to inflict serious bodily injury on another member of the school community.

Responses to Student Behavior

The Gwinnett County Board of Education is committed to equitably utilizing restorative practices and behavioral intervention strategies.

The decision to provide a behavioral response for a violation of a school rule shall be made by the administration of the local school using the established guidelines of this policy. The range of behavioral responses that can be assigned by a local school administrator may include:

<u>LEVEL</u> <u>I</u>	Examples of Classroom and Teacher-led Responses
	<p>Level I responses are classroom management tools and techniques that facilitate the teaching of appropriate behavior to allow students to self-govern their behavior, respect others, and contribute to a classroom environment that facilitates teaching and learning. Teachers are encouraged to employ the full spectrum of instructional and classroom management strategies. When appropriate, teachers may engage the student’s support system for assistance in successfully responding to and modifying the student’s inappropriate or disruptive behavior. Level I disciplinary responses should be used in a progressive manner.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check-in with School Counselor or other support staff • Classroom-based responses (e.g., verbal correction, written reflection/apology, reminders/redirection, role play, daily progress sheet) • Detention • Parent/guardian outreach (contact parent/guardian via telephone, email, or text) • Peer mediation • Mentoring Program • Restorative practices or other social emotional learning strategies
<u>LEVEL</u> <u>II</u>	Examples of Teacher-led/referred and Administrative Supported Responses
	<p>Level II responses are designed to teach appropriate behavior to allow students to self-govern their behavior, respect others, and contribute to a classroom environment that facilitates teaching and learning. In many cases, Level II responses engage the administrative and instructional support system and address factors within and outside the school environment that contribute to the student’s inappropriate or disruptive behavior. Level II responses are intended to address behavior by educating the student about the severity of the behavior and the harms that may result therefrom. Level II responses should be used in a progressive manner. A teacher referral for administrative support is required for any serious incident or other incident that may impact or implicate the health or well-being of students.</p> <p>TEACHER-LED <i>May be implemented at classroom level</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behavioral contract • Check-in with School Counselor or other support staff • Classroom-based responses (e.g., verbal correction, written reflection/apology, reminders/redirection, role play, daily progress sheet) • Detention • Mentoring Program • Parent/guardian outreach (contact parent/guardian via telephone, email, or text) • Parent/guardian and student conference (with teacher) • Restorative practices or other social emotional learning strategies • Temporary removal from class <p>TEACHER-REFERRED <i>Implemented with administrative support</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community service • Functional Behavioral Assessment/Behavioral Intervention Plan • Loss of privileges/removal from extracurricular activities • Peer mediation • Referral to appropriate substance-abuse counseling services • Referral to community-based organization • Referral to health/mental health services • Referral to student support team • Restorative practices or other social emotional learning strategies • Restitution

<u>LEVEL</u> <u>III</u>	Examples of Administrative Supported and/or Removal Responses
	<p>Level III responses employ the administrative and instructional support system to develop interventions that promote learning and address factors within and outside the school environment that contribute to the student’s inappropriate or disruptive behavior. Level III responses are intended to address behavior by educating the student about the severity of the behavior and the harms that may result therefrom. Level III responses may involve in-school suspensions, in-school interventions, and in the most serious cases Out of School Suspension – Short Term. Level III responses should be used in a progressive manner with administrative support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any Level I or Level II Teacher-Led response paired with any of the following: • Community service • Functional Behavioral Assessment/Behavioral Intervention Plan • In-school suspension • Loss of privileges/removal from extracurricular activities • Out of School Suspension - Short Term (1-3 days) • Parent/guardian and student conference (with administrator) • Peer mediation • Referral to appropriate substance-abuse counseling services • Referral to community-based organization • Referral to health/mental health services • Referral to student support team • Restorative practices or other social emotional learning strategies • Restitution
<u>LEVEL</u> <u>IV</u>	Examples of Administrative Supported, and Short-term Out-of-school Exclusionary Responses
	<p>Level IV responses address serious behavior with a focus on allowing the student to remain in school. As a last resort, when the nature of the behavior is severe or implicates future harm, a student may be subject to Out of School Suspension - Long Term. Level IV responses are intended to protect the school community by addressing destructive, dangerous, and disruptive behaviors in a progressive manner, with administrative support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functional Behavioral Assessment/Behavioral Intervention Plan • In-school suspension • Loss of privileges/removal from extracurricular activities • Mentoring Program • Out of School Suspension - Short Term (1–3 days) • Out of School Suspension - Long Term (4–6 days) • Parent/guardian and student conference (with administrator) • Restitution • Restorative practices or other social emotional learning strategies
<u>LEVEL</u> <u>V</u>	Examples of Long-term Administrative Supported, Out-of-school Exclusionary, and Referral Responses
	<p>Level V responses result in the student’s suspension or expulsion from school for an extended period of time and is reserved for severe behavior, behavior establishing that the student’s continued presence in school poses a threat of serious physical, mental or emotional harm to other students, staff, or members of the school community, or chronic and/or extreme disruption of the educational process. Level V responses may involve the placement of the student in an alternative educational environment that provides additional structure, services, and supports. Although Level V responses include suspension and expulsion, these responses promote the safety of the school community by addressing destructive and dangerous behavior.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Service • Loss of privileges/removal from extracurricular activities • Out of School Suspension - Long Term (4-10 days) • Out of School Suspension - Extended Term (11–180 days) • Permanent Expulsion (indefinite suspension) • Recommend for further action • Referral to alternative education • Referral to student support team • Restitution • Restorative practices or other social emotional learning strategies

Note: Bus suspensions (when the student is still allowed to attend school) are defined by the following levels:

- Level III: Bus suspension 1 to 5 days.
- Level IV: Bus suspension 6 or more days.
- Level V: Disciplinary Tribunal.

In order for bus suspensions to count toward the 7- Step Plan toward a Behavioral Correction Plan and Rule 12 Notification, the bus suspension must be combined with in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or Opportunity Room (four hours or more).

Student Infractions and Behavioral Responses

SRO Notification: Rules marked with an “X” require the local school administrator to notify the SRO. If a rule is marked with “XX,” the SRO will notify the District Attorney’s office.

Rule 1: Disruption and Interference with School

No student shall cause or attempt to cause (either directly or indirectly) a disruption or interference with school by any means including, but not limited to, any of the following behaviors:

Rule 1	Description of Violation	Level	Notify SRO
1A	Pull fire alarm;	IV or V	
1B	Occupy or block any area on campus, prevent or attempt to prevent students from attending a class, school activity or event;	I, II, or III	
1C	Except under the direct instruction of the principal, block or attempt to block normal pedestrian or vehicular traffic on a school campus or adjacent grounds;	I, II or III	
1DA	School disruption. A student may not in any manner, by use of violence, noise, force, coercion, threat, intimidation, fear, passive resistance, insult, or other conduct, intentionally or unintentionally cause the disruption of any lawful mission, process, or function of the school;	III, IV or V	
1DB	Class disruption. Student behavior that is repetitive or substantially interferes with the teacher’s ability to teach and/or students’ ability to learn;	I, II or III	
1DC	Disorderly conduct. Any act that substantially disrupts the orderly learning environment, or poses a threat to the health, safety and/or welfare of one or more students, staff members and/or others;	III, IV or V	
1E	Refuse to identify himself/herself upon request of any teacher, principal, superintendent, school bus driver, or other school personnel;	I or II	
1F	Urge, encourage, or counsel other students to violate any rules of the Student Conduct Behavior Code;	I, II or III	
1H	Be on campus or enter the premises of a school without proper authorization of the superintendent, principal, or other school personnel;	I, II or III	
1I	Dress inappropriately (including drug, alcohol, or tobacco advertisements, graffiti, tattoos, etc.) (A list of each prohibited item is available at each local school);	I or II	
1J	Willfully fails to leave the premises after being told to do so;	III or IV	
1Z	Other (list)	I, II or III	

Mandatory Reporting of Repeated and Substantial Class Interference

Teachers in Gwinnett County Public Schools are required to report any student’s violation of the Student Conduct Behavior Code which repeatedly or substantially interferes with the teacher’s ability to communicate effectively with the students in their class or with the ability of the students in their class to learn. Teachers shall report any such incidents to the principal or the principal’s designee within one school day of the most recent occurrence of such behavior. Such report shall not exceed one page and shall describe the behavior. The principal or the principal’s designee shall, within one day of receiving such report, send to the student’s

parents or guardians a copy of the report, and information regarding how the principal or the principal’s designee may be contacted. See O.C.G.A. § 20-2-737.

Student Removal from Class

A teacher may remove or refer to the principal or designee a student from class if the student has exhibited behavior that repeatedly or substantially interferes with the teacher’s ability to teach students in their class or the ability of other students to learn in the class. See O.C.G.A. § 20-2-738(a- h).

Where a teacher has previously filed a report of a student’s repeated or substantial interference with the classroom or where the behavior of a student poses an immediate threat to the safety of student’s classmates or the teacher, the teacher shall have the authority to remove the student from the classroom pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-738.

Each school will have a placement review committee. The placement review committee shall be responsible for determining the appropriate placement of a student when the principal recommends that the student be returned to the classroom and the teacher withholds consent for the student’s return. The placement review committee shall consist of three members, including two teachers and one alternate teacher chosen by the faculty and a member of the professional staff chosen by the principal. See O.C.G.A. § 20-2-738(d).

Rule 2: Damage, Destruction, or Misuse of School Property or Equipment

A student shall not cause or attempt to cause damage to school property or alter/misuse school technology or any other equipment, including accessing unauthorized areas on the computer. A student shall not steal or attempt to steal school property. A student shall not engage in unauthorized access/alteration of school/teacher/student records maintained by GCPS. A student shall not possess, sell, use, buy or transmit stolen school property or attempt to possess, sell, use, buy or transmit stolen school property.

The prohibited behaviors include, but are not limited to, the following:

Rule 2	Description of Violation	Level	Notify SRO
2A	Damage or vandalize school property;	III, IV or V	
2BA	Steal school property (valued at less than \$300);	I, II or III	
2CA	Engage in larceny/theft of school property (valued at \$300 or more);	III, IV or V	
2DA	Possess, use, sell, buy, or transmit stolen school property (valued at less than \$300);	I, II or III	
2DC	Possess, use, sell, buy, or transmit stolen school property (valued at \$300 or more);	III, IV or V	
2I	Alter/misuse technology or any other equipment, hardware or software or school web site/page;	I, II or III	
2J	Engage in computer trespass (accessing unauthorized areas on the computer/software);	I, II or III	
2JB	Unauthorized accessing/altering school/teacher/student records maintained by GCPS;	IV or V	
2K	Commit First Degree Arson- Knowingly damage or knowingly cause, aid, advise, encourage, hire, counsel, or procure another to damage, by means of fire or explosive, any building, vehicle, railroad car, watercraft, aircraft, or other structure: (a) that is insured without the consent of the insurer and the insured; or (b) under such circumstances that it is reasonably foreseeable that human life might be endangered; [Rule may only be charged with consultation of Office of Student Discipline]	V	X
2L	Undertake breaking and entering and/or burglary;	IV or V	X
2M	Commit arson (by means of fire or explosive a person knowingly damages or knowingly causes, aids, abets, advises, encourages, hires, counsels, or procures another to do damage);	IV or V	X
2N	Rob or attempt to rob by using violence, threat, or intimidation;	IV or V	X
2O	Commit armed robbery (with intent to commit theft, a person takes property of another by use of any offensive weapon or replica, article, or device having the appearance of such weapon); [Rule may only be charged with consultation of Office of Student Discipline]	V	XX

2P	Compromising test security of an international, national, state, or county standardized test;	IV or V	
2Z	Other; (list)	I, II or III	

Rule 3: Damage, Destruction, or Misuse of Private Property

A student shall not cause or attempt to cause damage to private property or steal or attempt to steal private property. A student shall not possess, sell, use, buy or transmit stolen private property on school grounds. Further, off school-grounds, a student shall not cause or attempt to cause damage to private property belonging to a school employee where such theft or damage is on account of that school employee's performance of their official duties. A student shall not sell or buy or attempt to sell or buy personal property on school grounds.

The prohibited behaviors include, but are not limited to, the following:

Rule 3	Description of Violation	Level	Notify SRO
3AA	Damage or vandalize private property of another person (valued at less than \$300);	I, II or III	
3AC	Damage or vandalize private property (valued at \$300 or more);	III, IV or V	
3BA	Steal private property of another person (valued at less than \$300);	I, II or III	
3CA	Possess, use, sell, buy, or transmit stolen property (valued at less than \$300);	I, II or III	
3CD	Possess, use, sell, buy, or transmit stolen property (valued at \$300 or more);	III, IV or V	
3H	Commit First Degree Arson-Knowingly damage or knowingly cause, aid, advise, encourage, hire, counsel, or procure another to damage, by means of fire or explosive, any building, vehicle, railroad car, watercraft, aircraft, or other structure: (a) that is insured without the consent of the insurer and the insured; or (b) under such circumstances that it is reasonably foreseeable that human life might be endangered; [Rule may only be charged with consultation of Office of Student Discipline]	V	X
3J	Buy or sell personal property;	I, II or III	
3LA	Engage in larceny/theft of private property (valued at \$300 or more);	III, IV or V	
3M	Steal or attempt to steal a motor vehicle;	IV or V	X
3N	Rob or attempt to rob using violence, threat, or intimidation;	IV or V	X
3O	Commit armed robbery (with intent to commit theft, a person takes property of another by use of an offensive weapon or any replica, article, or device having the appearance of such weapon); [Rule may only be charged with consultation of Office of Student Discipline]	V	XX
3P	Commit arson (by means of fire or explosive a person knowingly damages or knowingly causes, aids, abets, advises, encourages, hires, counsels, or procures another to do damage);	IV or V	X
3Z	Other: (list)	I, II or III	

Rule 4: Abuse, Threats, Intimidation, Assault, or Battery on a School Employee

SECTION A:

A student shall not make oral or written communication, create a document, or make a symbolic gesture or contact of a threatening, undermining, or provoking nature to or about a school employee or in the presence of a school employee. This includes, but is not limited to, disrespectful conduct, insult, use of profanity, ethnic, racial, sexual, disability, or religious slur, or harassment and includes the development of a “hit list,” “people to kill,” “people to shoot,” or a statement about bringing a weapon to school and injuring people.

The prohibited behaviors below include, but are not limited to, the following:

Rule 4	Description of Violation	Level	Notify SRO
4AA	Oral threat/verbal assault (oral speech that creates, or is intended to create, a fear of physical harm)	III, IV or V	
4AB	Written threat;	III, IV or V	
4AC	Rude and/or disrespectful conduct including but not limited to symbolic gestures and insults;	III, IV or V	
4AE	Cyberbullying. Bullying (as defined by state law and in Rule 5) through any electronic communication, whether or not such electronic act originated on school property, off school property, with school equipment, or with non-school equipment, that: (1) is directed specifically at school personnel; (2) is maliciously intended for the purpose of threatening the safety of those specified or substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school; and (3) creates a reasonable fear of harm to the school personnel(s)' person or property or has a high likelihood of succeeding in that purpose.	III, IV or V	
4AF	Use of profanity;	I, II or III	
4AG	Ethnic, racial, sexual, religious, or disability slur;	I, II or III	
4AL	Harassment - Repeated words (verbal or written), conduct, or action that annoys, alarms, or causes distress and serves no legitimate purpose;	IV or V	
4AM	Any expression (oral, written, or gesture) which has the effect of undermining the authority of the school employee or distracting staff and/or students from the learning environment, including writings of a threatening or provoking nature;	IV or V	
4AN	Terroristic threats (threatening to commit any crime of violence, release any hazardous substance, or to burn or damage property with the purpose of terrorizing another, with the purpose of causing the evacuation of a building, with the purpose of causing serious public inconvenience, or in reckless disregard of the risk of causing terror, the evacuation of a building, or serious public inconvenience);	V	X
4AO	Posturing to inflict physical harm. Any action or gesture directed toward a school employee that places the school employee in reasonable fear of immediate physical harm;	IV or V	
4AZ	Other: (list)	I, II or III	

SECTION B:

A student shall not cause or attempt to cause physical injury or behave in such a way that could reasonably cause physical injury or make physical contact of a threatening or provoking nature to a school employee.

The prohibited behaviors include, but are not limited to, the following:

Rule 4	Description of Violation	Level	Notify SRO
4BB	Behavior that unintentionally caused physical injury to employee;	II or III	
4BC	Intentional physical contact of an insulting or provoking nature to employee;	V	X
4BD	Aggravated battery (maliciously causing bodily harm to another by depriving them of a member of their body, or by rendering a member of their body useless, or by seriously disfiguring their body or a member thereof); [Rule may only be charged with consultation of Office of Student Discipline]	V	XX
4BE	Homicide/murder; [Rule may only be charged w/consultation of Office of Student Discipline]	V	XX
4BF	Kidnapping (seizure, transportation, and/or detention of a person against their will); [Rule may only be charged with consultation of Office of Student Discipline]	V	XX
4BG	Voluntary manslaughter; [Rule may only be charged with consultation of Office of Student Discipline]	V	XX
4BH	Enter without permission the private property of a school employee and/or deface/damage/vandalize such property;	III, IV or V	
4BI	Intentional physical contact that caused physical harm to an employee;	V	XX
4BK	Violence against a teacher or teachers;	IV or V	X
4BZ	Other: (list)	I, II or III	

Rules 4BA-4BZ also apply off school grounds when the misconduct by the alleged perpetrator is because of the school employee’s performance of their official duties.

Intentional Physical Contact with a Teacher, Bus Driver, or Other School Employee

Any student who intentionally makes physical contact of a threatening or provoking nature with a teacher, bus driver, school official, or other school employee shall be suspended and brought to a disciplinary tribunal.

The minimum penalty for a student found in violation of Rule 4BC shall be suspension from public school until the end of the school year. Any tribunal finding a student in violation of Rule 4BC may impose a more severe penalty in its discretion. This minimum penalty shall not be applied in conflict with federal law.

Any student found in violation of Rule 4BI shall be expelled from the public school system for the remainder of their eligibility to attend public school. The following exceptions apply: (1) The Board of Education, in its discretion may allow a student found in violation of Rule 4BI to attend the alternative school, (2) The Board of Education, in its discretion and upon the recommendation of the disciplinary tribunal, may allow a student in grades 6-8 to return to the public school system for grades 9-12, (3) The Board of Education, in its discretion, may allow a student in grades K-5 to return to the public school system, (4) Permanent expulsion will not be imposed where this penalty would infringe any right created under federal law, and (5) Permanent expulsion will not be imposed where the student acts in defense as provided in O.C.G.A. § 16-3-21. See O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.6; § 20-2-751.4.

Rule 5: Abuse, Threats, Intimidation, Assault, or Battery by a Student on another Student or to Any Other Person Not Employed by the School

SECTION A:

A student shall not make oral or written communication, create a document, or make a symbolic gesture or contact of a threatening, distracting, or provoking nature to or about a person/student or in the presence of a person/student. This includes but is not limited to bullying, disrespectful conduct, insult, use of profanity, ethnic, racial, sexual, disability, or religious slur, or harassment and includes the development of a "hit list," "people to kill," "people to shoot," or a statement about bringing a weapon to school and injuring people.

The prohibited behaviors below include, but are not limited to, the following:

Rule 5	Description of Violation	Level	Notify SRO
5AA	Oral threat/verbal assault (oral speech that creates, or is intended to create, a fear of physical harm)	I, II or III	
5AB	Written threat;	I, II or III	
5AC	Rude and/or disrespectful conduct including but not limited to symbolic gestures or insults;	I, II or III	
5AD	Bullying (See note below on bullying and state law.);	I, II or III*	
5AE	Cyberbullying. Bullying (as defined below) through any electronic communication, whether or not such electronic act originated on school property, off school property, with school equipment, or with non-school equipment, that: (1) is directed specifically at student(s); (2) is maliciously intended for the purpose of threatening the safety of those specified or substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school; and (3) creates a reasonable fear of harm to the student(s)' person or property or has a high likelihood of succeeding in that purpose;	III, IV or V*	
5AF	Use of profanity;	I, II or III	
5AG	Ethnic, racial, sexual, religious or disability slur;	I, II or III	
5AL	Harassment - Repeated words (verbal or written), conduct, or action that annoys, alarms, or causes distress and serves no legitimate purpose;	I, II or III	
5AO	Posturing to fight;	I, II or III	
5AR	Terroristic threats (threatening to commit any crime of violence, release any hazardous substance, or to burn or damage property with the purpose of terrorizing another, with the purpose of causing the evacuation of a building, with the purpose of causing serious public inconvenience, or in reckless disregard of the risk of causing terror, the evacuation of a building, or serious public inconvenience)	IV or V	X
5AZ	Other (list) _____	I, II or III	

* State law defines "bullying" as: 1) any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person, when accompanied by an apparent present ability to do so; 2) any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily injury or harm; or 3) any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, which a reasonable person would perceive as being intended to threaten, harass, or intimidate that: a) causes substantial physical harm or visible harm; b) substantially interferes with a student's education; c) is so severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating/threatening educational environment; or d) substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the school. Upon finding that a student in grades 6-12 has committed the offense of bullying for the third time in a school year, such student shall be assigned to an alternative school. (O.C.G.A. 20-2-751.4) Retaliation for reports of bullying will not be tolerated and will be subject to independent disciplinary action.

SECTION B:

A student shall not cause or attempt to cause physical injury or behave in such a way as could reasonably cause bodily injury to any student/person. A student shall not engage in any behavior that threatens the safety or well-being of another person or has the likelihood of provoking a fight.

The prohibited behaviors below include, but are not limited to, the following:

Rule 5	Description of Violation	Level	Notify SRO
5BA	Pushing and shoving;	I, II or III	
5BB	Fighting;	III, IV or V	
5BC	Battery (when one individual physically attacks or beats up on another individual.);	IV or V	
5BE	Behavior that caused physical injury to another student;	III, IV or V	
5BF	Physical contact of a threatening or provoking nature to another student;	I, II, III	
5BG	Aggravated battery (maliciously causing bodily harm to another by depriving them of a member of their body, or by rendering a member of their body useless, or by seriously disfiguring their body or a member thereof); [Rule may only be charged with consultation of Office of Student Discipline]	V	XX
5BH	Homicide/murder; [Rule may only be charged with consultation of Office of Student Discipline]	V	XX
5BI	Kidnapping (seizure, transportation, and/or detention of a person against h their will); [Rule may only be charged with consultation of Office of Student Discipline]	V	XX
5BK	Hazing (as a condition or precondition of gaining acceptance, membership, office, or other status in any school or school organization, subjecting a student to an activity which endangers or is likely to endanger the physical health or emotional wellbeing of a student, regardless of a student's willingness to participate in such activity)	III, IV or V	
5BM	Voluntary manslaughter (O.C.G.A. § 16-5-2); [Rule may only be charged with consultation of Office of Student Discipline]	V	XX
5BZ	Other: (list) _____	I, II or III	

Rule 6: Weapons, Dangerous Instruments, and Explosive or Implosive Devices

A student shall not solicit to buy or sell, or buy or sell or possess, handle, transmit, threaten with or discharge/use, any object that can reasonably be considered or converted to and/or used as a weapon such as, but not limited to knives; guns; pellet guns; brass knuckles; fireworks; lighters, tear gas, mace, explosives, pepper spray; bats (other than for athletics); clubs, sticks or other instruments of a bludgeoning type; Chinese stars; razors; projectiles and the like.

The prohibited weapons include, but are not limited to, the following:

Rule 6	Description of Violation	Level	Notify SRO
6A	Knife less than 2 inches;	IV or V	XX
6B	Knife 2 inches or more;	V	XX
6C	Handgun;	V	XX
6D	Rifle or shotgun;	V	XX
6EA	BB/pellet/airsoft/paintball gun;	V	XX
6EB	BB/pellet/airsoft/paintball rifle;	V	XX
6F	Toy or any look-a-like gun;	II or III	XX
6G	Destructive device (bomb, grenade, mine, rocket, missile pipe bomb or similar device);	V	XX
6H	Brass knuckles or metal knucks;	IV or V	XX
6I	Fireworks;	III, IV or V	
6IA	Accelerants (any liquid/aerosol, etc. which may be used to perpetuate or start a fire or other hazardous condition);	III, IV or V	X
6K	Tear gas, mace, or pepper spray;	III, IV or V	XX
6L	Bats, clubs, sticks or other instruments of a bludgeoning type (other than for athletics);	III, IV or V	XX
6N	Razors or razor blades;	IV or V	XX
6O	Spring stick/expandable baton;	IV or V	XX
6P	Blackjack;	IV or V	XX
6Q	Nun chahka, nun chuck, nunchaku, shuriken, fighting chain (any flailing instrument consisting of two or more rigid parts connected in such a manner as to allow them to swing freely);	IV or V	XX
6R	Throwing star, oriental dart, or any disc having two or more points or pointed blades which is designed to be thrown or propelled;	IV or V	XX
6S	Tazer/stun gun;	IV or V	X
6Z	Other: (list) _____	I, II or III	X

Possession of a Firearm, Dangerous Weapon or Hazardous Object on School Property or at School Functions

Students are prohibited from possessing firearms (including a handgun, rifle, shotgun, or other weapon which will or can be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or electrical charge), dangerous weapons (as defined by O.C.G.A. § 16-11-121) or hazardous objects (as defined by O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751), while on school property or at school functions. A student shall be excluded from school for one calendar year for possessing on school grounds or at a school function a firearm or a dangerous weapon (as defined by O.C.G.A. § 16-11-121), provided that all tribunal officers, tribunals, panels, administrators, the superintendent, and the Gwinnett County Board of Education shall have the discretion to impose a lesser or more harsh, appropriate consequence on a case by case basis for any such offense. Any student possessing a hazardous object (as defined by the O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751), while on school

property or at school functions shall receive disciplinary consequences in the discretion of the tribunal officer, tribunal, panel, administrator, the superintendent, or the Gwinnett County Board of Education and consistent with the Gwinnett County Board of Education's policies and procedures. See O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751; § 20-2-751.1.

Rule 7: Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco, and Vaping

SECTION A:

A student shall not be involved in any substance, drug, alcohol, tobacco, or vaping transaction, including, without limitation to buy, possess, sell, use, transmit, solicit; attempt to buy, possess, sell, use, or transmit; or be under the influence of any narcotic drug, depressant, or stimulant drug including without limitation caffeine pills, hallucinogenic drug, anabolic steroid, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, inhalant, alcoholic beverage, vaping product, or intoxicant of any kind. A student shall not possess, sell, buy, or transmit, or attempt to sell, buy, or transmit any substance under the pretense that it is, in fact, a prohibited substance as described in this rule. The misuse or unauthorized possession of a prescription drug or nonprescription drug shall be considered a violation of this rule; however, this rule shall not apply to proper possession and/or use of a drug as authorized by a medical prescription from a registered physician.

The prohibited substances and behaviors include, but are not limited to, the following:

Rule 7	Description of Violation	Level	Notify SRO
7AA	Alcoholic beverage or intoxicant of any kind;	IV or V	X
7AB	Amphetamine/methamphetamine drug [schedule II];	V	XX
7AC	Hallucinogenic drug [schedule I] [ex. peyote, PCP, etc.];	V	XX
7AD	Anabolic steroid [schedule III];	V	XX
7AE	Controlled drug or controlled substance [ex. Ritalin, Adderall, Phenobarbital, Percocet, OxyContin, Xanax, etc.];	IV or V	XX
7AF	Cannabis (including but without limitation to marijuana, hemp, THC, etc.);	IV or V	XX
7AG	LSD [schedule I];	V	XX
7AH	Cocaine [schedule II];	V	XX
7AJ	Heroin [schedule I];	V	XX
7AK	Inhalants* (any volatile solvents, aerosols, anesthetics, or volatile nitrites) [ex. glue, paint thinner, hair spray, Pam, ether, etc.];	IV or V	XX
7AL	Over-the-counter (OTC) drugs [ex. NoDoz, Vivarin, asthma medicines, energy/diet pills, aspirins, herb pills, etc.];	IV or V	XX
7AN	Look alike substance (under the pretense);	IV or V	XX
7AO	Cannabis (selling— including possession of cannabis that is packaged for distribution or possession of one ounce or more);	V	XX
7AP	Offering, requesting and/or receiving of a substance;	III, IV or V	XX
7AQ	Furnishing/providing/selling of a substance;	IV or V	XX
7AR	Non-controlled Prescription Drugs [ex. Prozac, Seroquel, Amoxicillin, etc.];	III, IV or V	XX
7AZ	Other: (list) _____	I, II or III	XX

* **SELF-ADMINISTRATION** of asthma medication and prescription auto-injectable epinephrine is permitted with written parent/guardian approval and required documentation to the principal or his or her designee. See administration for completion of proper county form/procedures.

SECTION B:

A student shall not possess, sell, use, transmit, buy, or solicit any drug-related paraphernalia, any tobacco-related paraphernalia, or any vaping-related paraphernalia, which includes, but is not limited to, pipes, water pipes, clips, rolling papers, electronic smoking devices, or any other items related to drug use, tobacco use, vaping, or depicting drugs, drug use, tobacco use, vaping or tobacco use except where such items are related to approved curriculum.

The prohibited paraphernalia include, but are not limited to, the following:

Rule 7	Description of Violation	Level	Notify SRO
7BA	Pipes, water pipes, clips, rolling papers, or other objects used for drug use;	I, II or III	XX
7BB	Photographs, drawings or depictions of drugs, drug use, or objects used for drug use;	I or II	
7BC	Tobacco paraphernalia (ex. matches, lighters, rolling papers and the like);	I, II or III	
7BD	Photographs, drawings or depictions of tobacco, vaping, tobacco use, or objects used for tobacco use or vaping;	I or II	
7BE	Electronic Smoking or Vaping Device	III, IV or V	
7BZ	Other: (list) _____	I, II or III	

SECTION C:

A student shall not possess, sell, use, transmit, buy, or solicit tobacco or nicotine products.

The prohibited products include, but are not limited to, the following:

Rule 7	Description of Violation	Level	Notify SRO
7CA	Tobacco products (ex. cigarettes, electronic tobacco, or nicotine cartridges (any type), chewing tobacco, dip, snuff, cigars, liquid nicotine— regardless of bio- logical source, electronic cigarette vapors— with or without nicotine, etc.);	I, II or III	
7CZ	Other: (list) _____	I or II	

Rule 8: Disregard of Directions or Commands

A student shall not fail to comply with reasonable directions or commands of teachers, student teachers, substitute teachers, teacher aides, administrators, school bus drivers, or other authorized school personnel.

The prohibited behaviors include, but are not limited to, the following:

Rule 8	Description of Violation	Level	Notify SRO
8A	Failure to follow directions or commands of staff;	I, II or III	
8B	Failure to follow written directions, local school rules or regulations;	I, II or III	
8C	Failure to serve an administrative consequence (ex. Administrative Detention, Saturday School);	I, II or III	
8Z	Other: (list) _____	I or II	

Rule 9: Sexual Misconduct/Indecency

A student shall not engage in any act of sexual harassment of a physical nature or verbal nature. A student shall not perform any act of indecent exposure, lewd exposure, gesture, or lewd caress or indecent fondling/touching of the student’s own body or the body of another person, or any act of sexual intercourse. A student shall not use any inappropriate gestures that mimic or imply sexual acts or engage in any acts of “streaking” or “mooning” as those terms are commonly understood. Such acts will not be regarded lightly or considered pranks.

A student shall not possess, view, copy, sell, buy or transmit printed or non-printed pornographic materials including any non-curricular sexually explicit printed or non-printed materials; or a student shall not possess, view, copy, sell, buy or transmit printed or non-printed pornographic materials including but not limited to non-curricular materials depicting the human male or female genitals or buttocks with less than a fully opaque covering or any portion of the female breast with less than a fully opaque covering.

The prohibited behaviors include, but are not limited to, the following:

Rule 9	Description of Violation	Level	Notify SRO
9A	Sexual harassment. Deliberate and unsolicited physical actions, gestures, or verbal or written comments of a sexual nature that are repeated or a single incident of a sufficiently serious nature to create a hostile environment;	IV or V	
9B	Lewd (sexual) exposure (any act of) (This includes “streaking” and “mooning.”);	IV or V	XX
9C	Obscene and/or indecent gestures or gestures that mimic or imply sexual intercourse;	I, II or III	
9D	Lewd caress or indecent fondling or touching of the student’s own body;	IV or V	XX
9E	Lewd caress or indecent fondling or touching of the body of another person;	IV or V	XX
9F	Sexual intercourse;	IV or V	XX
9G	Oral sex or any act of sodomy;	IV or V	XX
9H	Aggravated sexual battery (intentionally penetrating with a foreign object the sexual organ or anus of another person without the consent of that person); [Rule may only be charged with consultation of Office of Student Discipline]	V	XX
9I	Pornographic materials. Possession or transmission by any means of descriptions, images, recordings, or other materials involving the display of genitals, pubic area, buttocks, or breasts;	II or III	X
9IB	Sexually Exploitative/Sexually Explicit materials. Possession or transmission by any means of descriptions, images, recordings, or other materials involving (a) sexual acts of any type, (b) exposure of the genitals, pubic area, breasts, or buttocks of a minor, or (c) other graphic sexual content;	IV or V	X
9IC	Recording images of intimate areas. Recording, possession, and/or transmission of images of students or employees that are of a sexual nature and that were taken without the consent of the student or employee;	IV, V	XX
9J	Kissing or any act of intimacy;	I, II or III	
9K	Aggravated child molestation. (An offense of child molestation which physically injures the child or involves an act of sodomy); [Rule may only be charged with consultation of Office of Student Discipline]	V	XX
9L	Aggravated sodomy (performing or submitting to any sexual act involving the sex organs of one person and the mouth or anus of another with force and against the will of the other person or when the student commits sodomy with a person who is less than ten years of age); [Rule may only be charged with consultation of Office of Student Discipline]	V	XX
9M	Rape (a person commits the offense of rape when he has carnal knowledge of a female forcibly and against her will, or a female who is less than 10 years of age. Carnal knowledge in rape occurs when there is any penetration of the female sex organ by the male sex organ); [Rule may only be charged with consultation of Office of Student Discipline]	V	XX
9N	Sexual battery (intentional physical contact with the intimate parts of the body of another person without the consent of that person);	IV or V	XX
9O	Allowing another student/person to commit a lewd or indecent act to the body of oneself;	IV or V	X
9Z	Other: (list) _____	I, II or III	X

NOTE: Sexting (sending and receiving of lewd or pornographic text messages) will be handled under rules 9I, 9IB, and 9IC and may result in a range of consequences from suspension to referral to a disciplinary tribunal.

Rule 10: Unexcused Absences

A student shall not be absent from school or from any class or other required school function during required school hours except for illness or other providential cause, except with written permission of the teacher, principal, or other duly authorized school official. A student may not leave school grounds prior to the end of the school day, after their initial arrival on campus, without the permission of a duly authorized school official.

The prohibited behaviors include, but are not limited to, the following:

Rule 10	Description of Violation	Level	Notify SRO
10A	Tardy to class;	I or II	
10B	Tardy to school;	I or II	
10C	AWOL from class (absent without official leave);	I or II	
10D	AWOL from school;	I or II	
10E	Unexcused absence (failure to comply with compulsory school attendance law);	I or II	
10Z	Other: (list) _____	I or II	

Rule 11: Other Conduct which is Subversive to Good Order

A student shall not perform any other act which is subversive to good order and discipline in the schools. This includes but is not limited to violation of local school rules; violation of state and federal law; involvement in criminal gang-related behavior and/or criminal gang conduct as defined and prohibited by O.C.G.A. § 16-15-3 and § 16-15-4; providing false information to school personnel; unauthorized possession or inappropriate use of laser pointers, and electronic communications devices (including tape recorders, CD Players, MP3 players, video games, radios and televisions); loitering or trespassing, providing false information to or about school personnel, providing false information to or about school personnel, or community misconduct that would be so serious as to pose a threat to the school community.

A student shall not hold oneself out as a member of a criminal street gang identified by the Gwinnett County Gang Taskforce by one's mode of dress, means and method of communication including the use of hand signs, or the possession or publication of gang writing/symbols.

Subject to the rules listed below, the Gwinnett County BOE permits students to possess electronic pagers or communication devices on a limited basis and provides local school principals with the authority to set forth rules pertaining to student possession and use of such devices at their individual schools.

The prohibited behaviors include, but are not limited to, the following:

Rule 11	Description of Violation	Level	Notify SRO
11A	Violation of local school rules (state specific rule);	I or II	
11C	Criminal gang-related activity (as defined by O.C.G.A. 16-15-3 and 16-15-4) including but not limited to: (1) Conduct or participate in a criminal street gang through criminal gang activity as defined in O.C.G.A. 16-15-3; (2) Acquire, maintain, directly or indirectly, through criminal gang activity or proceeds derived there from any interest in or control of any real or personal property of any nature, including money; (3) Engage in, directly or indirectly, or conspire to engage in criminal gang activity while acting as an organizer, supervisor or other position of management with regard to a criminal street gang; (4) Cause, encourage, solicit, or coerce another to participate in a criminal street gang; (5) Communicate, directly or indirectly, with another any threat of injury or damage to the person or property of the other person or to any associate or relative of the other person with the intent to deter such person from assisting a member or associate of a criminal street gang to withdraw from such criminal street gang; (6) Communicate, directly or indirectly, with another any threat of injury or damage to the person or property of the other person or to any associate or relative of the other person with the intent to punish or retaliate against such person for having withdrawn from a criminal street gang; (7) While employed by or associated with a criminal street gang, commit any offense enumerated in O.C.G.A. 16-15-3	III, IV or V	X

	with knowledge that members of such criminal street gang have committed one or more of such offenses; (8) Commit any offense enumerated in O.C.G.A. 16-15-3 with the intent to maintain or increase their status or position in a criminal street gang;		
11D	Retaliating against or deterring a witness. No student shall use threats, physical force, intimidation, or violence to deter a student from, or retaliate against a student for: (1) providing information to school staff regarding the violation of the code, the commission of a criminal act or the commission of a delinquent act, or (2) testifying at a school disciplinary tribunal;	III, IV or V	
11E	Provide false information and/or forgery;	II or III	
11F	Cheating;	I, II, or III	
11G	Gambling;	II or III	
11H	Plagiarism;	II or III	
11I	Foul language (profane or vulgar language not directed at another person) on school property or at a school-sponsored event;	II or III	
11K	Laser pointers;	I or II	
11L	Unauthorized use during school hours of electronic devices including but not limited to: tape recorders, radios, CD players, MP3 players, video games, and televisions;	II or III	
11N	Loitering;	II or III	
11O	Criminal trespassing. Criminal trespass includes: (1) Conduct that intentionally damages any property of another without consent; (2) Entering the land, premises, or vehicle of another for an unlawful purpose; (3) Entering the land, premises or vehicle of another after receiving prior notice from the owner, rightful occupant, or their authorized representative that such entry is forbidden; (4) Remaining on the land, premises, or vehicle of another after receiving notice from the owner, rightful occupant, or their authorized representative to depart;	III, IV or V	
11P	Community misconduct that would pose a threat to the school community. Any off campus behavior of a student which (1) could result in the student being criminally charged with a felony or which could result in a felony criminal charge if committed by an adult; and which (2) makes the student's continued presence at school a potential danger to person or property at school or which disrupts the educational process;	IV or V	
11S	Other Felony: (list) _____ Behavior of a student which could result in the student being charged criminally with a felony or which could result in a felony criminal charge if committed by an adult;	III, IV or V	

11T	Holding oneself out as a member of a criminal street gang identified by the Gwinnett County Gang Taskforce by more than one of the following: one's mode of dress, means and method of communication including the use of hand signs, or the possession or publication of gang writings/symbols or admission of membership;	II, III or IV	X
11U	Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting information regarding instances of alleged inappropriate behavior by a teacher, administrator, or school employee toward a student;	III, IV or V	X
11Z	Other: (list) _____	I, II or III	

NOTE ON RULE 11T: The first violation of Rule 11T is a Level II or III violation. However, with a Gang Activity Contract, any future offenses would be elevated to Level IV or V.

Rule 12: Repeated Violations/Misbehavior/Chronic Disciplinary Problem Students

Students who chronically disrupt or repeatedly violate other school rules may be charged with repeated violations of school rules or misbehavior. This rule applies **after** remediation attempts including the development and implementation of a Behavioral Correction Plan.

Rule 12	Description of Violation	Level	Notify SRO
12A	Chronically disrupt or repeatedly violate other school rules;	N/A	

12Z	Other: _____	N/A	
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The student and parent must be notified in advance that once the student has been placed on a Rule 12, all subsequent violations will lead to an escalation in consequences and may lead to an independent Rule 12 charge and a disciplinary tribunal.

Rule 13: School Bus Infractions

No student shall cause or attempt to cause (either directly or indirectly) a disruption or interference with a school bus by any means including, but not limited to, any of the following behaviors:

Rule 13	Description of Violation	Level	Notify SRO
13A	Disruption of school bus. A student shall not in any manner use violence, force, fear, threat, or other conduct to disrupt or interfere with a bus driver's ability to operate a bus safely;	III, IV or V	
13B	Throwing objects at the driver;	IV or V	
13C	Failure to follow directions, rules, or regulations;	I, II or III	
13D	Use of mirrors, lasers, flash cameras or any other lights or reflective devices during the operation of a school bus without the permission of the driver;	I, II or III	
13E	Posturing to fight;	II or III	
13F	Fighting;	IV or V	
13G	Diverting or distracting the driver's attention;	II or III	
13H	Throwing objects on the bus or out the bus window;	II or III	
13I	Excessive noise;	I, II or III	
13J	Use of any electronic device during the operation of a bus, including but not limited to cell phones, audible radios, tape, or compact disc players without headphones;	I, II or III	
13Z	Other (list):	I, II or III	

All other GCPS rules still apply while on the school bus or at the bus stop.

Safety is the first priority while transporting students to and from school. While on a school bus, the bus driver/manager is the school official who has supervisory responsibility of students. Drivers must be able to concentrate on their driving at all times. A momentary distraction from their concentration can lead to a serious accident resulting in injury or death. The safety and well-being of each student depend on everyone following the standards of conduct outlined in this Code. That safety is why certain infractions have a different level of consequence or are singled out as a school bus infraction.

If a student is found to have engaged in bullying or other acts of physical violence such as physical assault or battery of another person on the school bus, a meeting with the student's parents or guardian and appropriate school officials will be required in order to develop a school bus behavioral correction plan for the student. See O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.5.

Any student who receives an in-school suspension or assignment to Opportunity Room (for elementary students) for a bus infraction may forfeit their bus-riding privileges on the day(s) of suspension.

GCPS Code of Conduct for Athletes

Participation in interscholastic athletic competitions is a privilege extended to the students by the Board of Education. Students participating in Georgia High School Association (GHSA) extracurricular athletic activities act as representatives of Gwinnett County Public Schools (GCPS). All students are expected to conduct themselves in such a manner as to meet the highest standards of GCPS at all times.

The Code of Conduct is designed to establish high expectations and standards for all students participating in GHSA sanctioned athletic activities. All students, parents, and coaches understand that the top priority is academic achievement. The Code of Conduct establishes high expectations regarding behavior and consistent consequences when violations occur.

The Code of Conduct goes into effect on the first day a student joins a GCPS athletic team. The Code remains in effect for the entire calendar year, including time when school is not in session.

The offenses and consequences listed below are in addition to (not in lieu of) any school or criminal consequences associated with the student misconduct.

All consequences listed in this Code of Conduct are minimum standards. The coach has the discretion to set consequences over and above the minimum standards.

Code of Conduct for Athletes Violations and Consequences

VIOLATION A: Students given Long-Term Suspension (exceeding 10 days, with or without GIVE option)

Consequence: Ineligible to attend or participate in any athletic or extracurricular activity during time of suspension

VIOLATION B: Arrest for, or charged with the commission of, any act that is a felony or would constitute a felony if committed by an adult (regardless of location or time of the alleged act; in or out of school)

Consequence: Immediate suspension from all participation until such time as:

- a. School officials determine that the student did not commit the act(s) or other felony conduct; or
- b. Local prosecutors dismiss or drop all pending charges and petitions; or
- c. The student pleads guilty to a misdemeanor charge, in which case refers to Violation D listed in this Code; or
- d. The student is convicted and sentenced to a felony or is adjudicated delinquent in the Juvenile Court of conduct which if committed by an adult could be charged as a felony and serves any and all portions of the sentence including all periods of probation.

For the following violations (C, D and E), the school administration must have valid evidence and/or verification of the violation as defined in the following:

- a. Self-admitted involvement by the student;
- b. Witnessed student involvement by the sponsor, coach, or any staff member;
- c. Parent admission of their student's involvement in tobacco, alcohol, or other drugs;
- d. Verified by official police report given to the school;
- e. Evidence of violations through investigation by school officials.

If the offense occurs at school or on school property (at any time), off school grounds, at a school-sponsored activity, function, or event, or enroute to and from school, the student will be subject to the actions described in the Student Conduct Behavior Code (Policy JCDI) and the following consequences for extracurricular activities.

VIOLATION C: Tobacco (any type)

Consequence:

- 1st Offense: Consequence determined by approved local school athletic/extracurricular policy;
- 2nd Offense: Suspension from athletic extracurricular competition for a minimum of 10% of the remainder of the season;
- 3rd Offense: Dismissed from team but allowed to try out for subsequent athletic extracurricular activities after that sport/activity has completed its season.

VIOLATION D: Alcohol/Other Drugs (Possession and/or Use)/Misdemeanor Criminal Law Violations

Consequences: Coach/Sponsor and Administrator will meet with the student and parent(s) or guardian.

- 1st Offense: Consequence determined by approved local school athletic/extracurricular policy ;
- 2nd Offense: Suspension from athletic extracurricular competition for a minimum of 20% of the remainder of the season;
- 3rd Offense: Suspension from all athletic extracurricular activities for the remainder of the school year.

VIOLATION E: Violations of school rules that result in ISS or OSS

Consequences:

- a. In-School Suspension: Participation may resume when student is released from ISS. Student cannot participate on the day the student is released from ISS.
- b. Out-of-School Suspension (Short-Term, not exceeding 10 days): Participation may resume after suspension is served (Policy JDD).

VIOLATION F: Hazing (as a condition or precondition of gaining acceptance, membership, office, or other status in any school or school organization, subjecting a student to an activity which endangers or is likely to endanger the physical health or emotional well-being of a student, regardless of a student’s willingness to participate in such activity.)

All instances of hazing will be immediately referred to the administration.

The GIVE Centers

The purpose of the Gwinnett InterVention Educational (GIVE) Centers is to:

- At the discretion of the tribunal officer(s) or Board of Education, provide an education opportunity for those students whose unacceptable behavior has excluded them from the regular school program for more than 10 days.
- Reduce the number of students being totally excluded from a middle or high school education.
- Provide suspended students an alternative to total school exclusion and provide them the opportunity to improve their behavior and return to the regular setting.

Length of school sessions

- All students at the GIVE Centers will be required to attend the entire daily sessions unless they are participating in another joint enrollment program.
- Students must make plans to arrive no earlier than 15 minutes before classes begin, and they must report to their classrooms upon arrival to campus. They must not remain outside the building before and after school. They must leave immediately when school ends for the day.

Miscellaneous facts about the GIVE Centers

- There are two locations, GIVE Center East (Lawrenceville) and GIVE Center West (Norcross).
- Students in grades 6–12 may attend the GIVE Centers.
- Students enrolled at the GIVE Centers may be allowed to enroll in online courses.
- Students are required to wear a staff-approved uniform.

Alternative Disciplinary Consequences

A student subject to a short-term suspension or to long-term suspension may be provided with the opportunity to reduce the period of suspension by completing alternative disciplinary consequences. The decision to allow a student the opportunity to reduce the period of suspension shall be at the discretion of the administrator or tribunal officer determining the consequence imposed as a result of the student’s misconduct. The student shall have the option to complete the alternative disciplinary consequences or to serve the full term of their suspension. The following alternative disciplinary consequences are authorized: (1) Attend the Creating Lasting Family Connections (CLFC) program or a similar program; (2) perform community service; (3) pay restitution; or (4) successfully complete GIVE’s Early Return Agreement/Contract.

Student Disciplinary Tribunals

A student disciplinary tribunal heard by a disciplinary tribunal officer(s) has been established by the Gwinnett County Board of Education (BOE) to handle all acts of misconduct of students enrolled in the school system that may warrant long-term suspension or expulsion. Disciplinary tribunal procedures are governed by the State of Georgia Public School Disciplinary Tribunal Act. (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-750)

Tribunal Referral Process

If the principal determines that a student should be referred to a disciplinary tribunal, the principal should consult with their Cluster Superintendent in the Division of School Improvement and Operations prior to calling the Office of Student Discipline to schedule a disciplinary tribunal.

Composition of Tribunals

- A tribunal officer will listen to disciplinary tribunals involving up to two students. For tribunals involving three or more students, the tribunal officer may hear the case with one or more assisting tribunal officers. The Director of Student Discipline, or designee, shall determine whether to appoint an assisting tribunal officer to any disciplinary tribunal.
- Tribunal officers are county administrators trained in conducting disciplinary tribunals.
- Tribunal officers hear evidence concerning charges of misconduct that have been brought against students which, if proven, may require greater than ten (10) school days and up to one (1) calendar year suspension with a recommendation of permanent expulsion.
- When two or more students are charged with violating school rules arising from a single incident or essentially the same set of facts, a single tribunal may be conducted to address the rule violations for all the students involved so long as a single tribunal is not likely to result in confusion for the tribunal officer(s) or substantially prejudice one student.

Tribunal Proceedings

All tribunals are recorded electronically. Tribunals before a student disciplinary tribunal officer(s) are confidential and are not open to the public. Staff and student witnesses to a particular case may be requested and/or subpoenaed by the school system to testify on its behalf at the tribunal. Subpoenas for witnesses are obtained from the Office of Student Discipline. It is the responsibility of the student or parent/guardian to deliver subpoenas to the witnesses and arrange for their transportation to the tribunal.

The evidence presented at a disciplinary tribunal may be physical (drugs, weapons, discipline record, written statements, etc.), as well as testimony from witnesses. At the tribunal, the student or parent/guardian has the right to be represented by an attorney obtained at their own expense. If an attorney is going to represent the student, the Office of Student Discipline must receive notice at least one school day prior to the tribunal to arrange for an attorney for the school system to be present. Students or parents/guardians may also be represented by an advocate obtained at their own expense. If an advocate is going to represent the student, the Office of Student Discipline must receive notice at least one school day prior to the tribunal. Students may be represented by organizations such as the NAACP, SPLC, ACLU, GwinnettSToPP, BMUCH, Ser Familia, and many other organizations. If parents require the services of an interpreter, they should request these services from the local school at least two full days prior to the discipline tribunal.

How Decisions Are Made

The disciplinary tribunal officer(s) will determine whether the student was or was not in violation of the Student Conduct Behavior Code and will determine the appropriate consequences. The tribunal officer(s) may consider only the evidence it regards to be relevant to the charges in question in making its determination of whether a rule has been violated. The tribunal officer(s) are allowed to give the presented evidence whatever weight the tribunal officer thinks is warranted.

The disciplinary tribunal officer(s) will review the student's school records if the student is found in violation of the Code. Both parties are given the opportunity to make a closing or summary statement. The tribunal officer(s) convenes privately to decide the appropriate consequences. The tribunal is concluded when the tribunal officer(s) reads their decision. A letter and other information regarding the decision will be sent to the student or parent/guardian within five (5) working days after the tribunal is held.

Appeals

The Board of Education may voluntarily review any decision of a student disciplinary tribunal; however, reasonable notice of an intent to review shall be given to the pertinent student and parent or guardian. Additionally, the Board of Education for Gwinnett

County shall consider appeals from student disciplinary tribunal decisions. Pendency of appeal to the Board will not ordinarily prevent the commencement of the period of suspension or expulsion prescribed by the student disciplinary tribunal officer(s).

The Superintendent, or designee, (along with the Executive Director of Academic Support) may review any student disciplinary tribunal that is subject to review by the Board of Education pursuant to an appeal or a recommendation of permanent expulsion. In reviewing any student disciplinary tribunal, the Superintendent's designee may recommend an amendment or reversal of a tribunal officer's finding. This recommendation will be submitted to the Superintendent for consideration and/or action.

In addition, the Superintendent may, in his discretion, permit a student to return to school pending the outcome of an appeal; this would occur only where the Superintendent believes that there is a substantial likelihood that the student will ultimately prevail on his appeal.

No new evidence and no oral argument may be presented to the Board on appeal and all consideration on appeal will be based on the record of the proceedings at the tribunal of the student disciplinary tribunal and the written appellate arguments filed by the parties. Notice of appeal shall be in writing and filed in the Superintendent's Office in care of the Office of Student Discipline. Notice of appeal or legal arguments of the appellant must be received in the Office of Student Discipline no later than 20 calendar days from the date the decision is rendered. The Board may take any action it determines appropriate, and any decision of the Board shall be final.

Long-Term Suspension Re-entry Requirements

At the end of a student's term of suspension, the student who fails to attend an alternative school program or is not given the option to attend an alternative school program or is terminated because of misconduct, will have a readmission review at the local school before the student may be enrolled.

The student must provide the following and this information should be faxed to the Office of Student Discipline (770-513-6840).

- Submit a 500-word essay reviewing the incident that brought the student before a disciplinary tribunal, discussing what the student learned from the incident, what the student would do differently in the future, why the student's education in GCPS is important, a description of the student's aspirations, dreams, and goals, and who can help the student achieve these goals.
- Submit three letters of reference from people other than a relative, attesting to the student's good behavior and fitness to return to school;

The Office of Student Discipline will inform local school officials when the student has satisfied the requirements and a readmission review can be held at the local school.

Drug and Alcohol Programs

Creating Lasting Family Connections (CLFC) Program

Creating Lasting Family Connections (CLFC) is a drug/alcohol education program for first-time offenders of Level III or IV violations in Rule 7 of the Student Discipline Code. Not all first offenders will qualify for this program. This program could allow the student to reduce their term of suspension.

All four, two-hour sessions are in the evening and must be completed in sequential order. Further information regarding this program can be obtained from the Office of Student Discipline or by calling:

Berkmar Community School—770-806-3730

Norcross Community School—770-447-2643

Shiloh Community School—770-736-4351

Tobacco-Free Schools

School district policy prohibits the use of tobacco products at all GCPS facilities/campuses, by all students, staff, and visitors, 24 hours per day, seven days per week. This policy is inclusive of e-cigarettes and vaping. Thank you for your cooperation!



School Safety Tip Line

**School Safety
TIP LINE**

Confidential Tip Line
Call or Text

770-822-6513

(You do not have to give your name.)

Help keep your school safe! If you think that someone is carrying a weapon, drugs, or alcohol on school property, or if you believe that you have been the target of violence or threat of violence, or have witnessed violent or threatening conduct by another person, please call or text the tip line.



Other Important Telephone Numbers for Reporting:

Violence/Threats/Crime— First, call Local School Principal, then call Safety and Security at 770-513-6715

Student Discipline— First, call Local School Principal, then call the Office of Student Discipline at 770-513-6607

Racial Discrimination/Sexual Harassment— First, call Local School Principal, then call Title IX Coordinator at 678-301-6811

GCPS Schools Are No Bullying Zones

The Board of Education believes that all students can learn better in a safe school environment. Behavior that infringes on the safety of students will not be tolerated. Bullying, as the term is defined in Georgia law, of a student by another student is strictly prohibited. Such prohibition and the penalties shall be included in the Student Code of Conduct for all schools within the school system. See Policy JCDI and the Student Conduct Behavior Code.

To eliminate bullying to the extent possible, GCPS sets forth the following guidelines:

- Schools will implement a schoolwide anti-bullying program that fosters a positive school climate and helps to engage all students in learning—regardless of their cultural background, religious beliefs, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, or gender—in order to support and/or intervene with students who may struggle in the school setting.
- Anti-bullying programs will encourage students to report bullying and schools will formalize the reporting process.
- GCPS will provide school staff with training to teach students social and emotional skills, cultural awareness, problem-solving strategies, and conflict resolution.
- Staff will teach students appropriate strategies to inspect their own preconceived ideas and challenge their biases, and they will promote culturally responsive relationship-building with students.
- Schools will create Safe Zones where students can talk to an adult in a non-judgmental environment, receive support, and get connected to the resources they need to succeed.
- Schools will establish support services for students who experience bullying.
- Schools will coordinate with outside agencies, counseling, and other support services to support students.
- Schools will maintain a continuum of preventative and intervention strategies.
- Schools will implement restorative practices as applicable.

Georgia law requires that all allegations of bullying be investigated by the appropriate school official. School officials review the merits of the allegation as defined by the Student Code of Conduct. Upon finding that a student (grades 6-12) has violated the prohibition on bullying for the third time in the school year, such student will be assigned to an alternative school. (O.C.G.A. 20-2-751.4)

SchoolMessenger

Gwinnett County Public Schools + SchoolMessenger put you “in the know” wherever you go



SchoolMessenger is a rapid notification system used to contact families in Gwinnett County Public Schools (GCPS) via telephone messages, text messages, and email messages. The district uses the system to communicate information related to districtwide events, including safety alerts and school closings due to inclement weather. Schools also may use the system to communicate general/non-emergency information related to school events and attendance messages via email.

1-844-248-6644

Emergency messages from Gwinnett County Public Schools and local schools will come from this number.

Please add this phone number to your contacts so you can easily identify the call as coming from Gwinnett County Public Schools. If you miss a message, just call this toll-free number to retrieve and replay phone notifications.

Manage Your Messages

Parents and guardians have the ability to customize messaging preferences. They can do this by accessing SchoolMessenger through the Parent Portal or using the SchoolMessenger website or app.

Managing the communication you receive from your school and the district via SchoolMessenger is simple and convenient.

1. Go to go.schoolmessenger.com.
2. Log in to your account using the email address you provided to your child’s school. If it is your first visit, you will have to set up your account.

3. Click on the user name in the top right-hand corner of the page and select the “Preferences” option to set up or change notification preferences. The preferences on this page affect SchoolMessenger broadcasts that may be sent to you from the school and district. “Message Preferences” show all the types of messages that the school and district may send via SchoolMessenger. You can select how you wish to be contacted for each message type.

Want to receive emergency text notifications?

Good news! If you opted in to receive text notifications last year, there is no need for you to do anything this year... you are still in the system! If you are new to GCPS or have not subscribed to the text service yet, it is easy to do. Text the word “SUBSCRIBE” to the number 67587. You will receive a response by text. If you do not, please contact your wireless provider, as some providers do not accept texts that use short code (SMS) messages. NOTE: In order to opt in to receive text messages from GCPS and the local school, the phone number must be associated with your student in our student information system.



Remember... you can opt out of these messages at any time by simply replying “Stop” to one of our messages.

If your contact information changes during the year, contact the school, or update your information via the Parent Portal.

Add 1-844-248-6644 to your Contacts list as Gwinnett County Public Schools.

Go to go.schoolmessenger.com to manage your messaging preferences.

If you have not already subscribed to get texts via SchoolMessenger, it’s easy to do.

If you do not want to receive messages from Gwinnett County Public Schools via SchoolMessenger, please manage your messaging preferences using the SchoolMessenger app or by accessing SchoolMessenger through the Parent Portal. In addition, at any time while listening to a message broadcast, you can press “5” on your phone to initiate the opt-out process.



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Gwinnett County Public Schools

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