

# HOUSTON COUNTY SCHOOLS

## MISSION STATEMENT



*Our Mission  
is to produce  
high-achieving  
students.*

*David Carpenter  
Superintendent of Schools*



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## HOUSTON COUNTY SCHOOLS STUDENT CALENDAR 2009-2010

August 4	Tuesday	First Day of School GKIDS - K
September 7	Monday	<b>HOLIDAY</b> - Labor Day
September 4	Friday	Progress Reports
September 21-25	Monday - Friday	ITBS (3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade)
October 12	Monday	<b>HOLIDAY</b> - Columbus Day
October 13	Tuesday	<b>HOLIDAY</b> - Students
October 15	Thursday	Report Cards
October 19-21	Monday - Wednesday	Cogat (4 <sup>th</sup> Grade)
November 11	Wednesday	<b>HOLIDAY</b> - Veterans Day
November 12	Thursday	Progress Reports
November 23-27	Monday-Friday	<b>HOLIDAY</b> - Thanksgiving
December 18	Friday	Last day before Holidays
December 21-January 1		<b>HOLIDAY</b> - Christmas Holiday
January 4	Monday	<b>HOLIDAY</b> - Students
January 5	Tuesday	Second Semester Begins
January 8	Friday	Report Cards
January 18	Monday	<b>HOLIDAY</b> - Martin Luther King
January 19	Tuesday	<b>HOLIDAY</b> - Students
February 9	Tuesday	Progress Reports
February 15	Monday	<b>HOLIDAY</b> - President's Day
February 16-19	Tuesday-Friday	<b>WINTER BREAK</b>
March 3	Wednesday	5 <sup>th</sup> Grade Writing Test
March 15-26	Monday - Friday	3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade Writing Test
March 24	Wednesday	Report Cards
March 29 - April 2	Monday-Friday	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>
April 14 -16, 19 - 20	Wednesday - Friday, Monday - Tuesday	CRCT
April 27	Tuesday	Progress Reports
May 26	Wednesday	Last Day of School /Report Cards



# RECEIPT OF STUDENT HANDBOOK SIGNATURE SHEET

Teacher's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Parents:

Please sign this page, tear completely from the handbook, and return to your child's school.

I have read the information in the *Houston County Elementary School Student Handbook* and understand that the school must operate in accordance with the stated policies and procedures.

I have paid particular attention to information, some of which is new, addressing the following subjects:

- Attendance
- Student Code of Conduct
- Third Grade Gate: A student must acquire grade-level reading skills to be promoted at the end of grade three. To meet this criterion, the student must earn a minimum score on a **reading** assessment (the Criterion Referenced Competency Test - CRCT), administered through the Georgia Department of Education.
- Fifth Grade Gate: A student must acquire grade-level reading and math skills to be promoted at the end of grade five. To meet this criterion, the student must earn a minimum score on a **reading** assessment and **math** assessment (the Criterion Referenced Competency Test - CRCT), administered through the Georgia Department of Education.
- Morning Drop-off Time for Students (7:45 a.m.)
- Afternoon Dismissal Time for Students (3:30 p.m.)

Parent's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTE TO PARENTS: PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN**



*Houston County Schools*  
*1100 Main Street, Perry, Georgia 31069*  
*478-988-6200*  
*www.hcbe.net*

**STUDENT PROHIBITION FROM EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Note to Parent/Guardian: Please complete this form **ONLY** if there are school clubs and/or organizations from which you are **PROHIBITING** your child to participate.

Name of Student \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Parent/Guardian \_\_\_\_\_

My child (named above) is prohibited from participating  
in the following school clubs and organizations:

1 \_\_\_\_\_

6 \_\_\_\_\_

2 \_\_\_\_\_

7 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_

8 \_\_\_\_\_

4 \_\_\_\_\_

9 \_\_\_\_\_

5 \_\_\_\_\_

10 \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Student \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent/Guardian \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form to the Principal at your child's school





# HOUSTON COUNTY STUDENT HEALTH RECORD

Health Related Services



STUDENT'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_ Student's ID # \_\_\_\_\_ DOB \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Mother's Work \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Father's Work \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contacts (*Is the person on the pick-up list?*) \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

List brothers/sisters and the school(s) they attend: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Current Medical History: **(Check All That Apply)**

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Anemia  | <input type="checkbox"/> Cystic Fibrosis                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Rheumatic Fever          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arthritis   | <input type="checkbox"/> Diabetes:   | <input type="checkbox"/> Seizures:                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asthma Inhaler: <input type="checkbox"/> Y / <input type="checkbox"/> N | <input type="checkbox"/> Insulin injection or <input type="checkbox"/> Pump  | (Type: _____ VNS _____)                           |
| 1. Seasonal <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Mild <input type="checkbox"/>                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Fainting Spells/Dizziness                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Speech Difficulty        |
| 2. Moderate <input type="checkbox"/> 4. Severe <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Frequent Headaches/Migraines                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Surgery/Hospitalization  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bleeding Problems/Blood Disorder  | <input type="checkbox"/> Frequent Nose Bleeds                                | <input type="checkbox"/> Vision Problems/Contacts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blood Pressure  | <input type="checkbox"/> Hearing Problems                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Weight Problems          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bowel/Bladder Problem   | <input type="checkbox"/> Heart Murmurs/ Type: _____                          | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Other:</b> _____      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bronchitis ( <i>Chronic</i> )   | <input type="checkbox"/> Heat Exhaustion                                     |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cancer  | <input type="checkbox"/> Limb Loss   |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cardiac <input type="checkbox"/> Chest Pain                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Missing Organs ( <i>eye, kidney, etc.</i> )         |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crohns/IBS  | <input type="checkbox"/> Pacemaker or <input type="checkbox"/> Defibrillator |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Convulsions w/Fever   | <input type="checkbox"/> Premature Birth ( <i>Complications</i> )            |   |

Please explain any "yes" answers on the back. \_\_\_\_\_

Does your child have any potentially life threatening condition? \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, please explain. \_\_\_\_\_

Describe how the above checked items affect your child at school. \_\_\_\_\_

Are there any known allergies including medication, food, environment, and /or insects? \_\_\_\_\_

What kind of reaction occurs with these allergies? \_\_\_\_\_

Does child require Epi-pen at school? \_\_\_\_\_

List *all* daily medication including home and school. \_\_\_\_\_

Current Physician: \_\_\_\_\_ Family Pediatrician: \_\_\_\_\_ Specialist: \_\_\_\_\_

After School Program: \_\_\_\_\_

After School Daycare: (*Name*) \_\_\_\_\_

Car Ride: \_\_\_\_\_

Bus #: \_\_\_\_\_

HRS-32-A





# INTERNET AGREEMENT

## Parent / Guardian Agreement

As the parent or guardian of this student, I have read the Terms and Conditions for Internet access. I understand that this access is designed for educational purposes and the Houston County School System has taken available precautions to eliminate controversial material. I also recognize that it is impossible for the school system to restrict access to all controversial materials, and I will not hold the school system responsible for materials acquired through the Internet. Further, I accept full responsibility for supervision if and when my child's use of the Internet is not in a school setting. I hereby give permission for my child to use the Internet on resources provided by the Houston County Board of Education and certify that the information contained on this form is correct.

Name of Student \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Parent/Guardian (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*

## Student Agreement

I understand and will abide by the above Terms and Conditions for Internet use. I further understand that any violation of the regulations above is unethical and may constitute a criminal or school system offense. Should I commit any violation, my access privileges may be revoked, school disciplinary action may be taken, and appropriate legal action may be taken.

User Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*

**NOTE TO PARENTS: PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN**



## PERSONAL BODY SAFETY

Dear Parents:

State law requires that each student be provided with a health and safety education program. The Houston County School System continues to provide its students with a quality health curriculum that includes programs that have been successfully implemented for a number of years. Written parental permission is required for a student to receive programs that are designated courses of study in *Personal Body Safety*. In grades K through 5, the only designated courses are:

<i>Good Touch Bad Touch</i>	Kindergarten
<i>Keeping My Body Safe &amp; Talking About Touching</i>	First Grade
<i>What TaDoo With Fear</i>	Second Grade
<i>Now I Can Tell You My Secret</i>	Third Grade
<i>What TaDoo With Secrets</i>	Fourth Grade
<i>Breaking the Silence</i>	Fifth Grade
<i>Caring About Me (CAM)</i>	Fourth Grade Girls Fifth Grade Boys and Girls

Each of the above courses is taught or coordinated through the counselor's office. All materials have been approved by the Health Education Review Committee. The committee is composed of parents and educators. The programs listed above will be made available for parent review prior to implementation.

Thank you for your support and cooperation.

.....  
\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, my child has permission to participate in courses of study designated as Personal Body Safety.

\_\_\_\_\_ No, my child does **NOT** have permission to participate in courses of study designated as Personal Body Safety.

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Parent's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTE TO PARENTS: PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN**

\*Contact the school counselor if you wish to see the *Personal Body Safety* curriculum prior to the lesson.

## Personal Body Safety Course Descriptions

Good-Touch, Bad-Touch (Kindergarten) - A personal body safety program designed for elementary school children to teach the skills they need to prevent and interrupt child abuse. Children are taught what abuse is and given five rules that empower them into action if threatened or victimized. A summary of the rules are reviewed each year. This curriculum is a springboard for all other body safety curriculum taught in elementary school.

Good-Touch, Bad-Touch - The video, What Tadoo, and the big book, Good-Touch, Bad-Touch, are used to teach the program.

Keeping My Body Safe (First Grade) - The first grade body safety program will be presented using an interactive workbook, entitled We Wonder-Keeping My Body Safe! The booklet will teach skills that will help children stay safe from sexual abuse. Children will learn about the private areas of his or her body, about safe and unsafe touches and what to do if sexual abuse happens to them. The program will be presented in class and then the booklets will be sent home for parents to review with their child.

Talking About Touching (First Grade) - Helps with the transition from Kindergarten to First Grade and is a researched based program. It has three components: (1) Touching Safety; (2) Personal Safety; and (3) Assertiveness and Support. The program is used by the counselors to supplement the Good-Touch, Bad-Touch Program.

What Tadoo With Fear (Second Grade) - This is a video based lesson designed to help students learn safety techniques to guard against fear. The program deals with scary situations at home and how to talk to your parents about those circumstances. This program deals with many issues concerning the well being of children in today's society.

Now I Can Tell You My Secret (Third Grade) - Using the example of a young boy with a secret, the video gives youngsters the important message that they have the right to protect themselves against sexual advances by anyone, whether or not they know the person. The students are taught safety techniques to keep their bodies safe. Using the Good-Touch, Bad-Touch teaching cards, students are given the definition of sexual abuse and different situations that could occur in everyday life are discussed.

What Tadoo With Secrets (Fourth Grade) - A video designed to help children understand the difference between good and bad secrets. The video focuses on empowering children with the right to protect and keep themselves safe and encourages them to talk to an adult whom they trust.

Caring About Me (CAM) - A puberty unit developed to provide 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade girls and 5<sup>th</sup> grade boys factual information pertaining to their changing bodies. Particular attention has been made to meet state requirements of human growth and development as it relates to adolescence, puberty, emotions, and abstinence in 5<sup>th</sup> grade. The following videos are shown discussing their changing body:

4<sup>th</sup> grade girls - Everything You Wanted to Know About Puberty...For Girls

5<sup>th</sup> grade girls - Just Around the Corner for Girls

5<sup>th</sup> grade boys - Everything You Wanted to Know About Puberty...For Boys

Breaking the Silence (Fifth Grade) - Narrated by Jane Seymour, four kids talk candidly about their abuse and their abusers. Physical abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect are explained in a way that young children can understand. The main point throughout the program is that children should tell an adult if they feel they are being abused or if they know someone who is.

## ACCIDENTS AND ILLNESS

If a child is injured at school, office personnel will render first aid. Parents will then be contacted in those cases which the school deems are serious enough to warrant communication. If the school is unable to reach the parent, the emergency telephone contact person(s) will be called in an effort to find someone to come for the child. Please assist the school by leaving current emergency telephone numbers to be used in the event that you are not available. If a child shows signs of illness, he/she should not be sent to school. When a child becomes ill at school, the parent will be notified just as in the case of an accident. Also, if a child comes to school with an unidentified rash, the parent may be requested to seek medical approval for the child to attend school.

Parents will also be contacted in cases of children soiling their clothes at school through accidents such as vomiting, urinating, or defecation. The school cannot accept responsibility for student hygiene in such circumstances.

**Parental assistance is urgently needed in providing pertinent medical information upon the enrollment of the child in school. Please assist the school by notifying the office of any change in student data (medical or otherwise) that will ensure your child's success for a safe and healthy school year.**

An independent insurance company offers student accident insurance coverage to students. Two plans are available: school-day coverage or twenty-four hour coverage. Information sheets will be sent home by the students. Checks should be made payable to the insurance company. You are encouraged to carefully look at this affordable insurance as it definitely covers any accidents occurring at school.

### *When to Keep Your Child Home*

Remember: Sick children belong at home. Well children belong in school. The best way to prevent infections is frequent hand washing.

- Children with a fever over 100° should stay home until there is no fever for 24 hours. Call your doctor if your child has a fever with pain, rash, weakness, vomiting or diarrhea.
- If a child's eye is red with cloudy or yellow/green drainage, you should call the doctor during office hours. If an eye ointment is prescribed your child may return to school 24 hours after treatment begins.
- Children with one event of vomiting or diarrhea (watery loose bowel movement) should stay at home until at least 12 hours have passed without any further events. Call your doctor if the vomiting or diarrhea continues or if your child also has a fever, rash, or weakness.
- Your child should stay home if he/she has a lot of ear or tooth pain. Call your doctor for treatment.
- If your child has a sore throat and a fever, or a severe sore throat without fever, he/she should stay at home. Call your doctor.
- If your child's cough is worse than you would expect with a cold, keep him/her at home. If he/she has a hard time breathing or has a fever, call your doctor.
- If your child complains of a stomach ache, especially if he/she says it hurts to move and he/she does not want to eat, he/she should stay home. Call your doctor.
- If your child has impetigo (red, oozing blister areas with yellow-gold scabs on the face or body) he/she should stay home until all areas are crusted and not oozing. Encourage good hand washing.

When there is doubt in your mind about sending your child to school, consult your child's doctor. When you see the doctor, always get a note stating what day your child was seen. Remember to make sure that your child's school knows how to reach you during the day. Please give the school all available numbers: cell, work, relative, friends, etc.

## AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM

Most elementary schools offer after-school programs that provide supervision to elementary school-age students until 6:00 p.m. each school day. The program is open to children enrolled in pre-kindergarten through fifth grade. Each program strives to establish a safe, relaxed and stimulating environment that allows for individual and social growth. Children engage in activities that encourage creativity, build social relationships, reinforce appropriate behavior, and promote a positive self-image. Activities may include study time, recreation, crafts, music, story time, computer experiences, and other enrichment activities.

An application form must be completed before any student can participate in the After School Program. The Application fee of \$25, or the family rate of \$35, must be included with the form. This fee is *nonrefundable*. Tuition is \$35 per child a week for full-time and \$9.00 per child per day for drop-in. Occasionally a school week will be less than 4 days. During those weeks with less than 4 days, full-time as well as part-time students will be charged a daily rate of \$9.00. Weeks with less than 5 days WILL NOT be combined for payment.

Some schools do not have an After-School Program due to lack of participation.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS (INTERCOM)

Intercom announcements are made twice each day, at the beginning and at the end of the school day. The schools are not permitted to interrupt instruction with announcements unless it is an emergency.

## ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

The instructional day is from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Upon arrival at school, all students should immediately report to their assigned places and remain there unless permission is received from a school staff member to leave the room. Parents picking up a child should wait in the designated areas for their child to be dismissed.

It is strongly recommended that parents of kindergartners and first graders allow them to go to their rooms on their own after the first week of school so that they may gain independence and self-confidence. **Students will not be admitted to school prior to 7:45 a.m. It is essential that students be picked up from school by 3:50 p.m. each afternoon.** A parent who continues to drop students off before 7:45 a.m. or fails to pick them up by 3:50 p.m. will be reported to the appropriate authorities (reference: BOE Policy JGGA).

## ATTENDANCE

The Board of Education emphasizes values of regular attendance in enabling pupils to profit from the school program.

### *Compulsory Attendance*

Houston County School authorities, in cooperation with other county agencies, shall enforce the Georgia Compulsory Attendance Law, O.C.G.A. §20-2-690.1, Mandatory Attendance, which requires that every parent, guardian, or other person residing in the state having control of any school age child or children between the ages of 6 and 16 enroll and send such child or children to school. Further, all children enrolled for 20 school days or more in the public schools of Houston County prior to their SIXTH birthday shall become subject to all provisions of the law. All students missing more than 5 unexcused days in Georgia are declared as truant by law.

All Houston County students are affected by and fall under the provisions of our attendance protocol which is stated as follows;

Level I

Three (3) unexcused absences including unexcused tardies and early dismissals. School staff will contact parents and document the contact. Contacts may consist of e-mail, phone call, or teacher notification form.

Level II

Five (5) unexcused absences including unexcused tardies and early dismissals. School staff will notify parents of the truancy and request a conference with the parents to sign an Attendance Contract.

Level III

Eight (8) unexcused absences including unexcused tardies and early dismissals. School staff notifies Social Services Department; Social Services provides data to court for judicial proceedings to begin.

Any parent, guardian, or other person residing in Georgia having control or charge of a child or children who violate GA Code Section O.C.G.A. §20-2-690.1 shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be subject to a fine of not less than \$25 and not greater than \$100, imprisonment not to exceed 30 days, community service, or any combinations of such penalties, at the discretion of the court having jurisdiction.

Minimum Attendance for Promotion

To be eligible for promotion to the next grade, students in grades K-8 are expected to achieve 95 percent attendance. Students who achieve 90-94 percent attendance may be promoted at the discretion of the school principal if:

- All absences are justified and validated as set forth in policy JBD.
- Circumstances warrant.
- All work is completed satisfactorily in a timely manner.
- Academic achievement meets requirements for promotion.

Students who achieve less than 90 percent attendance will not be promoted to the next grade. Parents of students affected by this rule may request a review of the circumstances. This request must be made in writing to the principal of the school **not later than five (5) days** after the end of the school year. Appropriate documentation should accompany the request.

Excused and Unexcused Absences

Absence from school is classified as either excused or unexcused. Reasons established by the Georgia Board of Education as excused absences are set forth in this policy. Students may be temporarily excused from school and allowed to make up work when:

1. Personally ill and when attendance in school would endanger their health or the health of others. Excessive/extended absences due to illness must be justified by a physician's statement.
2. A serious illness or death occurs in their immediate family.
3. Mandated by order of governmental agencies or by a court order.
4. Celebrating religious holidays observed by their faith.

**NOTE:** An excused absence does not mean the student is given credit for being at school. It means that the student may make up work missed during the excused absence.

Students should present a written excuse within three [3] days after an absence whether excused or unexcused. Failure to do so will result in the absence(s) remaining unexcused. Excessive/extended absences due to illness must be justified by a physician's statement.

Only students who have excused absences may make up work or tests missed. The following items should be specified and included on each written excuse:

1. The date the excuse is written.
2. The date and day of the absence.
3. Reason for absence.
4. Signature of parent or guardian.

Upon returning to school, students should complete makeup work missed within five [5] school days. Parents may pick up homework assignments in the school office. The teacher, however, should be given adequate time to prepare homework assignments and materials.

**\*At the discretion of the principal, a statement from a physician may be required to validate extended or excessive absences.**

#### *Military Family Deployment - Absences for Special Consideration*

The Houston County School System is supportive of our military families, especially during the difficult time of deployment. In an effort to ease the burden of our students who have parents deploying, Houston County Schools will allow up to a total of 10 days of excused absences each academic year to allow families time during the deployment cycle. Absences may be planned to best fit your individual family needs. Excused absences will be allowed for the following situations:

- Pre-deployment, the day before deployment - one day;
- Day of departure - one day;
- Reunion, post-deployment - one day;
- R&R break-up to three days; or
- Travel to visit an injured parent - up to five days.

Other special circumstances will be considered; however, **10 days is the maximum that will be allowed per school year.** Students will be responsible for their homework and will need to make up any missed tests or class reports upon return to the classroom. Parents are asked to work with the classroom teacher and their children to ensure that students stay up-to-date on class material.

A form is available in the office that must be filled out and given to the principal for approval.

#### *Perfect Attendance*

To receive an award for Perfect Attendance, a student may not be absent nor tardy, nor may he/she be dismissed before the end of the instructional day.

#### *Tardiness/Early Dismissal*

Instruction begins promptly at 8:30 a.m., and a student is considered tardy after that time. A student who is tardy must report to the office to check in. A parent is expected to accompany the student and to sign him/her in. If a school bus arrives after 8:30 a.m., students will not be considered tardy; and, no tardy permit is necessary. **Three [3] unexcused tardies and/or three [3] unexcused early dismissals shall be counted as an unexcused absence.**

#### *Release of Students*

The school may not release a student to any person other than the person who enrolled the student in school. If an individual other than the person who enrolled the student in school is authorized to take the student from school on a regular basis (e.g., a grandparent or other relative, childcare provider, etc.), the person who enrolled the student in school must notify the school of such in writing and this notification should be placed in the student's record. If someone other than the person who enrolled the student in school (or an individual authorized in writing by this person) attempts to take custody of the

child or to remove the child from the school, the school will immediately contact the person who enrolled the student in school. If a person who attempts to take custody of the child without consent of the person who enrolled the student in school refuses to leave the campus or causes a problem, the school will contact the appropriate law enforcement agency. (This provision shall not apply with respect to State or local law enforcement officers.)

Any change in your child's transportation **must** be communicated through the main office and **not** through the teacher's phone message or email. This is to ensure the message gets to the child's teacher in time.

#### School Day

The school day for all elementary students begins at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 3:30 p.m. Students must be in attendance for a minimum of at least one-half of the instructional day to be counted present all day. Cutoff time for determining attendance is 12:00 p.m. If a student leaves before 12:00 p.m., or arrives after that time, the student is counted absent for the day.

#### ATTENDANCE ZONE REGULATIONS

The Federal Courts have approved the neighborhood school attendance zone formulated by the Houston County Board of Education. If the natural parent lives in Houston County, the student must attend the school in which the residence of the natural parent is located regardless of whether the student lives with the parent. The following exception applies:

*Children with medical problems documented on the Board of Education standard form by their family physician may be zoned to the school best equipped to meet their medical needs upon approval by the Board of Education.*

If the parents are divorced/separated, the child shall be required to attend the school in the attendance zone in which the primary custodial parent resides.

Elementary students who move from one attendance zone to another during the school year may delay withdrawal until the end of the school year. Parents must provide transportation to and from the new school. It is very important that students arrive on time and are picked up on time. If tardiness becomes an issue, the out-of-zone permission will be revoked and the students will be required to transfer to their zoned school. {Please keep in mind the tardy policy: three unexcused tardies equals an absence.} In such cases, the parents must complete an out-of-zone application at the time of the address change. **However, if school personnel determine that a parent or guardian has used false information to enroll a child in a school other than the school zone in which the parent/guardian resides, the child shall be withdrawn not later than the last day of the grading period.** The child shall be required to attend the school in the attendance zone in which the parent resides.

Transfer for reason of change of address will not be granted until the family presents evidence of formal transaction of new housing arrangements or provides the school with proof of housing to be completed within 90 days. Additional information about school attendance zones may be found in HCBOE policies JBCCA and JBCE.

#### Unsafe School Choice Option

If a student is a victim of a Violent Criminal Offense (as stated in 160-4-8-16/JBCCA Policy) on campus or at a school sponsored activity, he/she may request a transfer to a school who has made adequate yearly progress and has not been identified as being on a school improvement, corrective action, or restructuring plan. This request must be made within ten (10) school days of the commission of the Violent Criminal Offense.

## **AVOIDING DRUGS VIOLENCE AND NEGATIVE CHOICES EARLY (ADVANCE) - 5<sup>th</sup> Grade**

Members of the Warner Robins Police Department will be teaching the ADVANCE Program to all fifth grade students. This program is designed to give your child the skills they need to resist pressures that students may face. The lessons will include topics such as searching for positive alternatives, understanding and avoiding gangs and violence, how to say "NO", and media influences. The program will inform children of the dangers of drugs and violence and teach them how to overcome peer pressure while avoiding making negative choices in their lives.

An important part of this program is for the parents to be involved in assisting their child with homework assignments, reinforcing the importance of maintaining good behavior, and most importantly, helping to keep their child's body drug-free. Parents will be invited to attend a parent meeting at the ADVANCE graduation ceremony.

## **BALLOONS/GIFTS AT SCHOOL**

Students will not be allowed to accept flowers, balloons, or other gifts sent to the school during the school day.

## **BICYCLES**

Students who ride bicycles to school should park and lock them in the designated area immediately upon arrival. Students should not secure more than one bike with one lock. (Do not lock two bikes together). The school is at no time responsible for damage or loss of a bicycle. Students who ride bicycles to school should obey state laws for their safety.

## **BOOK CLUBS**

During the school year, teachers may occasionally send home individual book orders from various companies such as Troll and Scholastic. The purchase of books from these sources is optional and the books are not used as part of the instructional program. The orders are distributed to children during non-instructional time.

## **BUS CONDUCT**

The parents/guardians of students are responsible for the supervision of their child until they board the bus in the morning and after they exit the bus at the end of the day. The school has the authority to discipline a student for any misconduct occurring on the way to or from school. The school bus is an extension of the classroom. Once the student boards the bus, the student is expected to conduct him/herself on the bus in a manner consistent with the established standards for classroom behavior.

The bus driver shall bring students who do not conduct themselves properly on a bus to the attention of the principal. The bus driver is responsible for the safety of all who ride the bus. Students are expected to comply with reasonable instructions given by the bus driver. The bus driver has the authority to assign seats either temporarily or permanently and to establish rules for safety and proper behavior on the bus. Bus students are not to leave the school grounds before or after school without permission. The bus driver shall report improper student behavior to the principal or appropriate person.

A student who cannot conduct him/herself properly on a bus may have their riding privileges suspended. In such a case, the parent or guardian of the student involved shall be responsible for transporting the student to and from school. In cases of bus vandalism, the student and parent/guardian will be held responsible.

Students are prohibited from any and all acts of physical violence, bullying, physical assault, verbal assault of other persons on the school bus, disrespectful conduct toward the school bus driver or other persons on the school bus, and any other unruly behavior.

A meeting of the parent or guardian of the student and appropriate school district officials must be held to form a school bus behavior contract whenever:

1. A student is found to have engaged in bullying; or
2. A student is found to have engaged in physical assault or battery of another person on the school bus.

Students are prohibited from using any electronic devices during the operation of the bus, including but not limited to cell phones, MP 3 players, pagers, radios, tape or compact disc players; or any other electronic device in a manner that might interfere with the school bus communication equipment or the school bus driver's operation of the school bus.

Students are also 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.

#### Minor Offenses

1. Failure to remain seated
2. Refusing to obey driver/monitor
3. Throwing objects on the bus
4. Improper/dangerous conduct boarding or unboarding
5. Inappropriate physical contact
6. Excessive noise
7. Unsafe items
8. Eating/drinking
9. Discarding trash
10. Extending objects outside window
11. Other disruptive behavior

#### Consequences for Infractions of Bus Conduct

**First Sign of Student Misbehavior:** The bus driver will make contact with the parent to ask for help with the student. The driver will document the specific elements of the incident and document the conversation with the parent.

**First Bus Report:** A conference with the school official, parent, and driver is held. Suspension from the bus for a minimum of three (3) days will follow if the parent fails to attend the conference. A contract will be executed between student, parents, and school.

**Second Bus Report:** Five (5) days off bus

**Third Bus Report:** Ten (10) days off bus

**Fourth Bus Report:** Off bus the remainder of the year

A student may be suspended from the bus for 1-10 days on the first report if the principal determines the incident warrants suspension.

#### Major Offenses

Although there may be no other bus report, consequences for major offenses begin at the third report level and proceed as reports occur.

1. Disrespect of driver/monitor/administrator
2. Fighting
3. Severe vandalism - restitution required
4. Possession of tobacco

The student will be suspended from the bus for the remainder of the year for behaviors such as possession of weapons or drugs or severe disrespect of the driver. When a student is denied bus transportation due to misconduct, his/her absence from school is not excused. The parent/guardian shall be expected to provide transportation during the time the student is excluded from the bus.

### **CHALLENGED MATERIALS**

Criticisms of instructional and library materials that are in the Houston County schools shall be submitted in writing to the individual school principal on the form available in the school office. It is suggested that the critic file the complaint which will be submitted to the school Media Committee appointed by the principal. If a parent or guardian objects to a reading assignment made by a classroom teacher, the parent may request in writing that the student be given a comparable alternative assignment without penalty; in so doing, the parent should state the reason for the request.

### **COMMUNICATION BETWEEN HOME and SCHOOL**

Routine communications and information are normally sent home with students. Parents are urged to ask students daily about notes and forms from school. Generally, when a parent is requested to sign a note or form, unless otherwise stated, the signature does not indicate agreement with the contents, but only that the parent has seen the communication. If parents have questions about any school matter, they should call the teacher or the administrators of the school.

### **CONFERENCES - PARENT/TEACHER**

Parents are welcome to visit Houston County schools and are urged to call the school office and schedule conferences with teachers as needed. Teachers will notify parents of additional times that they are available for conferences.

Parents should first report to the school office upon entering the school building to obtain a pass and sign in. Please sign out in the office as you leave.

### **COUNSELING**

The Houston County Elementary School Counseling Program is both preventive and developmental in design. Development of a healthy self-concept and a respect for the feelings of others can prevent the occurrence of problems in later years. The program consists of individual counseling, small group counseling, classroom guidance, and consultation with parents, teachers and administrators.

Individual counseling - The counselor sometimes meets with a child on a one-to-one basis, building an atmosphere of mutual trust, respect and caring. The counselor strives to understand the child's needs and point-of-view. Understanding, support, and constructive suggestions for solving problems are given.

Small group counseling - Students have the opportunity to participate in small groups with others who share common concerns. Groups are for everyone, and participation does not indicate a problem. Groups deal with such subjects as family adjustment, self-concept, getting along with others and loss.

Parents must notify the counselor in writing if they do not wish for their child to participate in groups.

In classroom guidance, the counselor goes into the classroom and talks with the entire class about such things as getting to know themselves, getting along with others, studying and taking tests, following school rules, learning skills for making decisions, learning responsibility, and personal safety.

There are several ways a student may be referred to the counselor. The student may ask for a conference; parents may ask the counselor to talk with their child; a teacher or principal may ask the counselor to talk with a student; or, the counselor may initiate the conference.

Parents are urged to get to know the school counselor. The elementary school counselor is a professional who provides guidance services to all students and who assists children in their academic, personal, and social development.

### **CRISIS COMMUNICATION SYSTEM**

The Houston County School System has an automated, emergency calling system which is used in the event of emergencies such as school closings, evacuations, natural disasters, off-campus events, school lock-downs, or other major incidents. The Crisis Communication System delivers a recorded message to parents by telephone. This calling system enables the delivery of a fast, accurate message and is a valuable addition to our school safety program. **Please ensure that your child's school has accurate telephone numbers on file.**

### **DAMAGE TO PROPERTY**

Parents or guardians shall be responsible for the willful damage to the school building, furniture, bus, grounds, textbooks, or other property of the school by their child or ward. The principal shall assess the cost of repairing the damage. The student will be held responsible for their actions.

### **DISCIPLINE**

The complete Houston County Schools Student Conduct Code is printed in the back of this handbook {Code of Conduct, Policy JCD}. Please take time to read the Code of Conduct and discuss it with your children.

Classroom control is a prerequisite to classroom learning. Students who are well disciplined direct their interests, efforts, and abilities toward greater achievement. Discipline and classroom control requires the joint effort on the part of the teacher and students with the assistance of the parents.

A positive approach to discipline and learning is used in all elementary schools. Specific rules for proper behavior are explained and discussed by all teachers on a continuous basis. Students are expected to obey these rules and all directions given by school personnel. Parents are requested to reinforce a positive attitude toward learning and appropriate behavior.

Because all circumstances regarding misbehavior cannot be predicted or anticipated, the principal is granted wide authority in determining punishments or making decisions regarding disciplinary matters based on individual cases.

#### **Weapons Policy - Please read carefully**

Any elementary child who brings a weapon to school or who is in possession of a weapon at school or any other school function will be disciplined. The extent of the disciplinary action is dependent on the child's grade level, their actions, intent or if threats were made.

In a case of simple possession without intent or threat, the student is assigned to the Elementary Alternative School program.

If intent or threat is evident, the student is suspended home and scheduled for a hearing before the *Student Review Committee* to determine appropriate disciplinary action with assignment to the alternative school.

Any instance involving the possession of a weapon must be reported to the Executive Director for Elementary School Operations.

The term "weapon" means and includes:

- Any pistol, revolver, or any weapon designed or intended to propel a missile of any kind
- Any dirk, bowie knife, switchblade knife, ballistic knife, or other knife (2 inch blade or longer)

- Straight-edge razor or razor blade
- Spring stick, metal knucks, blackjack or any flailing instrument consisting of two or more rigid parts connected in such a way as to allow them to swing freely which may be known as a nun chahka, nun chuck, nunchaku shuriker or fighting chain
- 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
- Any stun gun or taser
- Toy weapons that are considered by the principal to be realistic
- Ammunition, bullets, or any objects which may explode upon impact
- Any objects that are considered by the school administration as weapons

#### Possession/Use of Drugs/Alcohol/Weapons

- a. Sale of drugs or alcohol on school property or at school related activities: The appropriate law enforcement agency is notified. The parent or guardian is notified. The student is to be immediately suspended and disciplined accordingly.
- b. Possession or use of drugs or alcohol: notify law enforcement and parents or guardian; suspension to home and refer to Student Review Committee.
- c. Possession or use of weapons: Notify parents or guardians; suspension to home and refer to Student Review Committee.

#### Alternative Placement Program

The purpose of the Elementary Alternative Program is to accommodate the behavioral and academic needs of students who have committed excessive or severe infractions in their home school. The program is very structured and teacher directed. Students are required to adhere to strict rules and guidelines. There is limited interaction with other students in school during the time that a student serves in the program.

The alternative program will maintain a quality educational program for the child with the emphasis on the Georgia Performance Standards for his or her grade level. A behavior improvement plan is developed for each child, in order to help him/her meet goals that will improve the student's understanding of the relationship between action and consequence before returning to the home school. The overall goal is to help the student learn appropriate social skills and become more productive in the regular school setting.

Students are expected to attend the alternative school each day. If a student is absent, the parent must provide a doctor's note or written note before the student can be admitted back to the program. The student must make up any absences regardless of whether excused or unexcused. Student absences will be reported to the home school.

Kindergarten and first grade students will be assigned 15 days. Second through fifth grade students will be assigned 30 days. Students referred for weapons with no intent will be assigned 15 days of alternative placement. Extended days can be assigned to students who are not following the rules.

There must be an agreed upon and confirmed date and time for an intake meeting to take place for the child being sent to the Alternative School Program. The date must be confirmed with the alternative school administration before a meeting is scheduled with the parent or guardian of the referred child. The following people must be present for the meeting: home school administrator, alternative school representative, parent or guardian, and the alternative student.

Bus transportation will be provided for students to be transported to and from the alternative placement program. The home school administrator must make arrangements with the transportation department. The bus will pick up and drop the student off at his or her home school. If a student has any bus write up during his or her time in the alternative program, the student's transportation privileges for the alternative school may be temporarily revoked. The parent or guardian will then be responsible for transporting the child to and from the alternative school. Transportation is a privilege and will not be abused.

Houston County's Elementary sites are: Lindsey Elementary and Kings Chapel Elementary.

### *In-School Suspension (ISS)*

In-school suspension is used as an alternative to suspension home. It is a time for students to complete their classroom work, make-up any missed work, as well as a time to think about their actions that got them there. We want our students in their classroom, but we want them to make good, responsible decisions.

Each school serves a nutritious lunch to students in ISS. Some schools serve sack lunches and milk while others receive a lunch tray. Your school's administration will inform you about their procedures for lunch.

### DISMISSAL

When it is necessary for a child to leave school before 3:30 p.m., the person who enrolled the child in school or a person on the approved list must first sign him/her out in the office. Office personnel will then call the student from his/her class. Proper identification may be requested of persons making the checkout request.

### DRESS CODE

Appropriate dress and appearance, proper behavior and cleanliness are vital to each member of the school community. Developing good tastes in attire, good grooming habits and good behavior is a part of the educational program. Wearing inappropriate dress to school can have a negative influence on the educational process and the educational climate of the school.

Each student, with the advice and counsel of his/her parents or guardian, should dress in a manner which is appropriate for school and its related activities. Students dressed modestly will generally have no problems concerning student dress codes.

**The following guidelines are followed in determining whether or not a student's attire is appropriate.**

- The dress, apparel, ornament (jewelry), or grooming is not detrimental to the health and safety of the student or other students. Male students are not permitted to wear earrings.
- The dress, apparel, ornament (jewelry), or grooming is not detrimental to the educational process or the educational climate.
- The dress, apparel, ornament (jewelry), or grooming is consistent with conventional standards of modesty and decorum.
- The dress, apparel, ornament (jewelry), or grooming is free from words, slogans, or pictures, which advertise drugs, alcohol, or sex or which contain vulgar or offensive writing, racial slurs, suggestive pictures or emblems or which may infer membership in gangs.

The campus administrator of the school is charged with the enforcement of the student dress code. The campus administrator is given wide latitude of discretion in the determination of proper or improper dress and behavior of students. Students who are found to be in violation of the dress code are subject to disciplinary action. The principal's actions may include:

- Counseling the student
- Warning the student
- Calling parents to bring a change of clothes
- Placing the student in in-school suspension for the remainder of the day
- Suspending the student short term
- Recommending long-term suspension (for flagrant or repeated violations)

All clothing is to be worn appropriately and in the manner for which it was designed. For example, a shirt designed to be tucked in the trousers or skirt should be worn with the shirttail tucked in. Belts should be buckled. The school reserves the right to establish rules during the school year regarding new fashions in dress.

The following rules for dress, apparel, ornament (jewelry), and/or grooming apply:

- Outer clothing which resembles loungewear, pajamas, or underwear is prohibited.
- See-through clothing is prohibited. (T-shirts must be worn under mesh see-through shirts.)
- Proper underclothing which insures modesty is required.
- Shoes/sandals must be worn at all times. Cleated shoes are prohibited inside the building.
- Clothing that is too tight so as to be immodest is prohibited.
- Clothing which has holes cut or torn that may expose the seat or parts of the body unique to the male or female is prohibited.
- Halter tops, backless blouses, strapless blouses and dresses, sleeveless T-shirts, bike shorts and short-shorts are prohibited. Shorts appropriate for young children are permitted. Students in grades Pre-K through 3rd grade may wear tank tops.
- Fads and styles in dress that differ extremely from conventionally accepted standards are prohibited.
- Hair must be well groomed; extremes in style and color should be avoided.
- Students may not wear hats, caps, combs, or picks, etc., inside the building.
- Extremes in clothing style, color, pattern, and fabric should be avoided.

### DRILLS: FIRE/TORNADO/EMERGENCY/BUS EVACUATION DRILLS

Students, teachers, and other school system employees will participate in drills of emergency procedures. The following safety drills are practiced:

\***Fire Drills** - These are held ten (10) times a year. When the alarm is sounded, students should follow the direction of teachers or marshals quickly, quietly, and in an orderly manner.

\***Tornado/Severe Weather** - Tornado drills are held once a year. Schools do practice walk thrus in order to ensure students know where to go and what to do.

A tornado watch: conditions are favorable for a tornado or severe weather.

A tornado warning: tornado has been sighted.

If a tornado warning is issued, bus dismissal may be delayed. If students are in-route to or from school and a tornado warning is issued, buses are required to stop at the nearest school and students/driver takes shelter there until the warning has passed.

\***Bomb Threat** - This is practiced once a year. Staff and student move 1000 feet from school.

\***Lockdowns** - Code Yellow and Code Red Drills - (Please note that these will take place two (2) times each year. A letter will be sent home ahead of time to notify you of the drills.)  
When schools have been placed on a Code Red lockdown, you will be notified through our Crisis Communication Phone System before the end of the school day.

\***Bus Evacuation** - Safe Bus evacuation is practiced twice a year during physical education classes with all students.

### ENGLISH TO SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES (ESOL) PROGRAM

The English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program goals are to help students obtain English language proficiency and to meet age and grade appropriate academic achievement standards for grade promotion and graduation. The program aids students to succeed in all four language skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing) both socially and academically. The ESOL program is federally mandated

and was established to ensure equal access to the school system's instructional program for those students who have limited English proficiency.

### Grade Placement for English Language Learners (ELLs)

For elementary and middle schools, placement will be made based on completed formal years of schooling and age appropriateness. Age appropriateness for elementary students is defined as not more than one year below the same-aged native English-speaking peers.

### ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

When a student initially enrolls in the Houston County School System, parents are responsible for providing the following documents:

Birth Certificate (Grades Pre-K, K, and 1)	At enrollment
Immunization Record (Georgia Form 3231)	At enrollment
Hepatitis B Vaccination	30 days
Ear, Eye, Dental Screening (Georgia Form 3300)	At enrollment
Guardianship Papers (if student does not live with natural parents)	At enrollment
Records from Previous School (school will make a direct request to the previous school, but the responsibility rests with the parent)	30 days
Proof of Residence	At enrollment
Social Security Number or Waiver or an Application for Social Security Number	At enrollment
Medical Information which will impact instruction	At enrollment

NOTE: Parents who object to the state immunization policy for religious reasons may complete a notarized waiver.

### Immunizations and Health Certificates (Forms 3300 and 3231)

#### **Form 3300 (Certificate of Eye, Ear, Dental Exam)**

A student, regardless of grade level, who has never been in a Georgia public school must provide certification of eye, ear and dental examinations on the Georgia Department of Human Resources Form 3300. Any child admitted to school without a certificate must present one within 120 calendar days. Forms may be obtained and completed at the local public health departments or physician offices.

#### **Form 3231 (Certificate of Immunization)**

Georgia Law requires children attending school (Kindergarten - 12th grade) to be age appropriately immunized with all the required vaccines at the time of first entry in school. A new entrant is a child entering a school in Georgia for the first time or entering after having been absent from a Georgia school for more than 12 months or one school year. All students, regardless of grade and including foreign exchange students, must have the Georgia Department of Human Resources Form 3231 immunization certificate marked "Complete for School" unless any of the following situations exist:

1. Medical exemption: in this case the 3231 has an expiration date no more than 12 months from date of issue. There must be an annual review of the medical exemption and the certificate must be reissued with or without indication of the medical exemption.
2. Religious exemption: For a child to be exempt from immunization on religious grounds, the parent or guardian must furnish the school with a notarized statement and it must meet the following criteria: (A) State that their religious beliefs conflict with immunization requirements; (B) the statement must be signed and dated by the parent/guardian; (C) The statement must be notarized, dated, and signed by a Notary Public; (D) The statement should be submitted to the school in lieu of an immunization certificate (form 3231); (E) The statement does not expire.
3. Waiver of 30 calendar days granted to new entrants by the superintendent or designee.
4. Waiver of 90 calendar days may be granted by the superintendent or designee to students entering Georgia public schools from out of state, if documentation is on file from the county health department or a medical doctor stating that an immunization sequence has been started and can be completed within the 90 day waiver period.

5. Immunizations are required for diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, hepatitis B, polio, measles, mumps, rubella, and varicella (chicken pox). Protection against each of these diseases must be addressed on the form 3231. The form can be computer generated and if the child attends more than one school, an original or a photocopy of the form must be submitted to the second school.

#### Sixth Grade Requirement

All currently enrolled children entering sixth grade on or after July 1, 2007, must meet the following requirements:

1. Two doses of Measles vaccine, two doses of Mumps vaccine, one dose of Rubella vaccine, or laboratory proof of immunity against each of these three diseases.
2. Two doses of Varicella (chicken pox) vaccine or documentation of disease or laboratory proof of immunity. At the time your child entered school, only one dose of this vaccine was required.

For more information about Georgia's immunization program or the immunization requirements for school entry and attendance, please click on the following link to the Georgia Department of Human Resources: [health.state.ga.us/programs/immunization/index.asp](http://health.state.ga.us/programs/immunization/index.asp).

#### Admission to Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten and First Grade

A child is eligible for pre-kindergarten if he/she is four years of age on or before September 1 of the current school year and admission to kindergarten if he/she is five years of age on or before September 1 of the current school year. A child is eligible for enrollment in first grade provided he/she is six years of age on or before September 1 of the current school year.

#### Transfer Students K ~ 5

Students transferring into Houston County Schools who have become residents of Houston County must furnish evidence of their attendance and a transcript of their school records from the school from which they are transferring. Without such records, the principal of the receiving school may suspend admission until such documents are received. However, if the principal elects to make tentative class assignments and tentative admission to the school, the placement is not final until the proper transcript and/or records are received. Grade or class placement shall be the responsibility of the principal and shall be based on general achievement with consideration being given to the mental, physical, emotional, and social maturity of the child. In general, students transferring into the school system will be placed in the same grade level as in the school from which they transferred. Testing will be required to determine placement of students from home schools and from schools not accredited by a regional accrediting agency or the *Georgia Accrediting Commission*. Contact the principal for additional placement testing information.

### FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

#### Notice to Parents/Guardians and Eligible Students

Under the Family Education Rights & Privacy Act, you have a right to:

1. Inspect and review, within 45 days of a request, the education records of a student who is your child, or in the case of a student who is eighteen (18) years of age or older or those who are emancipated, your own educational records. Parents or eligible students should submit to the child's school principal a written request and identify the record(s) they wish to inspect. The child's school principal will make arrangements for access and provide notice of such arrangements.
2. Request an amendment of the student's education records to ensure that they are not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights. To request the school district to amend a record, parents or eligible students should write the school principal, specify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is

inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights. If the district decides not to amend the record, it will notify the parents or eligible students of the decision and inform them of their right to a hearing. Additional information regarding the hearing procedure will be provided with the notification of the right to a hearing.

3. Consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that the Act and the regulations promulgated pursuant to the Act authorize disclosure without consent. One exception which permits disclosure without consent is to school officials with legitimate educational interest. A school official is a person employed by the district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member; a member of the school board; a person with whom the district has contracted to perform a specific task (such as attorney, auditor, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee (such as a disciplinary or grievance committee). A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an educational record in order to fulfill his/her professional responsibility. Upon request, the school district shall forward educational records without prior consent to another school in which the student seeks or intends to enroll.
4. File with the United States Department of Education a complaint under 20 C.F.R. 99.64 concerning the alleged failures by the HCSOE to comply with the requirements of the Act or the regulations promulgated thereunder. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20202-5920.

#### Notice to the Public

The Houston County School District has designated the following information as directory information:

1. A student's name.
2. A school at which a student is enrolled.
3. A student's participation in official school clubs and sports.
4. A student's weight and height if he/she is a member of an athletic team.
5. Awards or honors received during the time the student is enrolled in the Houston County School District.
6. Photographs or other student depiction used in information to the public regarding awards, honors, extracurricular activities, sports or school promotions.

Unless you, as a parent/guardian or eligible student, request otherwise, this information may be disclosed to the public upon request. You have the right to refuse all or any part of the above information to be designated as directory information and to be disclosed to the public upon request. If you wish to exercise this right, you must notify the principal of the school at which the student is enrolled, in writing, within ten (10) school days after the first day of the school year.

Notice of additional rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 USC 1232g) is available through the Office of Superintendent of Schools.

#### GIFTED EDUCATION PROGRAM

A gifted-identified student, as defined by the Georgia Board of Education, is one who demonstrates a high degree of intellectual, creative, and/or artistic ability(ies); possesses exceptional leadership skills or excels in specific academic fields/ and who needs special instruction and/or special ancillary services to achieve at levels commensurate with the student's abilities. (SBOE rule 160-4-20) Students, grades kindergarten through twelve, in the Houston County School System who demonstrate a high degree of intellectual, academic, creative and/or artistic ability shall be provided special services by the Program for Gifted Students. Students obtain eligibility through three out of four established criteria in the areas of achievement, mental ability, creativity and motivation.

The elementary Houston County Gifted Program is named FOCUS, an acronym for Fostering Originality, Creativity, Unique Ideas, and Self-Direction. Students who qualify for FOCUS attend a gifted resource

class one day each week, either on the campus of their own school or at another school. The FOCUS curriculum is interdisciplinary in nature and fosters the application of skills developed in the regular classroom. Students develop skills in a variety of areas that include problem solving, critical thinking, creativity, organization, research, and abstract thinking.

Students currently enrolled in Houston County Schools may be referred for testing at any time during the school year. All referrals will be reviewed by the schools' eligibility teams for consideration for formal evaluation. Parent permission will be obtained before any formal evaluation is begun, and parents will be notified in writing regarding their child's eligibility for the gifted program.

**Kindergarten, First, and Second Grade** - Referrals will be based upon a county-wide screening activity. Teachers and parents may make referrals by completing a TABs form for the eligibility team. Students who are eligible for placement will enter FOCUS gifted classes at the beginning of the following semester.

**Third, Fourth, and Fifth Grades** - Students will be automatically referred for evaluation based upon county-wide standardized test results. Students who are eligible for placement will enter gifted classes at the beginning of the following semester.

For further information, contact the FOCUS teacher at your child's school or the Director of Gifted Education.

#### *Gifted Program Continuation Criteria*

All students placed in the Houston County Gifted Program must meet eligibility criteria established by the Georgia Department of Education. According to state regulations, criteria for continued placement shall include satisfactory performance in both gifted and regular education classes, as well as provisions for a probationary period. The following Gifted Program Continuation Criteria for students in Houston County Schools are as follows:

**Grades** - The student shall pass all gifted and regular education classes as well as maintain an 80.00 average each grading period. In elementary and middle school, this average is computed using grades from the four core subject areas only. For the purposes of this policy, grading period shall be defined as each nine-week grading period in elementary and middle schools and each semester in high school.

**Probation/Withdrawal** - Any student failing to maintain an 80 average shall be placed on probation for one grading period. Students not performing satisfactorily during the probation period shall be removed from the program at the conclusion of that grading period.

**Re-Entry** - Re-entry is available at the parent's request under the following conditions:

- a. Re-entry may be considered only at the beginning of an academic year.
- b. The student must have met continuation criteria each grading period from the time of withdrawal to the time of requested re-entry.
- c. A student may re-enter without being retested if and only if re-entry is requested and granted at the first possible opportunity.
- d. Gifted students who are suspended long-term or expelled from school are not eligible for gifted services. However, those students who apply for admission to a system alternative school and who attend for the duration of their suspension or expulsion are eligible for re-entry into the Gifted Program upon returning to their home school. Additional testing/evaluation is not necessary in this instance.

## GRADING

### Pre-Kindergarten

Pre-Kindergarten students are evaluated through two parent-teacher conferences and application of a Bright From the Start assessment instrument. Progress Reports are issued to Pre-K students in December and May.

### Kindergarten

The kindergarten report to parents is based on the Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developmental Skills (GKIDS) and the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS). Reports are sent out at nine-week intervals and parents are invited to a conference at the end of each reporting period.

### First Grade

The first grade report to parents is based on student progress toward meeting Georgia Performance Standards (GPS). Parent/teacher conferences are encouraged throughout the year.

### Second Grade

Below is a list of subjects that should be graded on the report card. Please note, however, that all subjects/objectives included in the Georgia Performance Standards, Houston County Elementary School Curriculum Documents, and for Art and Music, the Georgia DOE Quality Core Curriculum Documents should be taught.

- Language Arts
- Mathematics
- Science/Health/Safety
- Social Studies
- Art
- Music
- Physical Education
- Conduct
- Work Habits

### Grading System for Grade Two: E, S, N, U

**Excellent (E) - Excellent Achievement Effort** (consistently performs above grade level expectations and consistently applies and extends learning skills)

**Satisfactory (S) - Satisfactory Achievement Effort** (completes grade level work at a satisfactory rate and usually applies learned skills)

**Needs Improvement (N) - Needs Improvement** (produces work of inconsistent quality and needs frequent corrective instruction and additional practice)

**Unsatisfactory (U) - Unsatisfactory Achievement Effort** (the student does not meet expectations)

Art, music, physical education, work habits and conduct will be marked with an "S" for satisfactory, "N" for needs improvement and "U" for unsatisfactory.

### Third, Fourth, and Fifth Grades

Below is a list of subjects that should be graded on the report card. Please note, however, that all subjects/objectives included in the Georgia Performance Standards, Houston County Elementary School

Curriculum Documents, and for Art and Music, the Georgia DOE Quality Core Curriculum Documents should be taught.

- Language Arts
- Mathematics
- Science/Health/Safety
- Social Studies
- Art
- Music
- Physical Education
- Conduct
- Work Habits

*Grading System for Grades Three, Four, and Five*

A 100 - 90    B 89 - 80    C 79 - 70    F - Failure (Below 70)

The areas of art, music, physical education, and conduct will be graded by S, N, and U. "Satisfactory" or S will represent that the student is progressing at a satisfactory rate according to his/her developmental level. "Needs Improvement" or N represents that the student's progress is in the satisfactory range; however, specific deficiencies, which could lead to further difficulties, have been noted. "Unsatisfactory" or U will represent that the student has accomplished less than 70% of the expectations of the area graded.

A transfer student entering from an accredited school during a graded period will be given credit for work done at his/her former school. Grades will be averaged with those assigned at the receiving school.

*Purposes and Guidelines*

The purpose of the report to parents is for the teacher to communicate the student's progress. Grading should be a professional assessment of a child's progress based on standards. Grading, particularly in the primary grades, should not be based exclusively on pen and paper assessments.

Examples: Teacher observation of students

1. Counting money
2. Measuring objects
3. Demonstrating concepts with manipulatives
4. Reading and answering questions orally
5. Conducting a science experiment
6. Participating in a group activity - (cooperative learning)
7. Developing a social studies project
8. Playing learning games
9. Summarizing a story that has been read silently
10. Researching a topic

Documentation of progress may be maintained through checklists, rubrics, conference notes, anecdotal records, completed projects, contracts, etc. It is also important for students to be aware of progress and to receive immediate feedback when they are assessed.

A second purpose of report cards and grading is to utilize assessment procedures as an instructional tool. If the assessment procedure reveals weaknesses, instructional strategies or modifications should be implemented to encourage mastery of skills and concepts.

**Lowering grades for disciplinary reasons is prohibited in the Houston County School System.**

Parents are to sign and return report cards the following instructional day. A parent's signature indicates that the parent has received and reviewed the report card.

Elementary school Report Cards are sent home every nine weeks (about 45 days) with Progress Reports issued mid-way.

Progress Reports / Deficiency Notices

Progress reports (deficiency slips) may be sent home to parents any time during a nine-weeks period that the teacher judges appropriate when a student’s progress is unsatisfactory. Parents should discuss these deficiency reports with the student, schedule a conference if desired, and promptly sign and return the deficiency report to the teacher. The parent will be notified if his/her child is in danger of receiving an unsatisfactory grade in art, music, or physical education. Progress reports will be sent home at the mid nine-weeks if the student’s work is unsatisfactory.

Report Cards

Report Card Schedule 2009-2010

Nine Weeks Period	End Date	Date Report Issued
Progress Report, Day 22	September 2	September 4 (Friday)
1st 9 weeks, Day 45	October 6	October 15 (Thursday)
Progress report, Day 67	November 9	November 12 (Thursday)
2nd 9 weeks, Day 90	December 18	January 8 (Friday)
Progress report, Day 112	February 5	February 9 (Tuesday)
3rd 9 weeks, Day 135	March 17	March 24 (Wednesday)
Progress Report, Day 157	April 23	April 27 (Tuesday)
4th 9 weeks, Day 180	May 26	May 26 (Wednesday)

**HEALTH SERVICES**

The goal of the Houston County School System’s Health Related Services program is to appraise, protect, and promote the health of students. Preventive and emergency school-based health services are provided to public school children in grades Pre- Kindergarten through Twelfth. The nursing team provides “Best Practice” strategies that strive to identify health related concerns that influence learning, eliminate barriers and increase attendance.

Medication Administration

Prescription medicines will be given to students by school personnel only when prescribed and ordered by a physician and when the following guidelines are followed:

1. School personnel must be informed by a written note from the parent directing that medication be given to the student at school. Specific information regarding medicine, dosage, and time to be given must be clearly stated.
2. Medication forms (HRS 29) are available to be filled out by the physician and parent in cases of long-term medication (more than two weeks).
3. All medication must be presented to the school office in a prescription labeled bottle, which will include student’s name, date, instructions for administering, name of drug, and name of issuing physician.

Non-prescription medicine, over the counter medicine, such as Tylenol, will be given only for a short-term duration (i.e. two consecutive weeks or for a total of 10 times through the semester without a physician’s order.) Medication must be in the original container and accompanied by written parental request and directions for administering. (Form HRS 29C)

HERBAL Medications will not be given without an order from the student's physician.

Expired medication will not be given. Please check for expiration date before bringing medications to school.

Students requiring an inhaler or Epi Pen are allowed to have them at all times. IT is critical that you discuss your child's medical condition(s) with the principal, teacher, and school nurse.

### Head Lice

Head lice can infect anyone, not just children.

Head lice are spread only through head-to-head contact.

Lice are more common among preschool and elementary school-aged children and their families. Head lice cannot live on pets or animals, only on humans. No diseases are spread by head lice.

How do I know if we have head lice?

- A few people will get an itchy scalp. Nits or eggs may be found close to the scalp and are hard to remove. Live crawling lice can be found throughout the scalp.
- The scalp will itch for many reasons AND for weeks after detection.
- Black specks may be found on the pillowcase (this is called the droppings).
- Some people have no symptoms at all
- Once lice are found on a student's head the child has had lice infestation for at least 7-10 days.

If your child is found to have active crawling head lice, you will be called to pick him/her up.

A letter will be sent home with these directions:

1. Inspect each member of your family daily for 3 weeks (then routinely once a week). Look closely at the scalp and you will see small, yellowish-tan nits (eggs) firmly attached to the hair shaft. They are not easily removed.
2. Treat each member infested (DO NOT treat unless there are live, crawling lice or eggs present; treatment WILL NOT prevent head lice). Several safe products are on the market. When used as directed, these products will kill the lice. REMOVAL of ALL nits (eggs) is the only way to stop the repeated problem.
3. ALL personal clothing, bed linen, towels, combs, and brushes must be washed in hot water with a strong detergent.
4. Items unable to be washed should be vacuumed (mattresses, furniture, carpets, stuffed animals).
5. A repeat shampoo treatment with the medicated product should be done 7-10 days after the first shampooing was done. This will kill any hatched eggs that were not killed or removed during the first treatment.

Please help the school prevent lice outbreaks by encouraging your child not to share clothing items or other personal items such as combs, brushes and towels with friends. The school nurse is available for consultation with difficult cases.

### Hospital-Homebound Services

Hospital/Homebound refers to those students who have a medically diagnosed physical condition which restricts them to their home or a hospital for a period of time which will significantly interfere with their education. A medical referral form shall be completed by a licensed medical physician. For more detailed information, please see your child's principal and counselor.

## HOMEWORK

It is the philosophy of the Houston County Board of Education that homework is an extension of the school curriculum. It is designed to be a constructive tool in the teaching-learning process; and, as such, can be an effective aid to student learning. Students will have a degree of homework on a regular basis for the following reasons:

1. To help students develop independent study skills
2. To reinforce learning which has taken place at school
3. To bring the home and school closer together
4. To relate school learning to out-of-school interests

Parents are encouraged to:

1. Show a positive interest in homework as well as in all other schoolwork
2. Provide children with a suitable place and quiet time for homework
3. Cooperate with the teacher to make homework more effective
4. Serve as consultants for problems, avoid doing the homework for the child
5. Allow for a time-out if the session becomes too emotional or tense

Types of homework to be expected include:

1. Practice assignments
2. Book reports
3. Special projects which are related to class activities
4. Reading assignments which will expand understanding of material introduced in class

## HONOR ROLL/HONORABLE MENTION

Students in grades 3-5 may achieve Honor Roll or Honorable Mention status each grading period by meeting the following criteria:

Honor Roll: To qualify for Honor Roll, students must:

1. Earn "A's" in all academic subjects.
2. Earn Satisfactory (S) in Art, Music and Physical Education.

Honorable Mention: To qualify for Honorable Mention, students must:

1. Earn "A's" with no more than one B in all academic subjects.
2. Earn Satisfactory (S) in Art, Music and Physical Education.

## INSURANCE

An independent insurance company offers student accident insurance coverage to students. Two plans are available: school-day coverage or twenty-four hour coverage. Information sheets will be sent home by the students. Checks should be made payable to the insurance company. You are encouraged to carefully look at this affordable insurance as it definitely covers any accidents occurring at school.

## INTERNET POLICY

The Houston County Board of Education recognizes the importance of making advanced technology and increased access to learning opportunities available to students and staff. As resources permit, INTERNET services shall be made available in schools. The board of education realizes that with access to computers and people all over the world also comes the availability of material that may not be considered of educational value in the context of the school setting. Houston County School System

personnel shall take available precautions to restrict access to controversial materials. The following procedures must be followed by Houston County employees and students in INTERNET use:

1. All student access to the Internet will be under the direct supervision of a teacher or designated professional staff member.
2. The Houston County School System shall employ Internet filtering technology which will restrict access by minors to inappropriate materials on the Internet.
3. The Houston County School System will use appropriate measures, including Internet filtering solutions and network security devices, which will insure the safety of minors when using Internet mail, chat rooms, and other forms of communication.
4. The Houston County School System will use appropriate tracking methods to insure that minors do not participate in unauthorized or illegal measures while online.
5. The Houston County School System will employ adequate network firewall and server security measures as to insure against the unauthorized use or disclosure of personal information regarding students and faculty.
6. The Houston County School System shall employ Internet filtering and network firewall facilities, which will restrict access by minors to harmful matters.
7. All students who are granted access privileges to the Internet must first read and sign the Student Agreement form. Furthermore, their parents and guardians must read the acceptable use policy and sign the Parent Agreement form and return it to a designated person at the student's school.

#### *Penalties for Improper Internet Use*

Any user violating these rules or any other state or federal laws or classroom or school system policies is subject to lose network and/or computer use privileges. Furthermore, school disciplinary action, including in-school suspension and/or suspension or expulsion may be imposed.

If the actions of a user cause or contribute to the loss of service, applications, and/or data, school disciplinary action commensurate with the magnitude of the infraction shall be administered. In the event that such action causes the need for technical assistance to restore the service, application or data, restitution may be charged.

Any unauthorized access or breach of state or federal law is subject to criminal prosecution.

Parent and student Internet Agreements are found in the front of this handbook. They must be signed and returned to school.

#### LIBRARY BOOKS

Students are responsible for library books checked out just as they are responsible for textbooks issued; therefore, they should be careful not to damage or misplace library books. Parents will be contacted for lost or damaged books for payment. Failure to pay for lost or damaged books/media materials will also result in the withholding of report cards, etc, at the end of school year until fees are paid.

#### LOST AND FOUND

Each school will have a designated lost and found area. Any article marked with a student's name is immediately returned to the student. **All hats, coats, jackets, lunch boxes, books, etc., should be plainly marked with the student's name.** At the end of each semester, all articles remaining in the lost and found collection will be donated to a local charity.

If your child loses an item at school, encourage him/her to check the lost and found. Parents are also encouraged to check the lost and found for missing articles.

## LUNCH/BREAKFAST PROGRAM

All students are encouraged to eat a well-balanced meal each day at school. Lunch and breakfast will be served daily at each school. The cost to students is \$2.00 per day for lunch and \$1.50 per day for breakfast. Free and/or reduced meals are available to qualifying students. Reduced prices are \$.40 per day for lunch and \$.30 per day for breakfast. All students will be given information regarding free and/or reduced meals during the first days of school. To apply for free and/or reduced meals, parents must complete an application for each child immediately after receiving the application. A new application must be completed at the beginning of each school year.

Parents are encouraged to pay for student meals by the week or month. Money will be collected in the lunchroom daily by the lunchroom staff but credit will be given for advance payment. **All checks should be made payable to *HOUSTON COUNTY SCHOOL NUTRITION*. Students may not "charge" for breakfast.** Students may bring a lunch and purchase milk. (Price for milk is 50 cents)

Students will be given milk to drink as part of their lunch in the lunchroom unless a doctor's statement is provided. Juice and *Juicy Juice* will be available for an additional charge. No carbonated drinks or drinks in glass bottles shall be brought to school.

### *School Breakfast and Lunch Information Elementary School 2009-2010*

PRICES	REDUCED	STUDENT	ADULT	ADULT (VISITOR)
BREAKFAST	\$.30	\$1.50	\$1.75	\$1.75
LUNCH	\$.40	\$2.00	\$3.00	\$3.25

**Ala Carte Items:** Cannot be pre-paid or charged. This item must be paid for during lunch. (Schools have a price list for ala carte items).

### *Pre-payment Schedule*

In order for your children to be served efficiently, pre-payments should be made weekly or monthly. Please use the following schedule as a guide for making monthly payments. **Checks should be made payable to Houston County School Nutrition.**

MONTH	BREAKFAST		LUNCH	
	REDUCED	FULL-PAID	REDUCED	FULL-PAID
August (20 days)	\$6.00	\$30.00	\$8.00	\$40.00
September (21 days)	\$6.30	\$31.50	\$8.40	\$42.00
October (20 days)	\$6.00	\$30.00	\$8.00	\$40.00
November (15 days)	\$4.50	\$22.50	\$6.00	\$30.00
December (14 days)	\$4.20	\$21.00	\$5.60	\$28.00
January (17 days)	\$5.10	\$25.50	\$6.80	\$34.00
February (15 days)	\$4.50	\$22.50	\$6.00	\$30.00
March (20 days)	\$6.00	\$30.00	\$8.00	\$40.00
April (20 days)	\$6.00	\$30.00	\$8.00	\$40.00
May (18 days)	\$5.40	\$27.00	\$7.20	\$36.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>\$54.00</u></b>	<b><u>\$270.00</u></b>	<b><u>\$72.00</u></b>	<b><u>\$360.00</u></b>

### Policy on Charging Lunch

Charges will be limited to three meals per student. Schools will notify parents when the child reaches the charge limit of three lunches. **Students are not allowed to charge breakfast.** After the charge limit has been reached, the child will be served an alternative lunch of a carton of milk and a cheese sandwich or a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. After the fifth consecutive alternative lunch, parents will be required to come to the school in order to provide the child with lunch money or a lunch from home.

### MONEY

It is recommended that students only bring enough money to school for daily purchases. For example, breakfast and lunch monies, school pictures, etc.

### PARTIES AT SCHOOL

There are only two (2) approved parties during the school year. They are as follows: Holiday party in December and the End-of-School Year party. Valentine's Day is celebrated at "break time" on February 14<sup>th</sup>. Birthday parties will not be celebrated at school nor will party invitations be distributed on the school campus. Also, lists of students will not be provided due to BOE policy.

### PERSONAL ARTICLES AT SCHOOL

School personnel are not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen personal articles belonging to students; therefore, students should not bring toys, electronic games, radios, tape players, cell phones, pagers, etc., to school.

### PHYSICAL EDUCATION / HEALTH

All elementary students are required by Georgia law to have 90 clock hours of physical education/health instruction each year (60 clock hours of physical education and 30 clock hours of health instruction.) All Houston County Schools have physical education specialists assigned; therefore, a well-planned health and physical education program is available for all students

If a student is ill and unable to participate in physical education, a note from the parent is required each day that the student is to be excused from physical education. If the student is to be excused for more than a week, a note signed by a doctor is required. While a child may be temporarily excused from physical education class because of illness, no child may be exempt from the physical education requirement. Alternative activities or adaptive physical education will be provided if appropriate.

### PROGRAMS FOR EXCEPTIONAL STUDENTS

The Houston County Board of Education provides special education programs for students eligible for services. Information regarding special education services may be obtained from the school and/or the Office of Student Services at the Central Office located in Perry.

### PROMOTION AND RETENTION POLICY

The Houston County Board of Education recognizes its responsibility for the students of Houston County. Part of this responsibility includes a commitment for the student's understanding and mastery of the basics in reading and mathematics. Promotion standards help to provide consistency in instructional emphases and clear expectations for teachers, parents, and students. Promotions are made on the basis of mastery of standards and/or the ability of the pupil to do the work at the next level of instruction, as well as a consideration of social and emotional needs of the student. Promotion and retention of students are administrative matters and are to be made by teachers and principals. The welfare of the student is the primary consideration.

Promotion of students annually is desired; however, it is recognized that under certain circumstances retention must be considered for some students. Retention of elementary school students shall conform to the following:

1. Every effort shall be made to identify potential retainees as early as possible during the school year.
2. The teacher is responsible for the early identification of any student having learning difficulties. The identification shall be made known to the student, parent, and principal through written notification.
3. Attendance regulations set forth in Houston County Board of Education JBD shall be enforced.
4. **Grades 1, 2, 4** - Effective the 2003-2004 school year, results of the Criterion-Referenced Competency Test (CRCT) may be considered in addition to grades, attendance, and other local requirements for promotion. Test results shall also be used to determine a student's need for accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction.

The school principal or designee may retain a student who performs satisfactorily on the Criterion-Referenced Competency Test but who does not meet promotion standards and criteria established by the local board of education.

**Promotion of students in grades 3 and 5 shall follow requirements set forth in Georgia Board of Education Rule 160-4-2.11;**

5. **Grade 3** - Effective the 2003-2004 school year, no third grade student shall be promoted to the fourth grade if the student does not achieve grade level on the Criterion-Referenced Competency Test (CRCT) in reading and meet promotion standards and criteria established by the local board of education for the school that the student attends.
6. **Grade 5** - Effective the 2004-2005 school year, no fifth grade student shall be promoted to the sixth grade if the student does not achieve grade level on the Criterion-Referenced Competency Test (CRCT) in reading and the criterion-Referenced Competency Test in mathematics and meet promotion standards and criteria established by the local board of education for the school that the student attends.
6. When a child is retained, his instructional program will be modified to accommodate his individual needs within resources available.
7. \*Individualized Educational Plans (IEP) for students with handicapping conditions shall establish standards for promotion.
8. Pre-K State guidelines prohibit a student from repeating the pre-kindergarten program.

The decision to promote or retain a child should be made jointly by principal and teacher. The teacher will notify parents and have at least two conferences prior to retaining a child.

A parent may request an appeal of a promotion/retention decision. The request must be in writing and submitted to the principal within five (5) calendar days of the last day of the school year. A Promotion/Retention Appeals Committee will review information relative to the retention and make a final decision.

### **PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)**

We have an active Parent Teacher Organization. The PTO regularly schedules meetings at each campus. Look for PTO information to come home with your child regularly or call your child's school for more information.

### **SCHOOL PICTURES**

During the school year individual school pictures will be made of all students and will be made available to parents and students for purchase. No student is expected to purchase any pictures nor will a student be penalized in any way for not purchasing pictures.

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Any actions such as unwanted touching or inappropriate comments of a sexual nature should be reported immediately to the principal.

Below is the Board of Education policy (JAAC/GAEA) on Sexual Harassment.

The Houston County Board of Education will not tolerate sexual harassment in any form by any person.

It is the policy of the Houston County Board of Education to maintain a learning environment that is free from sexual harassment. It shall be a violation of this policy for any person to harass a student, an employee, or any other person through conduct or communications of a sexual nature as defined below. It shall also be a violation of this policy for students to harass other students through conduct or communications of a sexual nature as defined below.

1. Submission to such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, as a term or condition of employment or an individual's education;
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for promotion or academic decisions affecting that individual; or
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's academic or professional performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive academic or work environment.

Any person who has knowledge of or suspects that sexual harassment is occurring within the system shall immediately report it the same way as provided for in the Student/Parent Grievance Policy.

The right to confidentiality, both of the complainant and of the accused, will be respected consistent with the Board's legal obligations, and with the necessity to investigate allegations of misconduct and take corrective action when this conduct has occurred.

All allegations of sexual harassment shall be immediately reported to the Superintendent or his/her designee, be fully investigated, and immediate and appropriate corrective or disciplinary action shall be initiated by the Superintendent. A substantiated charge against an employee shall subject such person to disciplinary action, including discharge.

## STUDENT CLUBS

Many schools have created opportunities for students to join clubs. Their purpose is to focus on areas of common interests for enhancement and enrichment. Students that belong to clubs will many times feel a sense of school spirit and ownership. Membership is voluntary. The clubs meet only before or after school and no instructional time is lost. All club activities shall be scheduled outside of the instructional day. Examples of clubs may be *chorus, jump-rope team, recycling*, etc. Please check with your principal regarding club membership rules and guidelines.

### *Student Extracurricular Activities Notification*

Each school principal shall implement procedures to annually notify all parents or guardians of all school-sponsored extracurricular activities, organizations and clubs in which students may participate and of the right of the parent or guardian to prohibit their child's participation. Notification to parents and guardians shall be provided annually via the student handbook and shall include the name of the extracurricular activity, student organization or club; information regarding the purpose, activities or national affiliation of the extracurricular activity, organization or club. Any membership or financial requirements for a student to join or become a member of the activity, organization or club shall be included in the information provided.

No student shall be allowed to participate in any school-sponsored extracurricular activity, organization or club if the student's parent or legal guardian has indicated in writing that the parent will not allow the student to participate and has provided a copy of such written notice to the school principal.

For school clubs formed after publication of the student handbook, parents or guardians must approve their student's participation via email, fax or written permission to the school principal.

School extracurricular activities, organizations, or clubs for purposes of this policy are those that are supervised or sponsored by a school system employee designated by the principal, and that meet in school facilities.

### **STUDENT OR PARENT GRIEVANCE**

All parties are encouraged to solve issues at the lowest level prior to filing a formal grievance. The process below is a formalized and much more serious step to helping resolve conflicts.

#### **Level I**

The complaint shall be presented orally or in writing to the principal within ten (10) calendar days after the most recent incident upon which the complaint is based. Any witness or other evidence should be provided at this time. The administrator will conduct an investigation and render a written decision within ten (10) calendar days of the filing of the complaint.

#### **Level II**

A complainant dissatisfied with the decision of the principal may appeal to the Superintendent of Schools by filing a written request to meet with the Superintendent. The complaint should be mailed to:

*David Carpenter, Superintendent  
Houston County Board of Education  
Post Office Box 1850  
Perry, GA 31069-1850*

This request must be filed within ten (10) calendar days after the complainant receives the decision from the principal.

The Superintendent will render a written decision within ten (10) calendar days after the meeting.

#### **Level III**

A complainant dissatisfied with the decision of the Superintendent may appeal to the Houston County Board of Education by filing a written request to the Office of the Superintendent. The appeal must be filed within ten (10) calendar days after the complainant receives the decision from the Superintendent. The Board of Education will act on the complaint at the next scheduled BOE meeting.

### **STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM (SST)**

All public school systems in Georgia must have a Student Team Process. The Student Support Team is a building level-problem solving committee consisting of three or more individuals working together to address the needs of students. Our Student Support Team Process is consistent with Response to Intervention (RTI): Georgia's Student Achievement Pyramid of Interventions.

The Pyramid of Intervention represents the process of continually monitoring student learning and using evaluation results to guide instruction. Georgia's Pyramid of Intervention currently utilizes a 4 Tier model with SST being the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tier of the Pyramid. SST is open to all students (K-12) who have learning and/or behavior problems, and is not making sufficient progress through the Pyramid of Interventions. Monitoring student progress enable educators to determine if interventions are increasing their skills as expected, or if they need additional instructional interventions to enable them to maximize academic success. Parents should be invited to participate in all SST meetings and in the development of intervention strategies. SST is a regular education function and strategies are implemented by the classroom teacher or by other individuals identified by the Student Support Team. Referrals to other system services can also be the result of the SST Process.

## TESTING PROGRAM

In 1971, a statewide testing program was established in Georgia to facilitate instructional planning, to provide feedback to students and parents, and to evaluate the effectiveness of educational programs. As part of the state program, students in grades 3 and 8 will take norm-referenced tests in reading and mathematics (ITBS). A writing assessment for individual students will also be administered to third and fifth graders. The State testing program includes a criterion-referenced test in the areas of reading, language arts and math for grades 1 and 2 and reading, language arts, math, social studies, and science in grades 3, 4, and 5. The *Houston County Literacy Inventory* will be administered three times yearly for students in grades 1 through 3 with parts of it given to struggling readers in grades 4 and 5. It will also be given to kindergarten students twice a year.

A cognitive abilities test (CogAT) is given to students in grade 4.

Kindergartners are to be assessed throughout the school year with Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developmental Skills (GKIDS).

A testing schedule for the 2009-2010 school year is printed below. Parents who have questions about the testing program are encouraged to arrange a conference with the homeroom teacher or the school test coordinator.

## TESTING SCHEDULE FOR 2009-2010

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TEST</u>	<u>GRADE</u>
Begins August 4	GKIDS	K
September 21-25	ITBS	3
October 19-20	CogAT	4
March 3	Writing Assessment	5
March 15-26	Writing Assessment	3
April 14-16;19-20	CRCT	1-5
May 24 - 25	CRCT Retest	3 & 5

## TEXTBOOKS

All textbooks are provided by the Board of Education, and students are responsible for the textbooks which they are issued. Students must pay for textbooks which are lost or damaged (beyond normal wear) according to the schedule below.

1. All books will be bar-coded. Books will not be accepted with the bar-code removed or damaged. Students will be charged 100% of the purchase price if the bar-code is damaged in any way.
2. The student must pay 100% of the purchase price if the book is lost during the first year the book is used.
3. Books depreciate 10% each year thereafter, but in no case will the student's cost be less than 50% of the purchase price of the book.
4. Charges for damaged books are assessed by the principal according to the condition of the book when issued and the extent of the damages.
5. A student's failure to pay for lost or damaged books/media materials will result in the withholding of report cards.

Replacement textbooks will not be issued until payment has been made. A textbook price list is available in the school office.

## TITLE IX - NON-DISCRIMINATION

Federal law prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964); sex (Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972); or disability (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990) in educational programs or

activities receiving federal financial assistance. Students and parents are hereby notified that the Houston County Board of Education does not discriminate in any educational programs or activities. Please call the Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, HCBOE, at 988-6200 or contact by mail at P.O. Box 1850, Perry, Georgia, 31069, for questions or concerns about Title VI/IX or Section 504 or ADA.

## **VISITORS**

Visitors are welcome at all Houston County schools. A visitor is defined as any person who is not a student at such school, an employee of the school or school system, a school board member, an approved volunteer following established guidelines of the school, or a person who has been invited to or otherwise authorized to be at the school by a principal, teacher, counselor, or other authorized employee of the school.

Visitors should first report to the school office upon entering and leaving the school building to obtain a pass. Visits to individual classrooms during instructional time are permitted only with the principal's approval and teacher notification. Such visits are not permitted if their duration or frequency interferes with the delivery of instruction or disrupts the normal school environment. Classroom visits should be limited to no more than 30 - 45 minutes as determined by the principal.

Parents are encouraged to visit school during the lunch break. Parents may purchase a lunch tray for nominal cost. If possible, please call by 8:30 a.m. of the day of your visit if you plan to purchase a school lunch. Parents are welcome in our schools and lunchtime is a great time for you to visit us.

Any person who shall not have any legitimate cause or need to be present upon the premises or within the school safety zone of any school and who willfully fails to remove himself or herself from such premises after the principal or designee of such school requests him or her to do so shall be guilty of a misdemeanor of a high and aggravated nature.

All visitors are reminded of the following Georgia law:

**Any parent, guardian, or person other than a student at a public school who has been advised that minor children are present who continues to upbraid, insult, or abuse any public school teacher, public school administrator, or public school bus driver in the presence and hearing of a student while on the premises of any public school or public school bus may be ordered by any of the above designated school personnel to leave the school premises or school bus, and upon failure to do so, such persons shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be punished by a fine not to exceed \$500.**

Each principal or designee of each school shall have the authority to exercise such control over the buildings and grounds upon which a school is located so as to prohibit any person who does not have a legitimate need or cause to be present thereon from loitering on such premises.

Any person who is not a member of the school staff or student body who loiters on or about any school building without written permission or who causes disturbances may be prosecuted according to law.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

School volunteers may be used to relieve teachers of routine and clerical matters so they may increase their effectiveness in instruction. In some cases, the volunteers will supplement the teacher's work through the volunteer's special resources as determined by the teacher.

Volunteers in the school shall be under the supervision of the principal in whose building they are assigned, in accordance with approved procedures. The school principal or designee will provide an orientation to each volunteer prior to volunteer service at the school. Volunteers must sign in and out at the designated area in the office.

### Security Clearance

All volunteers, including parents, **must receive a security clearance.** A security clearance form may be picked up in the school office. The form must be completed and approved before volunteering will be permissible. The approval process may take several weeks. This also includes chaperones for field trips. Requests for emergency clearances will not be accepted, therefore, it is recommended that you submit a clearance form as soon as possible if you feel there may be an opportunity that you will volunteer at some time throughout the school year.

### WEATHER

In the event of school cancellation, parents will be notified by telephone through the **Crisis Communication System.** This system has the capability to call all 15,000+ parents within a matter of minutes, delivering a fast and accurate message. The message will also be posted to our school system's Website, [www.hcbe.net](http://www.hcbe.net), and will be posted on the HCBOE TV stations, channel 17 for Cox customers and channel 10 for ComSouth customers. A Public Service Announcement request will also be sent to the local media, to include 13WMAZ TV, FOX24 TV, WMGT41 TV, WNNG 1350 AM, 100.9FM, Clear Channel radio stations and Cumulus radio stations.

**If a tornado warning is issued, bus dismissal may be delayed.** If students are in-route to or from school and a tornado warning is issued, buses are required to stop at the nearest school and students/driver takes shelter there until the warning has passed.

### WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL

Parents should notify the school if for any reason it becomes necessary for their child to be withdrawn from school. The withdrawal forms are taken care of ahead of time in the school office if at all possible. Fees owed for lost or damaged books, library fines, lunch fees, etc. must be paid before the withdrawal process is complete. Parents should take a copy of the withdrawal form with them to the new school.

# HOUSTON COUNTY SCHOOLS

## STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

BOARD POLICY

Descriptor Code: JCD

STUDENTS - CODE OF CONDUCT

Adopted: 06/13/06

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It is the purpose of the Houston County Board of Education to operate each school in a manner that will provide an orderly process of education and that will provide for the welfare and safety of all students who attend the schools within the district. In accordance with that purpose, the Board of Education has adopted a policy which requires all schools to adopt codes of conduct which require students to conduct themselves at all times in order to facilitate a learning environment for themselves and other students. These standards for behavior require students to respect each other and school district employees, to obey student behavior policies adopted by the Board and to obey student behavior rules established at each school within the district.

The school's primary goal is to educate, not to punish; however, when the behavior of an individual student comes in conflict with the rights of others, corrective actions may be necessary for the benefit of that individual and the school as a whole. Accordingly, students shall be governed by policies, regulations and rules set forth in the Code of Conduct.

The student code of conduct shall be distributed to each student and the student's parents or guardians during the first week of school and upon enrollment of each new student. The parents shall be requested to sign an acknowledgment of the receipt of the code of conduct and return promptly the acknowledgment to the school. The student code of conduct shall be available in the school office and each classroom.

The Code of Conduct is effective during the following times and in the following places:

- At school or on school property at any time;
- Off school grounds at any school-related activity, function or event and while traveling to and from such events;
- On school buses and at school bus stops.

Also, students may be disciplined for conduct off campus which could result in the student being criminally charged with a felony and which makes the student's continued presence at school a potential danger to persons or property at the school or which disrupts the educational process.

Major offenses including, but not limited to, drug and weapon offenses can lead to schools being named as an Unsafe School according to the provisions of State Board Rule 160-4-8-.16, UNSAFE SCHOOL CHOICE OPTIONS.

Parents are encouraged to become familiar with the Code of Conduct and to be supportive of it in their daily communication with their children and others in the community.

### **AUTHORITY OF THE PRINCIPAL**

The principal is the designated leader of the school and, in concert with the staff, is responsible for the orderly operation of the school. In cases of disruptive, disorderly or dangerous conduct not covered in this Code, the principal may undertake corrective measures which he or she believes to be in the best interest of the student and the school provided any such action does not violate school board policy or procedures.

## **AUTHORITY OF THE TEACHER**

The Superintendent fully supports the authority of principals and teachers in the school system to remove a student from the classroom pursuant to provisions of state law.

Each teacher shall comply with the provisions of O.C.G.A. § 20-2-737 which requires the filing of a report by a teacher who has knowledge that a student has exhibited behavior that repeatedly or substantially interferes with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students in his or her class or with the ability of such student's classmates to learn, where such behavior is in violation of the student code of conduct. Such report shall be filed with the principal or designee on the school day of the most recent occurrence of such behavior, shall not exceed one page, and shall describe the behavior. The principal or designee shall, within one school day after receiving such a report from a teacher, send to the student's parents or guardian a copy of the report and information regarding how the student's parents or guardians may contact the principal or designee.

The principal or designee shall notify in writing the teacher and the student's parents or guardian of the discipline or student support services which has occurred as a result of the teacher's report within one school day from the imposition of discipline or the utilization of the support services. The principal or designee shall make a reasonable attempt to confirm that the student's parents or guardian has received the written notification, including information as to how the parents or guardian may contact the principal or designee.

## **PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES**

When it is necessary to impose discipline, school administrators and teachers will follow a progressive discipline process. The degree of discipline to be imposed by each school official will be in proportion to the severity of the behavior of a particular student and will take into account the student's discipline history, the age of the student and other relevant factors.

The Code of Conduct provides a systematic process of behavioral correction in which inappropriate behaviors are followed by consequences. Disciplinary actions are designed to teach students self-discipline and to help them substitute inappropriate behaviors with those that are consistent with the character traits from Georgia's Character Education Program.

The following disciplinary actions may be imposed for any violation of this Code of Conduct:

- Warning and/or Counseling with a School Administrator, Counselor, or Teacher:
- Loss of Privileges
- Isolation or Time Out
- Removal from Class or Activity
- Notification of Parents
- Parent Conference
- Probation
- Detention
- In-school Suspension
- Placement in an Alternative Education Program
- Short-term Home Suspension
- Referral to a Tribunal for Long-term Suspension or Expulsion
- Suspension or Expulsion from the School Bus
- Referral to Law Enforcement or Juvenile Court Officials: Georgia law requires that certain acts of misconduct be referred to the appropriate law enforcement officials. The School will refer any act of misconduct to law enforcement officials when school officials determine such referral to be necessary or appropriate.

The maximum punishments for an offense include long-term suspension or expulsion, including permanent expulsion, but those punishments will be determined only by a disciplinary tribunal as outlined in the Board of Education policies.

Disciplinary hearings shall be held no later than ten school days after the beginning of the student's suspension unless the school system and parents or guardians mutually agree to an extension.

Any teacher who is called as a witness by the school system shall be given notice no later than three days prior to the hearing.

Parents or students may elect not to contest whether a student has violated the Code of Conduct or the appropriate discipline, and in such cases, an agreement may be negotiated which would include the parents or students waiving a right to a hearing before a disciplinary tribunal. Such an agreement and waiver must be approved also by the disciplinary tribunal or hearing officer in accordance with local board policy.

Before a student is suspended for ten days or less, the principal or designee will inform the student of the offense for which the student is charged and allow the student to explain his or her behavior. If the student is suspended, the student's parents will be notified if possible. School officials may involve law enforcement officials when evidence surrounding a situation necessitates their involvement or when there is a legal requirement that an incident be reported.

School officials may search a student if there is reasonable suspicion the student is in possession of an item that is illegal or against school rules. Students vehicles brought on campus, student book bags, school lockers, desks and other school property are subject to inspection and search by school authorities at any time without further notice to students or parents. Students are required to cooperate if asked to open book bags, lockers or any vehicle brought on campus. Metal detectors and drug or weapon sniffing dogs may be utilized at school or at any school function, including activities which occur outside normal school hours or off the school campus at the discretion of administrators.

#### **BEHAVIOR WHICH WILL RESULT IN DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES**

The degree of discipline imposed will be in accordance with the progressive discipline process unless otherwise stated.

- Possession, sale, use in any amount, distribution, or being under the influence of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturates, marijuana, drug paraphernalia or alcoholic beverage or other intoxicant may result in suspension up to two full semesters.
- Possession, distribution, attempted sale or sale of substances represented as drugs or alcohol shall be subject to a minimum suspension of one full semester.
- Possession, sale, attempted sale, distribution, or being under the influence of a prescription or over the counter drug.
- Possession or use of a weapon or dangerous instrument as provided for in Code Section 16-11-127.1: A student shall not possess, use, handle, or transmit any object that reasonably can be considered a weapon. Students who possess firearms on campus will be subject to a minimum of a one calendar year suspension and will be referred to law enforcement officials.
- Verbal assault, including threats of violence or bodily harm and/or sexual assault or harassment, of teachers, administrators, other school personnel, other students, or persons attending school-related functions: Immediate suspension and automatic referral to a disciplinary tribunal if a student is alleged to have committed an assault upon a teacher or other school personnel; possible referral to a disciplinary tribunal if a student is alleged to have committed an assault upon another student or a person attending a school-related function.
- Physical assault or battery, including sexual battery, of other students, or persons attending school-related functions: possible referral to a disciplinary tribunal if a student is alleged to have committed battery upon another student or a person attending a school-related function.

- **Fighting:** any student engaged in fighting may be subject to discipline up to and including long-term suspension at the discretion of the student's building administrator. Penalties recommended for fighting shall not be reduced or limited by, but shall be in addition to, any penalties imposed by any court of competent jurisdiction.
- **Terroristic Threats and Acts:** any student who commits a terroristic threat or act shall be subject to discipline, including expulsion.
- **Physical violence against a teacher, school bus driver, or other school personnel:**

(1) Immediate suspension and automatic referral to the disciplinary tribunal if a student is alleged to have committed an act of physical violence against a teacher or other school personnel: Expulsion for the remainder of the student's eligibility to attend public schools for acts of physical violence found by a tribunal to have intentionally made physical contact which causes physical harm to another unless such physical contact or physical harm was in defense of himself or herself, as provided in Code Section 16-3-21; or the Board may authorize the student to attend alternative school for the period of the expulsion; provided, however, that if such student is in kindergarten through grade six, then the Board upon the recommendation of the tribunal may permit the student to re-enroll in regular programs for grades 9 through 12; and provided further that if the Board does not operate an alternative education program for grades kindergarten through grade six, then the Board may permit the student in kindergarten through grade six who commits such an act to re-enroll in the public school system. The student shall be referred to juvenile court with a request for a petition alleging delinquent behavior.

(2) Possible punishments may include expulsion, long-term suspension, or short-term suspension for students found by a tribunal to have intentionally made physical contact of an insulting or provoking nature with the person of another.

### Bus Misbehavior

The following specific provisions shall govern student conduct and safety on all school buses:

(1) All provisions of the Student Code of Conduct apply to behavior on the school bus, including but not limited to, acts of physical violence as defined by Code Section 20-2-751.6, bullying as defined by subsection (a) of the Code Section 20-2-751.4, physical assault or battery of other persons on the school bus, verbal assault of other persons on the school bus, disrespectful conduct toward the school bus driver or other persons on the school bus, and other unruly behavior;

(2) A meeting of the parent or guardian of the student and appropriate school district officials must be held to form a school bus behavior contract whenever:

- A student is found to have engaged in bullying; or
- A student is found to have engaged in physical assault or battery of another person on the school bus.

The school bus behavior contract shall provide for age-appropriate discipline, penalties, and restrictions for student misconduct on the bus. Provisions may include, but are not limited to, assigned seating, ongoing parental involvement, and suspension from riding the bus.

These provisions regarding use of a bus behavior contract are not to be construed to limit the instances when other code of conduct violations may require use of a student bus behavior contract.

(3) Students shall be prohibited from using any electronic devices during the operation of a school bus, including but not limited to cell phones; pagers; audible radios, tape or compact disc players without headphones; or any other electronic device in a manner that might interfere with the school bus communication equipment or the school bus driver's operation of the school bus; and

(4) 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.

- Disrespectful conduct, including use of vulgar or profane language, toward teachers, administrators, other school personnel, other students, or persons attending school-related functions
- Any behavior based on a student's race, national origin, sex, or disability that is unwelcome, unwanted, and/or uninvited by the recipient is prohibited, including verbal or non-verbal taunting, physical contact, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature, up to and including sexual harassment as used in connection with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.
- Possession or use of tobacco in any form: First Offense-3 days ISS; Second Offense-5 days ISS; Third Offense-Long-term Suspension.
- Damaging or defacing personal property, including the property of another student or any person legitimately at the school, or school property (vandalism or graffiti) during school hours or off-school hours.
- Theft
- Extortion or attempted extortion shall at a minimum be suspended with the opportunity to apply to an alternative school.
- Possession and/or use of fireworks or any explosive
- Activating a fire alarm under false pretenses or making a bomb threat shall at a minimum result in suspension for one full semester.
- Insubordination, disorderly conduct, disobeying school rules, regulations, or directives;
- Disobeying directives given by teachers, administrators, or other school staff or refusal to talk with an administrator
- Classroom and school disturbances
- Violation of school dress code
- Use of profane, vulgar, or obscene words or indecent exposure
- Use or possession during the school day of cell phone or electronic communication device, except for health or other reasons approved by an administrator
- Inappropriate public displays of affection
- Gambling or possession of gambling devices
- Moving and non-moving driving violations upon school property and at school events
- Giving false information to school officials
- Cheating on school assignments

- **Unexcused absence, chronic tardiness, skipping class, leaving campus without permission, failure to comply with compulsory attendance law**
- **Bullying:** Georgia law mandates that upon a finding that a student in grades 6-12 has committed the offense of bullying for the third time in a school year, the student shall be assigned to an alternative school.
- **Inciting, advising, or counseling of others to engage in prohibited acts.**
- **Willful and persistent violation of the student code of conduct.**
- **Criminal law violations/Off-campus misconduct:** A student whose conduct off campus could result in the student being criminally charged with a felony and which makes the student's continued presence at school a potential danger to persons or property at the school or which disrupts the educational process may be subject to disciplinary action, including in-school suspension, short-term suspension and referral to a disciplinary tribunal.
- **Gang Related Activity**
- **Any Other Conduct:** A student shall not engage in any other conduct not listed above subversive to the good order and discipline of his/her school.

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

**Assault:** Any threat or attempt to physically harm another person or any act which reasonably places another person in fear of physical harm. (Example: threatening language or swinging at someone in an attempt to strike).

**Battery:** Intentionally making physical contact with another person in an insulting, offensive, or provoking manner or in a way that physically harms the other person.

**Bullying:** In accordance with Georgia law, bullying is defined as (1) Any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person, when accompanied by an apparent present ability to do so; or (2) Any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm.

**Chronic Disciplinary Problem Student:** A student who exhibits a pattern of behavioral characteristics which interfere with the learning process of students around him or her and which are likely to recur.

**Detention:** A requirement that the student report to a specified school location and to a designated teacher or school official to make up work missed. Detention may require the student's attendance before school or after school. Students are given one days' warning so that arrangements for transportation can be made by the parents or guardians.

**Disciplinary Tribunal:** School officials appointed by the Board of Education to sit as fact finder and judge with respect to student disciplinary matters.

**Dress Code:** The current dress code is explained in the student handbook.

**Drug:** A legal substance used as medicine with or without a prescription or an illegal substance scheduled in the Georgia Controlled Substance Act. All legal substances shall only be possessed or dispensed according to Board Policy. Use of a drug authorized by a medical prescription from a registered physician and taken in accordance with the guidelines in the student handbook and the Health Services Manual shall not be considered a violation of this rule.

**Expulsion:** Suspension of a student from a public school beyond the current school quarter or semester. Such action may be taken only by a disciplinary tribunal.

**Extortion:** Obtaining money or goods from another student by violence, threats, or misuse of authority.

**Fighting:** Fighting is defined as “a physical struggle or a physical struggle and confrontation wherein blows of the fist, arms, legs or feet are intended to hit or do in fact hit any other student or any other person while a student is going to or from school, during the school day, at any school related activity and /or on school property.”

**Fireworks:** The term “fireworks” means any combustible or explosive composition or any substance or combination of substances or article prepared for the purpose of producing a visible or audible effect by combustion, explosion, deflagration, or detonation, as well as articles containing any explosive or flammable compound and tablets and other devices containing an explosive substance.

**Gambling:** Engaging in a game or contest in which the outcome is dependent upon chance even though accompanied by some skill, and in which a participant stands to win or lose something of value.

**In-School Suspension:** Removal of a student from class(es) or regular school program and assignment of that student to an alternative program isolated from peers.

**Physical Violence:** Intentionally making physical contact of an insulting or provoking nature with the person of another: or intentionally making physical contact which causes physical harm to another.

**Probation:** That period of time during which a student is allowed to continue or resume his education in the Houston County School District under the terms and conditions imposed by an administrator, disciplinary tribunal or Board of Education; or during a period of enrollment immediately following long-term suspension or expulsion or confinement in an institutional facility such as jail, detention facility, and Youth Detention Center. Any student on probation shall not violate school rules during the period of probation and shall be placed on a behavior contract with his or her school. Any student on probation who violates school rules shall be subject to discipline for the offense of “violation of probation” and be subject to discipline with consequences ranging from In-School Suspension up to and including expulsion at the discretion of the building principal.

**Suspension:** Removal of a student from the regular school program for a period not to exceed 10 days (short-term) or for a period greater than 10 days (long-term, which may be imposed only by a disciplinary tribunal). During the period of suspension, the student is excluded from all school-sponsored activities including practices, as well as competitive events, and/or activities sponsored by the school or its employees.

**Theft:** The offense of taking or misappropriating any property, of another with the intention of depriving that person of the property, regardless of the manner in which the property is taken or appropriated.

**Terroristic Threats and Acts:** Any student who commits a terroristic threat or act shall be subject to discipline, including expulsion. A student commits the offense of a terroristic threat when he threatens:

- To commit any crime of violence, or
- To burn or damage property for the purpose of terrorizing another, or
- By causing the evacuation of a school building, place of assembly for school-related events or school bus transportation, or
- Causing serious school inconvenience in reckless disregard of the risk of causing such terror or inconvenience, or
- A student shall not knowingly furnish or disseminate through a computer or computer network any picture, photograph, or drawing or similar visual representation or verbal description of any information designed to encourage, solicit, or otherwise promote terroristic acts as herein defined.

**Waiver:** A waiver is an agreement not to contest whether a student has committed an infraction of the Code of Conduct and the acceptance of consequences in lieu of a hearing before a disciplinary tribunal.

**Weapons:** The term weapon is defined in Code Section 16-11-127.1 and for the purpose of this policy includes any object which is or may be used to inflict bodily injury or to place another in fear for personal safety or well-being. The following things may be defined as dangerous weapons: any pistol, revolver, or any weapons designed or intended to propel a missile of any kind, or any dirk, any bat, club, or other bludgeon-type weapon, any stun gun taser, bowie knife, switchblade knife, ballistic knife, any other knife, straight-edge razor or razor blade, spring stick, metal knucks, chains, blackjack, or any flailing instrument consisting of two or more rigid parts connected in such a way as to allow them to swing freely, which may be known as a nunchaku, or fighting chain, throwing star or oriental dart, or any weapon of like kind.

**Any Other Conduct:** A student shall not engage in any other conduct not listed above subversive to the good order and discipline of his/her school.

## **STUDENT SUPPORT PROCESSES**

The Board of Education provides a variety of resources that are available at every school within the district to help address student behavioral problems. The school discipline process will include appropriate consideration of support processes to help students resolve such problems. These resources include Student Support Teams, school counselors, chronic disciplinary problem student plans.

## **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

This Code of Conduct is based on the expectation that parents, guardians, teachers and school administrators will work together to improve and enhance student behavior and academic performance and will communicate freely their concerns about, and actions in response to, student behavior that detracts from the learning environment. School administrators recognize that two-way communication through personal contacts are extremely valuable; therefore, they provide information to parents as well as on-going opportunities for school personnel to hear parents' concerns and comments.

Parents and students should contact the principal of the school if specific questions arise related to the Code of Conduct.

The Code of Conduct specifies within its standards of behavior various violations of the Code which may result in a school staff member's request that a parent or guardian come to the school for a conference. Parents are encouraged to visit the schools regularly and are expected to be actively involved in the behavior support processes designed to promote positive choices and behavior.

Georgia law mandates that any time a teacher or principal identifies a student as a chronic disciplinary problem student, the principal shall notify by telephone call and by mail the student's parent or guardian of the disciplinary problem, invite the parent or guardian to observe the student in a classroom situation, and request at least one parent or guardian to attend a conference to devise a disciplinary and behavioral correction plan.

Georgia law also states that before any chronic disciplinary problem student is permitted to return to school from a suspension or expulsion, the school shall request by telephone call and by mail at least one parent or guardian to schedule and attend a conference to devise a disciplinary and behavioral correction plan.

The law allows a local board of education to petition the juvenile court to require a parent to attend a school conference. If the court finds that the parent or guardian has willfully and unreasonably failed to attend the conference requested by the principal pursuant to the laws cited above, the court may order the parent or guardian to attend such a conference, order the parent or guardian to participate in such programs or such treatment as the court deems appropriate to improve the student's behavior, or both. After notice and opportunity for hearing, the court may impose a fine, not to exceed \$500.00, on a parent or guardian who willfully disobeys an order of the court under this law.

This Conduct Code shall be strictly construed subject only to exceptions required by a State or Federal law applicable hereto, and exceptions made by a disciplinary tribunal on a case-by-case basis.

## STUDENT EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES NOTIFICATION

Each school principal shall implement procedures to annually notify all parents or guardians of all school-sponsored extracurricular activities, organizations and clubs in which students may participate and of the right of the parent or guardian to prohibit their child's participation. Notification to parents and guardians shall be provided annually via the student handbook and shall include the name of the extracurricular activity, student organization or club; information regarding the purpose, activities or national affiliation of the extracurricular activity, organization or club. Any membership or financial requirements for a student to join or become a member of the activity, organization or club shall be included in the information provided.

No student shall be allowed to participate in any school-sponsored extracurricular activity, organization or club if the student's parent or legal guardian has indicated in writing that the parent will not allow the student to participate and has provided a copy of such written notice to the school principal.

For school clubs formed after publication of the student handbook, parents or guardians must approve their student's participation via email, fax or written permission to the school principal.

School extracurricular activities, organizations, or clubs for purposes of this policy are those that are supervised or sponsored by a school system employee designated by the principal, and that meet in school facilities.

REVISED: 7/22/02; 8/10/04; 6/13/06

**HOUSTON COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM**  
**SCHOOL CLUB LISTING**