# T.J. Elder Middle School Student Handbook 2022-2023



Excellence in Academics, Arts and Athletics

Mrs. Vickie Harden, Principal 902 Linton Road Sandersville, GA 31082 478 – 552 – 2007

 $\underline{www.washingtoncountyschoolsga.org}$ 





Student Name		
Grade		
Homeroom Teacher		

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#### Thomas Jefferson Elder Middle School

Mrs. Tamiko Watts Assistant Principal

Dr. Mia Wuchte Assistant Principal

Mrs. Leigh Anne Brooker Teacher Administrator



Excellence in Academics, Arls and Alblelics

Mrs. Vickie Harden, Principal

Post Office Box 816 - 902 Linton Road Sandersville, GA 31082 Phone: 478-552-2007 Fax: 478-552-7388 Ms. Kimberly Toliver Teacher Administrator Trainee

> Ms. Teresa McPherson Instructional Facilitator

> > Ms. Rita Hunt Counselor

Welcome to our EMS Family!

My name is Vickie Harden and I am the new principal at T.J. Elder Middle School. It is my pleasure to welcome you back to school this year. Our staff of highly qualified professional educators and support personnel is committed to providing our students many opportunities both inside and outside of the classroom. We invite and encourage students and parents to work in partnership with us to excel in Academics, Arts and Athletics.

Please know that we highly value home/school communication here at T.J. Elder Middle School. It is vital and plays an integral role in each student's success. We encourage you to contact us if the need arises, and to *stay in the know* about your child's studies, assignments, assessments, and school activities, as well as other events and happenings.

Thank you for your support! We look forward to providing your child with an AWESOME middle school experience!

Sincerely,

Vickie Harden

ickie Harden

Principal

#### Faculty and Staff of T.J Elder Middle School

#### 6th Grade

Alexander, Decki Barnes, April Burden Jr., Eddie Duggan, Kara Griffin, Jessica Hall, Regina

Lord, Jessica - Chairperson

McClenton, Yevette Renfroe, Dayna

#### 7th Grade

Duckworth, Pamela

Frost, Tabatha - Chairperson

Harris, Brandi Harris, Lynn Raye, Aubrey Roberson, Befaney Thomas, Maxine Watkins, Kimberly Williams, ShaQuetta

#### 8th Grade

Taunia Brown Jones, Latronda Moon, Bobby Powell, James

Powell, Shannon - Chairperson

Russell, ReNeisha Sanders, Alyssa Swan, Seanquetta

Toliver, Kimberly - Teacher Administrator

Trainee

#### **Connections**

Biggins, Brandon Cooper, Gregory Hamby, Cameron Jordan, Morgan Mantey, Kira

Nicholson, Gre'Shun Pendleton, Terrence Severance, Bethany Shelton, Matthew Sheppard, Lauren

Wansley, Belinda - Chairperson

#### **Special Programs**

Burden, Stephanie Carroll, Casey Davis, Kenya Kitchens, Shonterria

Pettit, Wendy Pierce, Jhanequa Pierce, LaQuanna

Riley, Becky - Chairperson

Rogers, Angelina

Settles, Shanona Merrell

Taylor, Meredith Winkler, Barry

#### **Paraprofessionals**

Griner, Patricia
Johnson, Brenda
Logue, Ruthie
Maze, Shakeytha
Pierce, Shanequa
Reaves, Shamekia
Smith, Alicia
Smith, Valerie
Williford, Allison

#### Clerical

Darrisaw, Terehaun Orr, Alexandria Rhodes, Kim Strowbridge, Pam

#### Counselor

Hunt, Rita

#### <u>Nurse</u>

Hackley, Juaquasha

#### **Resource Office**

Biggins, Rochelle Jones, Sanford

#### **Media Specialist**

Sellars, Stephanie

#### **Wrap Around Services**

Larimore, Georgia

#### **Instructional Facilitator**

McPherson, Teresa

#### Administration

Brooker, Leigh Anne Harden, Vickie Watts, Tamiko Wuchte, Mia

#### IT Support

Gray, A.J.

### WASHINGTON COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT



## Dr. Rickey L. Edmond, Superintendent of Schools

#### **Board of Education Members:**

Mr. Chris Hutchings, Chairman of Board of Education

Mr. Sammie L. Knight, Vice Chairman

Mr. Tracy Giddens

Mr. Randy Mayberry

Mrs. Gladine Thompson

#### **District Personnel Leaders:**

Ms. Sandra C. McMaster Deputy Superintendent, Special Projects & School Finance

Ms. Meghan Nugent Director of Public Relations
Ms. Emily Johnson Director of Special Programs

Ms. Karen Wright Registrar

Dr. Michael Powell Director of Technology

Ms. Amy Vickers Director of CTAE & Workforce Development

Ms. Jennifer Tatum

Ms. Audra Gilbert

Ms. Masha White

Director of Digital Learning

Director of Teaching & Learning

Director of Human Resources

Dr. Darryl Gilbert Director of School Improvement, Assessment &

Accountability

Ms. Misty Ivey School Social Worker

Ms. Georgia Larimore Director of Student Support Services

Ms. Karen Yonchak Director of School Nutrition

Mr. Tim Chapman Manager of Maintenance & Facilities

Mr. Robert Ferebee Manager of Transportation

# WASHINGTON COUNTY

# SCHOOL DISTRICT

OUR SYSTEMATIC PROCESS: PRODUCT, PEOPLE & PROCESSES
COMMUNICATION, COLLABORATION AND COLLECTING & LEVERAGING DATA

NOISSII

#### **EXPECTING**

all children to **EXCEL** in Academics, Arts & Athletics Will be a premier district that produces well-rounded students ready to lead in our community & a global society.

VISION

BIG 6

#### **SCHOOL COMMUNITY & CULTURE:**

School Safety Internal/External Stakeholder Relations

#### STEAM:

STEAM Certification
Cyber Ready Seal
Robotics
Specialized Programming

#### **WORK FORCE DEVELOPMENT:**

21st Century Career & College Readiness

#### **TEACHER LEADERSHIP:**

Systems Thinking Building Capacity

#### RTI/MTSS & SEL:

Student Services & Parent Engagement

#### LITERACY:

Improve Literacy Bridge Home & School



# **DEVELOPING THE WHOLE CHILD**

#### **Elder Middle School Mission & Vision Statements**

#### Mission

Educating students to Succeed in a Global Society

#### Vision

Our vision is to create opportunities for all students to be college and career ready.

#### **Belief Statements**

- 1. All students can learn provided opportunities to experience success.
- 2. The key to student success is a research, standards based instructional program.
- 3. Since learning is a lifelong process, the successes and failures of the educational process are the joint responsibilities of all stakeholders.
- Staff members should have the opportunity to further develop their leadership and decision-making skills and pursue educational endeavors.
- Effective communication among all stakeholders is essential to the success of the educational process.
- Everyone has the right to feel safe and to be treated with respect and understanding.

## 2022-2023 District Calendar

2022-2023 Calendar	Option 1		
ACTIVITY	DATES	DAYS	MONTH ENDS
In-Service Days 1 - 4	August 1 - August 4, 2022	M, T, W, Th	
School Begins	August 5, 2022	F	September 1, 2022
Labor Day Holiday	September 5, 2022	М	September 30, 2022
End 1st 9 Weeks (44 Days)	October 6, 2022	Th	
Fall Break	October 7, 2022	F	
Columbus Day Holiday	October 10, 2022	М	
In-Service Day 5	October 11, 2022	T	
Begin 2nd 9 Weeks	October 12, 2022	W	November 2, 2022
Thanksgiving Holidays	November 21-25, 2022	M, T, W, Th, F	December 7, 2022
End 2nd 9 Weeks (43 Days)	December 16, 2022 (Early Release Day)	F	
End 1st Semester (87 Days)	December 16, 2022 (Early Release Day)	F	
Semester Break	December 19- December 30, 2022	M-F and M-F	
Inservice Day 6	January 2, 2023	M	
Begin 2nd Semester	January 3, 2023	T	
MLK, Jr. Holiday	January 16, 2023	М	January 20, 2023
Inservice Day 7	February 17, 2023	F	
Presidents' Day Holiday	February 20, 2023	М	February 21, 2023
End 3rd 9 Weeks (45 Days)	March 9, 2023	Th	
Inservice Day 8	March 10, 2023	F	
Begin 4th 9 Weeks	March 13, 2023	М	March 22, 2023
Spring Break	April 3-7, 2023	M, T, W, Th, F	
GA Milestones EOG	TBD	TBD	
GA Milestones EOC	TBD	TBD	April 26, 2023
Graduation	May 20, 2023	Sat	
End 4th 9 Weeks (48 Days)	May 24, 2023 (Early Release Day)	w	May 24, 2023
End 2nd Semester (93 Days)	May 24, 2023 (Early Release Day)	W	
Inservice Day 9 & 10	May 25 - 26, 2023	Th, F	

#### **General Information**

- 1. The school building does not open officially until 7:00. Students may not be dropped off before 7:00 a.m. Faculty and staff members will supervise students who arrive at EMS between 7:00 and 7:50 a.m. in the cafeteria. Homeroom begins at 7:50 a.m. and the instructional day begins at 8:15. Students are considered tardy to school if they arrive after 8:15.
- 2. All students must leave the campus at the end of the school day unless engaged in a school sponsored activity under direct supervision of a faculty member.
- 3. No commercial / fast food should be brought into the lunchroom.
- 4. **Parent Communication**: In order to ensure that your child arrives at the location that you have requested, we will require a note from the child's guardian or guardian designee. **No phone calls will be taken for bus changes.** If you need to make a bus change, during the day, the guardian or designee of the guardian (person must be listed on the student's sign-out list, must come to the school to complete a bus pass). This change will help us provide a safe environment for our children.

#### **Early Dismissal Procedures**

Students are not permitted to leave school during the school day unless the principal or his designee grants permission. The following procedures are to be followed:

For the safety of students and ease of car and bus dismissal, parents will be allowed to enter on school campus at 3:10 p.m. to get in the car rider line to pick up his/her child(ren). If an emergency arises, parents may call the school office for clearance for entrance. If you cannot reach the school, please contact the district office.

- 1. All students are required to have their parent/guardian sign them out in the main office. Parents must submit an official ID to the receptionist.
- 2. It is not recommended that students be checked out after 3:10 p.m.
- 3. Please consider the instructional time lost when a student is repeatedly checked out of the same class. Every minute is so important to success.

#### **EMS Bell Schedule**

6th Grade	7th Grade	8th Grade
oth Grade	7th Grade Oth Grade	
Homeroom	Homeroom	Homeroom
7:50 - 8:10	7:50 - 8:10	7:50 - 8:10
Hawk Time (1st)	Hawk Time (1st)	Hawk Time (1st)
8:15 - 9:10	8:15 - 9:10	8:15 - 9:10
Connections I (2nd)	Academic I (2nd)	Academic I (2nd)
9:15 - 10:00	9:15 - 10:10	9:15 - 10:10
Connections II (3rd)	Academic II (3rd)	Academic II (3rd)
10:05 - 10:50	10:15 - 11:10	10:15 - 11:10
Academic I (4th)	<mark>Lunch</mark>	Academic III (4th)
10:55 - 11:50	11:15 - 11:40	11:15 - 12:10
Academic II (5th)	Connections I (4th)	<b>Lunch</b>
11:55 - 12:45	11:45 - 12:30	12:15 - 12:40
<mark>Lunch</mark>	Connections II (5th)	Academic IV (5th)
12:55 - 1:20	12:35 - 1:20	12:45 - 1:40
Academic III (6th)	Academic III (6th)	Connections I (6th)
1:25 - 2:20	1:25 - 2:20	1:45 - 2:30
Academic IV (7th)	Academic IV (7th)	Connections II (7th)
2:25 - 3:20	2:25 - 3:20	2:35 - 3:20
Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal
3:20 - 3:45	3:20 - 3:45	3:20 - 3:45

<sup>\*</sup>Each grade will incorporate a 10-minute break-TBD\*

#### **Washington County Schools Code of Conduct**

Students spend the majority of their time in classroom environments where behavior is expected to meet the high standards set by the Washington County Board of Education. While most discipline matters are managed in the classroom, some student behavior is managed by the office through an office referral that may result in interventions or consequences based on the nature of the violation of Washington County Board policy or the Code of Student Conduct.

#### **Purpose**

The Washington County School System has adopted a code of conduct that requires all students to conduct themselves at all times in a manner that facilitates a learning environment for them and other students. These standards for behavior require students to respect each other and school system employees, to obey student behavior policies adopted by the Board and to obey student behavior rules established by the Washington County School System.

In our efforts to nurture such a positive learning environment, we will embed our various expectations of our student code of conduct into our overall goals. Students, parents, and teachers are expected to become familiar with the code of conduct so they can understand

and be knowledgeable of the behaviors that contribute to a safe school and a productive learning environment. Students will help to define what these rules look like in the various settings. We will then be able to support students as they make connections to the common expectations and learn to model appropriate behaviors and take responsibility for their choices in a meaningful way. Our school rules were developed based on the following four goals:

- 1. Be Safe. Avoid behaviors that impair their own or other students' educational achievement. Students should know and avoid the behaviors prohibited by this code, take care of books and other instructional materials, and cooperate with others.
- 2. Be Responsible. Students are expected to show a high level of self-responsibility by participating fully in the learning process. Students need to report to school and class on time, attend all regularly scheduled classes, remain in class until excused or dismissed, pay attention to instruction, complete assignments to the best of their ability, and ask for help when needed. In addition, students should display a high level of responsibility at school as well as all school related events and activities.
- 3. Be Respectful. Show respect for the knowledge and authority of teachers, administrators, and other school employees. Students must obey reasonable directions, use acceptable and courteous language, avoid being rude, and follow school rules and procedures. Students should also recognize and respect the rights of other students.
- 4. **Be Kind.** We believe kindness creates conditions which lead to a caring environment for students, teachers, and community members. **Everyone benefits when individuals embrace acts of kindness.**

#### **Beliefs and Attitudes**

In order to successfully manage student behavior and build self – discipline, Washington County School System holds the following beliefs and attitudes:

- 1. Discipline should be viewed as a set of behaviors to be learned.
- Positive school discipline combines prevention and response strategies in a well-balanced manner.
- 3. Prevention of inappropriate behavior is emphasized.
- 4. Schools that value and integrate belonging, independence, cooperation, and mastery of academic and social skills provide a strong foundation for discipline.
- 5. The use of prevention / intervention strategies must respect individual differences.
- 6. Well-disciplined schools have a high level of communication and partnership with the parents and communities they serve.
- 7. Everyone must be part of the solution.

The System's primary goal is to educate, not 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 the policies, regulations, and rules set forth in this Code of Conduct.

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

- 1. At school or on school property at any time
- 2. Off school grounds at any school activity, function, or event, and while traveling to and from such events
- 3. On vehicles provided for student transportation by the school system 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 drugs and weapon offenses can lead to schools being named an "Unsafe School" according to the provision of State Board Rule 160-4-8-16, Unsafe School Choice Options.

The General Assembly of Georgia requires that this Code of Conduct include language encouraging parents and guardians to inform their children of the consequences, including potential criminal penalties, or underage sexual conduct and crimes for which a minor can be tried as an adult. Parents are encouraged to become familiar with the Code of Conduct and to be supportive of it in their daily communication with their child 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/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 student 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 a report shall be filed with the principal or designee on the 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.

#### **Progressive Discipline Procedures**

A progressive discipline process is an integral part of an effective school system. It helps correct student behavior and brings it within acceptable standards, ensuring a safe and productive school. The goal of progressive discipline is to reform students and bring their conduct within acceptable standards

- 1. To deter other students from engaging in similar conduct
- 2. To maintain control over the school as a whole and maintain school standards

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. Students who are subject to disciplinary action will be afforded due process. The administration of each school will make every effort to administer the discipline code in compliance with all state and local board of education rules and policies and will take in consideration individual plans (i.e. IEP, 504, and MTSS) to ensure appropriate consequences for all students' behaviors.

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

- 1. Warning
- 2. Counseling with an Administrator or Counselor
- 3. Referral to the Student Academic/Behavioral Support Center
- 4. Loss of Privileges
- 5. Isolation or Time out
- 6. Assignment of Special Tasks
- 7. Temporary Removal from Class or Activity
- 8. Notification of parents
- 9. Parent Conference

- 10. One Hour Intervention
- 11. Engagement In-School Suspension
- 12. In-School Suspension
- 13. Temporary Placement in an Alternative Education Program
- 14. Short Term Suspension
- 15. Disciplinary Probation
- 16. Suspension or Expulsion
- 17. 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.

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. A district administrator must also approve such an agreement and waiver. 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 as soon as 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 that the student is in possession of an item that is illegal or against school rules. Student book bags, school lockers, desks, and other school properties are subject to inspection and search by school authorities at any time without notice to students or parents. Students are required to cooperate if asked to open book bags and lockers. 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.

This progressive discipline model is divided into three levels. Each level represents progressively more serious misbehavior and consequences. The level of discipline imposed shall be based on the severity of the misbehavior.

#### T.J. Elder Middle School Discipline Offenses: (General Examples)

- 1. Leaving campus without permission/cutting class
- 2. Being in an off-limits area
- 3. Giving false verbal or written information: falsifying, misrepresents omitting or erroneously reporting information regarding instances of alleged inappropriate behavior by a teacher, administrator or other school employee toward a student. Any student (or *parent or friends of a student*) who has been the victim of an act of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct by a teacher, administrator or other school system employee is urged to make an oral report of the act to any teacher, counselor or administrator at his/her school.

- 4. Committing any expulsion offense that is not presented to the Disciplinary Tribunal
- 5. Being out of class without a pass
- 6. Using obscene/ profane language (discretionary)
- 7. Engaging in any sexual misconduct (discretionary)
- 8. Having food/concessions in halls or classrooms
- 9. Having non- educational software, including audio CDs
- 10. Being tardy to class

#### Serious offenses will be dealt with at the discretion of the administration

#### Physical/Verbal Confrontation and Criminal Act

Any physical or verbal confrontation that interferes with the educational process and/or the commission of any criminal act at the school, during school hours, while being transported to or from school, or while attending school functions off the school campus will result in the following:

- 1. School officials will contact the District's Police Department, Washington County Sheriff's Office, Sandersville Police Department, or other appropriate law enforcement agencies
- All students involved in such activities will be released to law enforcement personnel who will transport the students to the appropriate law enforcement agency to investigate the incident
- 3. School officials will notify the parents of the students involved to inform them and to ask that they report to the law enforcement agency to pick up their children

This policy will in no way prohibit school officials from utilizing customary school disciplinary consequences in any actions imposed by the enforcement agency or Juvenile Court.

#### **Cell phones and Electronic Devices**

Students **are not** allowed to have cell phones or smart watches at school. Cell phones, smart watches, and all other electronic devices will be confiscated.

This progressive discipline model is divided into three levels. Each level represents progressively more serious misbehavior and consequences. The level of discipline imposed shall be based on the severity of the misbehavior.

# **Explanation of Discipline Levels and Possible Responses Level I**

Level I Discipline is used for minor acts of misconduct which interfere with orderly school procedures, school functions, extracurricular programs, approved transportation, or a student's own learning process. Students may be disciplined by the professional staff member involved or may be referred directly to the principal.

Professional staff members may utilize any of the discipline management techniques appropriate for the situation, including, but not limited to the following:

- 1. Alternate placement during lunch
- 2. Alternate temporary placement in a different classroom from peers
- 3. Student participation in a conference with parent/guardian and teacher
- 4. Development of a written or graphic representation that reflects understanding of the

specific misbehavior, the nature of the expected behavior, and the related character trait(s)

The principal may utilize any of the above discipline management techniques, and/or may employ:

- 1. Student participation in a conference with parent/guardian, teacher, and/or principal
- 2. Restriction from school programs and special assemblies
- 3. Assignment to Academic/Behavior Support Center for a designated period time
- 4. Partial day suspension
- 5. Full day suspension for one day
- 6. Participation in the disciplinary technique that positively promotes the student Code of Conduct and desired character trait(s)

#### Level II

Level II discipline offenses are intermediate acts of misconduct that require administrative interventions. Consideration of necessary behavior support services should be given, if not already provided. Students guilty of a Level II offense may receive any of the discipline management techniques appropriate for the situation as determined by the principal or designee, including, but not limited to the following:

- 1. Student participation in a conference with parent/guardian, teacher, and/or principal
- 2. Restriction from programs and special assemblies
- 3. Assignment to lunchtime detention
- 4. Assignment to Academic/Behavior Support Center for a designated period of time
- 5. Partial day suspension
- 6. Full day suspension
- 7. Suspension from school for up to three school days, pending investigation
- 8. Participation in the cleaning/repair of any damage caused to the school-related environment
- 9. Payment for the repair of any damage caused to the school-related environment
- 10. Participation in a school service project which enables the student to be engaged in the desired character trait(s)
- 11. Any other disciplinary technique that positively promotes the student code of conduct and desired character trait(s)

#### Level III

Level III discipline offenses are serious acts of misconduct including, but not limited to, repeated misbehavior that is similar in nature, serious disruption of the school environment, threats to health, safety or property, and other acts of serious misconduct. These offenses must be reported to the principal. Offenses that threaten the health, safety, or well-being of others may result in immediate suspension. Student and parent/guardian participation in a conference has previously occurred. Initiation of necessary behavior support services should be given. Students guilty of a Level III offense may receive any of the discipline management techniques appropriate for the situation as determined by the principal or designee, including, but not limited to the following:

- 1. Restriction from programs and special assemblies
- 2. Suspension from school for five school days or more, which shall include any time during which the student was subject to suspension pending investigation
- 3. Participation in the cleaning/repair of any damage caused to the school-related

environment

- 4. Payment for the repair of any damage caused to the school-related environment
- 5. Participation in a school service project which enables the student to be engaged in the desired character trait(s)
- 6. Assignment to Academic/Behavior Support Center for a designated period of time
- 7. Placement in a separate alternative educational program for no less than ten days
- 8. Any other disciplinary technique that positively promotes the Student Code of Conduct and desired character trait(s)

Students in this discipline level have the benefit of due process, such as the process provided by the school Discipline Tribunal or the procedural safeguards and other requirements identified in the 1997 Federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Any student who is suspended from school will not be allowed to participate in functions or extra-curricular activities sponsored by any school in Washington County Public School System before, during, or after the regular school day (ex: field trips, assemblies, programs, club meetings, athletic events, contests, recognition or award ceremonies, etc.) Any student that comes on the campus of any school while suspended, is subject to a criminal charge of Trespassing.

#### **Definition of Disciplinary Actions**

**Expulsion**: removal of a student from the school system for an extended period of time or permanently by the Disciplinary Tribunal.

Out of School Suspension (OSS): removal of a student from school for a designated period of time not to exceed ten (10) days per suspension.

- 1. Parents will be notified of the suspension in writing, stating the duration and reasons for the suspensions.
- 2. The principal will advise parents of their rights to a conference and discussion of said suspension.
- 3. Students suspended at home must make up all work missed during the suspension in order to get credit. Upon returning to school, the student is responsible for making arrangements with the teacher for make up work. The work will be submitted according to a schedule arranged by the teacher.
- 4. Any student that is suspended from school will not be allowed to participate in functions or extra-curricular activities sponsored by any school in Washington County Public School System before, during, or after the regular school day (ex: field trips, assemblies, programs, club meetings, athletic events, contests, recognition or award ceremonies, etc.) Any student that comes on the campus of any school while suspended, is subject to a criminal charge of Trespassing.

**Engagement In School Suspension (EISS)**: removal of a student from a regular assigned schedule and assignment to a special self-contained setting for a period of time of 1-5 days. The student will be permitted to continue their regular daily schedule after the student, parent or guardian and administrator meet in an effort to determine the root cause of the behavior.

- 1. Students placed in EISS will be counted present for school.
- 2. Students placed in EISS must report directly to EISS after breakfast if they do not return to school with a parent or guardian. Failing to do so will result in additional consequences.
- 3. Once a student's parent/guardian has met with the administrator their engagement will be cleared and the student will return to the regular daily schedule.

In School Suspension (ISS): removal of student from regularly assigned schedule and assignment to a special self – contained setting for a period of one (1) or more days.

- 1. Students placed in ISS will be counted as present for school.
- 2. Students placed in ISS must:
  - a. Report directly to the ISS room after breakfast. Students who fail to report will be assigned an additional consequence. Warnings will not be issued.
  - b. Stay the entire day (8:00-3:20) or assigned time. A student signing out must make up the time missed. After a student is assigned to ISS, parents will be notified in writing of the offense and the punishment;
  - c. Obey all rules of the class.
  - d. Not be allowed to participate in any extracurricular activities during that time.
  - e. Failure to report or serve ISS will result in OSS. Also, ISS days will be made up upon returning to school.

#### **Behavior Contract**

A behavior contract will be issued to a student when the student acquires a total of six discipline referrals in any combination of Level 2 and Level 3 offenses. While on this contract the student will not be eligible for any extracurricular activities or field trips. The behavior status will be reviewed at the end of a 45 day period to decide if the student can transition off of the contract. A breach of the contract will result in a minimum of a 10 day placement at the Washington County Achievement Academy with a maximum of expulsion from the Washington County School System.

#### **Parental Involvement**

The Washington County School System Code of Conduct is based on the expectation that parents, guardians, teachers, and administrators will work together to improve and enhance student behavior and academic performance. They will communicate freely their concerns and actions in response to student behavior that detracts from the learning environment. School administrators recognize that two – way communication through personal contact is 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 staff member's request that a parent or guardian come to the school for a conference. Parents are encouraged to visit the school 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 classroom situations, 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 the 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 a 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 a hearing, the court may impose a fine, not to exceed \$500,000, on a parent or guardian who willfully disobeys an order of the court under law.

#### **Student Support Process**

Washington County School System provides a variety of resources which are available to help address student behavioral problems. The school discipline process will include appropriate consideration of support processes to help students resolve such problems. The resources include student support teams through a multi-tier intervention process, school counselor, WCBOE social worker and mentors.

#### **Washington County Board of Education Expulsion Offense**

#### **Rule 1: Disruption and Interference with School**

- 1. No student shall occupy any school building, gymnasium, school grounds, properties, or part thereof with intent to deprive others of its use.
- 2. No student shall block the entrance or exit of any school building or property of corridor or room so as to deprive others access thereof.

- 3. No student shall set fire to or otherwise damage any school building or property.
- 4. No student shall prevent or attempt to prevent the convening or continued functioning of any school / class activity or lawful meeting or assembly on school campus.
- 5. No student shall discharge, display, or otherwise threateningly use any firearm, explosive or other weapon defined in O.C.G.A & 16-11-127.1 or facsimile thereof on school premises.
- 6. No student shall prevent other students from attending any class or school activity.
- 7. No student shall, except under the direct instruction of the principal, block normal pedestrian or vehicular traffic on the school campus or adjacent grounds.
- 8. No student shall continually and intentionally make noise or act in any manner as to interfere with the teacher's ability to conduct a class.
- 9. No student shall in any other manner, by use of violence, force, noise, coercion, threats, intimidation, fear, passive resistance or any other conduct intentionally cause the disruption of any lawful mission process or function.
- 10. No student shall refuse to identify himself or herself upon request of teachers, principal, superintendent, school bus driver or other personnel.
- 11. No student shall urge, encourage or counsel other students to violate any of the preceding paragraphs of this rule.
- 12. No student shall be involved with playing cards or gambling (flipping, throwing dice, etc.)

#### Rule 2: Damage or Destruction of School Property

A student shall not cause or attempt to cause damage to school property, steal or attempt to steal school property.

#### **Rule 3: Damage or Destruction of Private Property**

A student shall not cause or attempt to cause physical damage to private property or steal or attempt to steal private property, including property of another student or person legitimately at the school.

#### Rule 4: Assault of a School Employee, Including Verbal Assault

A student shall not cause or attempt to cause physical injury or behave in such a way as could reasonably cause physical injury to a school employee.

#### Rule 5: Assault of Non-Employee, Including Verbal Assault

A student shall not cause or attempt to cause physical injury or behave in such a way as could reasonably cause physical injury to a person.

#### Rule 6: Possession or Use of Weapons

A student shall not possess, use, handle, or transmit any handgun, firearm, rifle, shotgun, or similar weapon; any explosive compound or incendiary device; or, any other dangerous weapon as defined in O.C.G.A. 16 - 11 - 121, including a rocket launcher,

bazooka, recoilless rifle, mortar, or hand grenade. Students who possess firearms on campus will be subject to a minimum of a calendar year suspension and will be referred to law enforcement officials.

#### Rule 7: Narcotics, Alcoholic Beverages, and Stimulant Drugs

A student shall not possess, sell, transmit, or be under the influence of any illegal drugs or alcoholic beverage or intoxicant of any kind. This includes drug look-alikes.

#### **Rule 8: Disregard of Direction or Commands**

A student shall not fail to comply with reasonable directions or commands of teachers, substitute teachers, paraprofessionals, principals, school bus drivers or any other authorized school personnel.

#### **Rule 9: Unexcused Absences**

A student shall not be absent from school or from any class or other required school function during required school hours except for illness or other providential cause, except with written permission from a duly authorized school official, nor shall any student encourage, urge or counsel other students to violate this rule

#### Rule 10: Habitual Offender

Any student sent to the office ten (10) times will be considered a chronic behavior problem and will be placed on disciplinary probation. Disciplinary probation means that a student may be expelled by the Washington County Disciplinary Tribunal for any further misbehavior.

#### **Rule 11: Bullying**

A student shall not engage in any bullying behavior on the school grounds during and immediately before or after school hours; on the school grounds at any other time when the school is being used by a school group; off school grounds at a school activity, function or event; or in route to and from school. <u>Bullying behavior is defined as repetitive action targeted at a specific victim or group when the intent is to intimidate or otherwise be physically, verbally, or non-verbally aggressive</u>

#### **Rule 12: Dress and Grooming**

A student shall not dress, groom, or wear or use emblems, insignia, badges or other symbols where the effect thereof is to distract unreasonable attention of the other students or otherwise cause disruption or interference with the operation of the school. The principal or other duly authorized school officials shall determine whether any particular mode of dress, apparel, grooming or use of emblems, badges or other symbols result in such interference or disruption and its cause to all students by announcement or posting at the school.

#### **Rule 13: Solicitation**

A student shall not sell merchandise of any type without prior approval of the principal. All merchandise and/or monies will be confiscated items. **Administrators may or may not return confiscated items to parents.** 

#### **Rule 14: Medications**

Students are not allowed to carry medications of any type on their person. <u>ALL</u> medications must be turned in to the school nurse's office or the front office if a school nurse is not available.

#### Rule 15: Cell phones/Smart watches and other Electronic Devices

Students **are not** allowed to have cell phones or smart watches at school. Cell phones, smart watches and all other electronic devices will be confiscated.

#### Rule 16: Inappropriate Contact

#### Rule 17: Disrespecting a Teacher or Any Adult

#### Rule 18: Possession or Use of Any Hazardous Instrument/Object

A student shall not possess or use any hazardous object, including any dirk, bowie knife, switchblade knife, ballistic knife, any other knife having a blade of two or more inches, straight-edge razor, razor blade, spring stick, knuckles, whether made from metal, thermoplastic, wood, or other similar material, blackjack, any bat, club, or other bludgeon-type weapon, or any flailing instrument consisting of two or more rigid parts connected in such a manner as to allow them to swing freely, which may be known as a nun chahka, nun chuck, shuriken, or fighting chain, or any disc, of whatever configuration, having at least two points or pointed blades which is designed to be thrown or propelled and which maybe known as a throwing star or oriental dart, or any instrument of like kind, any nonlethal air gun, and any stun gun or Taser. Such term shall not include any of these instruments used for classroom work authorized by the teacher.

#### BOARD POLICY JCDAG

#### **Bullying**

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

Bullying is defined as follows: An act which occurs on school property, on school

vehicles, at designated school bus stops, or at school related functions or activities, or by use of data or software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, computer network, or other electronic technology of a local school system, that is:

- 1. Any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person, when accompanied by an apparent present ability to do so;
- 2. Any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm; or
- 3. Any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, which a reasonable person would perceive as being intended to threatens, harass, or intimidate, that:
  - a. Causes another person substantial physical harm within the meaning of Code Section 16-5-23.1 or visible bodily harm as such term is defined in Code Section 16-5-23.1;
  - b. Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education;
  - c. Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or
  - d. Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

Acts of bullying shall be punished by a range of consequences through the progressive discipline process, as stated in the Code of Conduct. However, upon a finding by the disciplinary hearing officer, panel or tribunal 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 the alternative school.

Upon a finding by a school administrator that a student has committed an act of bullying or is a victim of bullying, the administrator or designee shall notify the parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of the student by telephone call or through written notice, which may be done electronically.

Students and parents will be notified of the prohibition against bullying and the penalties for violating the prohibition by posting information at each school and by including such information in the student/parent handbooks.

WCBOE Policy Descriptor Code: JCDAE

#### **Weapons**

It is the policy of the Washington County Board of Education that a student shall not possess, use, handle or transmit any object that reasonably can be considered a weapon on property or in a building owned or leased by a school district, at a school function, or on a bus or other transportation provided by the school district. Weapons may include, but are not limited to: 1. Any handgun, firearm, rifle, shotgun or similar weapon; or, any other dangerous weapon as defined in O.C.G.A section 16-11-12l, including a rocket launcher, bazooka, recoilless rifle, mortar, or hand grenade. 2. Any hazardous object, including any dirk, bowie knife, switchblade knife, ballistic knife, any other knife having

a blade of two or more inches, straight-edge razor, razor blade, spring stick, knuckles, whether made from metal, thermoplastic, wood, or other similar material, blackjack, any bat, club, or other bludgeon-type weapon, or any flailing instrument consisting of two or more rigid parts connected in such a manner as to allow them to swing freely, which may be known as a nun chuck, nunchaku, shuriken, or fighting chain, or any disc, of whatever configuration, having at least two points or pointed blades which is designed to be thrown or propelled and which may be known as a throwing star or oriental dart, or any instrument of like kind, any nonlethal air gun, and any stun gun or taser. Such term shall not include any of these instruments used for classroom work authorized by the teacher. Students who possess any weapon described in paragraph 1 in violation of this policy will be subject to a minimum of one calendar year expulsion. The Superintendent shall have the authority either before or after the student is referred for a tribunal hearing to reduce the mandated one year expulsion under circumstances where the one year expulsion appears excessive to the Superintendent. The tribunal shall also have the authority to modify such expulsion requirements on a case-by-case basis in determining the appropriate punishment. Finally, in any tribunal decision appealed to the board of education, the board may reduce the mandated punishment but shall consider whether the Superintendent and/or tribunal considered a reduction and any rationale in denying such a reduction. Students who possess other weapons or hazardous objects as described in paragraph 2 will be subject to discipline as specified in the student code of conduct. Reporting Requirements All employees must report violations of this policy to the principal or assistant principal of the school. If the principal has reasonable cause to

believe that a report is valid, he/she must immediately make an oral report to the Superintendent and to the appropriate law enforcement authority and district attorney.

The student's parents or guardian will be notified immediately of his/her child's involvement in any activity involving weapons.

Students will be given a copy of the Code of Conduct, which includes a statement of prohibited conduct with regard to weapons and possible disciplinary actions.

Washington County School Date Adopted: 4/4/2002

Last Revised: 1/8/2015

#### **Drug Policy**

Any student found guilty of being involved in the possession and/or use of alcohol will be expelled for the remainder of the school year.

Any student found guilty of being involved in the possession and/or use of drugs will be expelled for one (1) calendar year.

- 1. A student shall not possess, sell, use, transmit, or be under the influence of any narcotic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind: .
  - a. On the school grounds during and immediately after school hours
  - b. On the school grounds at any other time when the school is being used by a school group
  - c. Off the school grounds at a school activity, function, or event

- d. En route to and from school
- e. Off the school grounds while a student is in attendance at school or any school function, or is otherwise subject to jurisdiction of school authorities. Use of a drug authorized by medical prescription from a registered physician shall not be considered a violation of this rule.
- 2. The principal will give the substance to Campus Police who will then report the incident to juvenile authorities.

## Smoking, Possession, or Use of any Tobacco/Vaping Product or Instrument (Level 3)

Tobacco Use Prohibited

No student, staff member or school visitor is permitted to use any tobacco product at any time, including non-school hours 24 hours per day, seven days per week: In any building, facility, or vehicle owned, leased, rented or chartered by the Washington County School District. On any school grounds and property - including athletic fields and parking lots - owned, leased, rented or chartered by the Washington County School District; or at any school-sponsored or school-related event on-campus or off-campus. In addition, no student is permitted to possess tobacco, electronic cigarettes, or vapor products. The policy may permit tobacco products to be included in instructional or research activities in public school buildings if the activity is conducted or supervised by the faculty member overseeing the instruction or research and the activity does not include smoking, chewing, or otherwise ingesting the tobacco/vaping product.

Tobacco and Vape Products: Lighters, matches, vapes and vape cartridges are considered illegal smoking products.

Administrators will determine the Disposition Level after conducting the investigation of the incident.

#### Disposition

Level 1 - Possession - 5 days OSS

Level 2 - Possession and Use - 10 days OSS

Level 3 -10 days OSS + referral to Disciplinary Hearing Tribunal

#### 2010 Georgia Code

TITLE 20 - EDUCATION

#### CHAPTER 2 - ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

ARTICLE 16 - STUDENTS

**PART 2 - DISCIPLINE** 

#### SUBPART 2 - PUBLIC SCHOOL DISCIPLINARY TRIBUNALS

§ 20-2-751.7 - State mandated process for students to follow in reporting instances of alleged inappropriate behavior by teacher or other school personnel; notice of process; training; investigations

O.C.G.A. 20-2-751.7 (2010)

20-2-751.7. State mandated process for students to follow in reporting instances of

alleged inappropriate behavior by teacher or other school personnel; notice of process; training; investigations

- (a) The Professional Standards Commission shall establish a state mandated process for students to follow in reporting instances of alleged inappropriate behavior by a teacher, administrator, or other school employee toward a student which shall not prohibit the ability of a student to report the incident to law enforcement authorities. Each local school system shall be required to implement and follow such state mandated process and shall include the mandated process in student handbooks and in employee handbooks or policies.
- (b) If it is determined through the state mandated process established pursuant to subsection (a) of this Code section that a complaint against a teacher, administrator, or other school employee is unsubstantiated and without merit, the local school system shall, at the request of the aggrieved party, submit a written statement to that effect to all local print and television media outlets that published any articles or reported any news relating to such complaint against the teacher, administrator, or employee.
- (c) The Professional Standards Commission shall coordinate a training program on educator sexual misconduct. Such program shall be delivered by trained staff from the Professional Standards Commission, regional educational service agencies, and local school systems. The superintendent of each local school system shall ensure that all certified staff in its school system receive such training.
- (d) (1) The staff of the Professional Standards Commission shall be authorized, without notification to the Professional Standards Commission, to immediately open an investigation submitted to the commission by a local school superintendent, with approval of the local board of education, of a complaint by a student against an educator alleging a sexual offense, as provided for in Code Sections 16-6-1 through 16-6-17, 16-6-20,16-6-22.2,or16-12-100.
- (2) The Professional Standards Commission shall have on staff a minimum of one investigator specifically trained in investigating educator sexual misconduct. The investigation of any complaint of sexual misconduct shall be completed in no more than 60 days and shall be presented at the commission meeting immediately following the conclusion of the investigation.
- (3) If the Professional Standards Commission's review of the investigative report results in a sanction against the educator, the educator shall have the right to appeal the commission decision to a hearing before an administrative law judge within 90 days of such sanction.
- (e) Nothing in this Code section shall be construed to infringe on any right provided to students with Individualized Education Programs pursuant to the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or the federal Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

#### **Dress Code**

The student along with his/her parents is responsible for appropriate dress and adherence

to the Washington County Dress Code while attending Washington County Schools. A neat, dignified, and well-groomed appearance is expected of every student. We strive to instill a level of excellence in our students in order to develop their personal best in academics, extra-curricular activities, and appearance. We are preparing students for their future-today!

The administrative staff and faculty are responsible for the enforcement of the Washington County Dress Code. If a student is not in uniform or not adhering to the dress code rules, then he/she will be in violation of Washington County Schools Dress Code. This will be a discipline offense, and the student will be dealt with accordingly. The dress code will also apply to all formal events and field trips.

The Washington County School System requires all students in Pre-K through 12 to wear a school uniform. All students in Pre-K through 12 (except those deemed exempt) must adhere to this mandatory school uniform policy with the following dress code being applied in all schools:

- Solid black, khaki colored, navy-blue, or gray pants/slacks (no hospital scrubs, knit pants, leggings(as an outer garment), jogging or cargo pants; no zippers or pockets on pant legs).
- Uniform pants must be worn and belted at the natural waist and made of standard uniform material (cotton, twill, or a blend of uniform-type material, not including denim or denim look alike).
- Belt buckles must be no more than 2 inches wide with no designs or graffiti.
- Belts must be worn. Students will be charged \$4.00 if they lose a school belt.
- Any solid color short/long sleeve shirts; must be collar-style shirts (Polo or Oxford style) If a logo is worn on the shirt it must be no larger than three (3) inches.
- Shorts, Capris, wrap skirts, skirts, and jumpers must be no shorter than two (2) inches above the knee (front and back). The colors are solid black, khaki colored, navy blue, or gray (standard uniform material cotton, twill, or a blend of uniform type material, not including denim).
- Any solid color dress may be worn but must be no shorter than 2 (two) inches above the knee in front and in back. Strapless dresses are not allowed. Thin-strapped dresses must have a solid color polo-style shirt underneath.
- No hooded jacket, no hooded sweaters or no hooded pull-overs can be worn at grades K-12 in the school building.
- Closed-toe and closed-back shoes are required. The foot must be completely covered.
- Leggings cannot be worn as an outer garment but may be worn under a dress or skirt.
- Any solid-colored sweaters (no hooded) or vests will be permitted.
- All shirts must be tucked in for girls and boys.
- All shirts must be long enough to be tucked in for boys and girls.
- Tank tops, thermal undergarments, and turtlenecks in a solid color may be worn under the uniform top.
- No extreme hair color/style that causes disruption or interferes with the learning environment will be allowed. Hair color is defined as a natural hair color.
- No hats, caps, sweatbands, do-rags, skull caps, scarves or sunglasses may be worn in the building.
- No skin-tight clothing.

- No heavy, metal jewelry with symbols.
- No bedroom shoes, slippers, slides, or lookalikes.
- No offensive or sexually suggestive nail art, tattoos or belts.
- No pajamas.
- No grills may be worn in the mouth.
- No visible piercings may be worn except in the ears.
- No denim or denim look alike (any color) jeans, skirts, dresses, jumpers, jackets, etc. (Except on a principal's approved Spirit Day)

The Principal may adjust the code as needed for special events such as Homecoming Week, Red Ribbon, Spirit Friday (jeans and spirit wear with Washington County Logos), School Prom and special situation(s) for individual students. This will be left to the discretion of the school administrator.

## WASHINGTON COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

#### ATTENDANCE POLICY

Regular attendance at school is an absolute necessity for good student performance. Pursuant to Georgia Law (O.C.G.A. Section 20-2-690.1), all students between the age of 6 and 16 are required by law to attend school daily unless they have a lawful reason to be absent. Ages 4 and 5 year old students, if enrolled in a school program for 20 days are automatically covered under the Georgia Compulsory School Attendance Law.

Any child subject to compulsory attendance who during the school calendar year has more than five (5) days of unexcused absences is considered truant (O.C.G.A. Section 20-2-735), except for school days missed as a result of out of school suspension shall not count as unexcused days for the purpose of determining student truancy (S.B.O.E 160-5-1.10).

Parents or guardians who do not provide for the regular attendance of their child/ren are subject to being taken to court and fined as established in State Board Rule (160-5-1-.10) and in accordance with (O.C.G. A- Section 15-11-67) the possible denial of a driver's license for a child. The Washington County School District Attendance Policy is written according to Georgia Law to reduce unexcused absences.

Parent/guardian and student (age 10 and above) must sign receipt of attendance policy by September 1 of the school calendar or within 30 days of student enrollment.

#### **Definition of an Absence**

An absence for an entire school day will be a student who misses more than 3.5 hours during the school day (8:15 am - 3:15 pm).

An absence for a class period will be a student who misses more than half the amount of time of the class period.

#### **Excused Absences**

1. Personal illness or attendance in school endangering a student's health or the health of others. With proper verification, a student may be eligible for hospital/homebound instruction (S.B.O.E. Rule 160-4-2-31).

- 2. A serious illness and/or death of an immediate family member.
- 3. Students may have an excused absence when attending a funeral of an immediate family.
- 4. A court order or order by a government agency mandating absences from school.
- 5. A foster care student who attends court proceeding relating to the student's foster care shall be credited as present by the school and shall not be counted as an absence, either excused or unexcused for any day, portion of a day or days missed from school as set forth

in O.C.G.A 20-2-692.2

- 6. Celebrating religious holidays necessitating reasonable absences from school.
- 7. Conditions rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to student health or safety.
- 8. Visiting with a military parent prior to deployment or during leave from an overseas \ combat zone (up to 5 days per school year).

#### **Procedures for Addressing Excused Absences**

- 1. A statement from a doctor or medical facility; funeral director and/or pastor and court summon. These statements must be received by the school within three (3) days of the student returning to school after absence(s).
- 2. If a student is sent home by the school nurse, it will be counted as an excused absence.
- 3. A parent/guardian may submit undocumented excuses for no more than three (3) absences per semester for a total of six (6) per year. These undocumented absences may be used for days the student is ill and does not seek medical attention or illness of an immediate family member and/or extreme family emergency which necessitates student being absent. The school must receive a written excuse within three (3) days of the absence(s) for it to count as an excused absence. The following information must be specified on each excuse: 1) The date excuse is written; 2) The date(s) and day(s) of absence(s); 3) The reason for absence(s) and 4) The signature of parent/guardian with a valid contact number. \*\*These days may not be used for out of town trips or vacation.
- 4. Absences in excess of six (6) days will only be excused with appropriate medical documentation.
- 5. Students who have received excused absences will be allowed to make up school work.

#### **Procedures for Addressing Unexcused Absences**

- 1. After three (3) unexcused absences the school shall contact parents by telephone or send letter by student requesting a conference to discuss concerns regarding attendance. After two (2) reasonable attempts to reach and notify parent/guardian without response, the school shall send a notice to parent/guardian by certified mail, return receipt requested. The letter is to include a copy of the Compulsory Attendance Law (O.C.G.A. 20-2-690.1)
- 2. After six (6) unexcused absences the school shall send a letter to parents/guardian (by certified mail return receipt requested) informing them that student is truant and in violation of compulsory attendance and will be referred to School Social Worker.
- 3. School Social Worker shall contact and work with guardian and student to improve attendance.

4. After ten (10) unexcused absences per school calendar, the School Social Worker/Attendance Officer shall refer parent/guardian/student to CHINS committee which consist of members from Judicial Court System, Department of Family and Children Services, Mental Health and school district.

# Washington County Board of Education Student Records Policy Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Pupil Protection Rights Amendment (PPRA)

It is the policy of the Washington County Board of Education that accurate and complete student academic and discipline records shall be maintained for each student enrolled in the schools of this school district. Confidentiality of student records shall be preserved in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Pupil Protection Rights Amendment (PPRA). Access to education records is provided to parents, guardians, and eligible students (eligible students are defined as those 18 years of age or older, those enrolled in post-secondary educational institutions, or those younger than 18 who are emancipated), to professional educators with legitimate educational interests, to those federal or state officials whose access is authorized in connection with an audit or evaluation of federal or state-supported education requirements related to those programs, and to courts and others pursuant to subpoenas or similar documents.

The Superintendent shall direct the publication of procedures through which parents or eligible students may request the correction of errors in student records. The Superintendent shall ensure that each principal will develop a means to notify, on an annual basis, students and parents/guardians, including non-English speaking parents, of their rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and the Pupil Protection Rights Amendment either by letter or through a student handbook distributed to each student in the school.

The Board of Education designates certain information from student education records as "directory information", as is specified in this paragraph. Unless a parent/guardian or eligible student makes a timely request to the principal of the school where the student is enrolled that such information not be designated directory information as to that individual

student, such information will not be considered confidential and may be disclosed upon request.

Directory information is as follows:

- 1. Each student's name, address, grade level, and telephone number; The date and place of birth of each student;
- 2. Each student's participation in clubs and sports;
- 3. The weight and height of a student if he or she is a member of an athletic team;
- 4. Dates of attendance at Washington County Schools; and
- 5. Awards received during the time enrolled in the Washington County School System.

Student records will be forwarded without further notice to parents/guardians or eligible

students to any school within or outside the Washington County School System, upon request of the school where a student is enrolling.

Any person whose parental rights have not been revoked by court order and any guardian, or any individual acting as a parent in the absence of a parent/guardian, may inspect the education records of his/her child during the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday while school is in session.

Generally, a parent will be permitted to obtain a copy of education records of his/her child upon reasonable notice and payment of reasonable copying costs of 25 cents per page.

Education records are maintained at the school where the student is enrolled and are in the custody of the principal or his/her designee.

Personally identifiable information will not be released by the school system from an education record without prior written consent of the parent or eligible student except under the following circumstances:

- Disclosures will be made to school administrators, teachers or other professionals employed or associated by the school system who have some role in evaluating or educating the student.
- 2. Records will be sent to a school where the student has enrolled upon request of that school.
- 3. Disclosures will be made to federal or state officials in connection with the audit of educational programs.
- 4. Disclosures will be made in connection with financial aid applications of the student to determine the eligibility for and amount of aid as well as enforcement of the terms and conditions of financial aid.
- 5. Disclosures will be made to comply with state law, Internal Revenue Service laws and regulations, judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas. A reasonable effort will be made to notify parents/guardians or eligible students in advance of such disclosures.
- 6. Disclosures will be made to organizations conducting studies on behalf of or by educational institutions specified in 34 C.F.R. 99.31(a) (6) and (7).
- 7. Disclosure may be made to accrediting institutions to carry out their accreditation function.
- 8. Disclosures will be made in connection with a health or safety emergency.
- 9. Information the Board of Education has designated "directory information" may be disclosed upon request unless a parent/guardian or eligible student objects in writing to the principal of the school where his/her child is enrolled within a reasonable time after receipt of the notice as contained in the student handbook. Directory information about former students will be disclosed upon request.
- 10. Disclosures may be made, without the consent or knowledge of the eligible student or parent, to the Attorney General of the United States or his/her designee in response to an ex parte order in connection with the investigation or prosecution of terrorism crimes. The school system is not required to record such disclosure of information and is protected from liability for disclosing such information in good faith.
- 11. Disclosure of student names, addresses, and telephone numbers shall be made to

military recruiters and post-secondary institutions upon request, unless the student's parent(s)/ guardian(s) notifies the School System in writing that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent.

Each record custodian in the Washington County School system shall maintain as part of each student's file a log of those persons to whom access to the educational records has been provided.

A parent/guardian or eligible student who believes the student's record contains an error may request its correction by submitting a written explanation of the error and the basis for believing it to be in error to the principal or his/her designee, who shall investigate and determine whether or not to amend the record. If the matter cannot be resolved, a parent/guardian or eligible student may request a hearing pursuant to federal regulations at 34 C.F.R. 99.21-99.22 as well as applicable state regulations. If the hearing results in a determination that the record contained erroneous information, the parent/guardian or eligible student shall be informed in writing of the correction; if the information contained in the record is determined not to be erroneous, the parent/guardian or eligible student may place a statement in the record commenting upon the contested information and stating the basis for disagreement. The statement shall thereafter be disclosed whenever the portion to which it relates is disclosed.

#### PROTECTION OF PUPIL RIGHTS AMENDMENT (PPRA)

Definition of Terms Used in PPRA:

"Instructional Material" - Instructional material that is provided to a student, regardless of format, including printed or representational materials, audio-visual materials, and materials in electronic or digital formats (such as material accessible through the Internet). The term does not include academic tests or academic assessments.

"Invasive Physical Examination" - Any medical examination that involves the exposure of private body parts, or any act during such examination that includes incision, insertion, or injection into the body, but does not include a hearing, vision, or scoliosis screening.

"Personal Information" - Individually identifiable information including: (1) a student or parent's first and last name; (2) home address; (3) telephone number; or (4) social security number.

#### Requirements:

No student shall be required to submit to a survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information concerning:

- 1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent;
- 2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
- 3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
- 4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;

- 5. Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
- 6. Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers;
- 7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student's parent;
- 8. Income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program), without prior written consent of the parent or eligible student.

A parent of a student may, upon request, inspect any survey created by a third party containing one or more of the items listed as (1) through (8) above before the survey is administered or distributed by a school to a student and may choose to opt the student out of participation in the survey. The Superintendent shall develop procedures for (1) granting a request by a parent for reasonable access to such survey within a reasonable period of time after the request is received, and (2) making arrangements to protect student privacy in the event of administration or distribution to a student of a survey containing one or more of the items listed as (1) through (8).

The requirements of PPRA do not apply to a survey administered to a student in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

A parent of a student may, upon request, inspect any instructional material used as part of the education curriculum for the student. The Superintendent shall develop procedures for granting a request by a parent for reasonable access to instructional material within a reasonable period of time after the request is received.

Parents shall be notified prior to the administration of physical examinations or screenings that the school may administer to students. This notice shall offer the parent the opportunity to opt the student out of any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening that is (1) required as a condition of attendance; (2) administered by the school and scheduled by the school in advance; and (3) not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student, or of other students.

The parent of a student shall be notified prior to the commencement of activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of marketing or for selling the information (or otherwise providing that information to others for that purpose). Such notice shall offer the parent the opportunity to inspect, upon request, any instrument used in the collection of such information before the instrument is administered or distributed to a student and to opt the student out of such activities. The Superintendent shall develop procedures that: (1) make arrangements to protect student privacy in the event of such collection, disclosure or use; and (2) grant a request by a parent for reasonable access to such instrument within a reasonable period of time after the request is received.

The requirements concerning activities involving the collection and disclosure of personal information from students for marketing purposes do not apply to the collection,

disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing evaluating, or providing educational products or services for or to students or education institutions, such as the following:

- 1. College or other secondary education recruitment, or military recruitment;
- 2. Book clubs, magazines, and programs providing access to low-cost literary products
- 3. Curriculum and instructional materials used by elementary schools and secondary schools;
- 4. Tests and assessments used by elementary schools and secondary schools to provide cognitive, evaluative, diagnostic, clinical, aptitude, or achievement information about students;
- 5. The sale by students of products or services to raise funds for school-related or education- related activities;
- 6. Student recognition programs.

#### Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA)

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) is a federal law that required the creation of national standards to protect sensitive patient health information from being disclosed without the patient's consent or knowledge. The US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued the HIPAA Privacy Rule to implement the requirements of HIPAA.

The HIPAA Security Rule protects a subset of information covered by the Privacy Rule.

#### **HIPAA Privacy Rule**

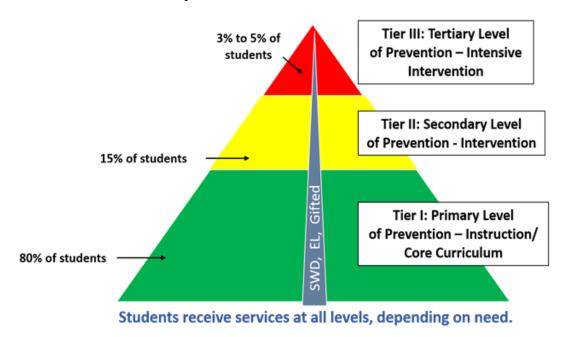
The Privacy Rule standards address the use and disclosure of individuals' health information (known as "protected health information") by entities subject to the Privacy Rule. These individuals and organizations are called "covered entities." The Privacy Rule also contains standards for individuals' rights to understand and control how their health information is used. A major goal of the Privacy Rule is to ensure that individuals' health information is properly protected while allowing the flow of health information needed to provide and promote high quality health care and to protect the public's health and well-being. The Privacy Rule strikes a balance that permits important uses of information while protecting the privacy of people who seek care and healing.

#### **Child Find**

EMS has in effect policies and procedures to ensure that all children, who are in need of special education and related services are identified, located, and evaluated. The implementation of a multi-tiered system of supports, including the use of scientific, research, or evidence-based interventions are required at EMS before referring a child for an initial evaluation for special education.

# **Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)**

EMS utilizes MTSS, which provides a framework to align instructional, behavioral, and learning practices with the mission of learning for everyone. The MTSS process is committed to providing support to all students based on individual needs. Response to Intervention (RTI) is embedded throughout Georgia's MTSS framework to provide support matched to students' needs to maximize student achievement and to improve behavioral outcomes. Georgia's MTSS includes schoolwide implementation that focuses on the "what and how of instruction" and the provision of services and supports to students that meet their unique, whole child needs.



A multi-level prevention system is an essential component of Georgia's MTSS. The component includes three levels of intensity or prevention that is designed to improve high-quality core instruction, evidence-based interventions, and supports when used effectively within the framework.

The triangle graphic depicts the progression of support across the multi-level prevention system. The triangle represents three levels of prevention and the percentage of students that are expected to benefit from the levels of prevention in an effective system.

The levels are Tier I: Primary Level – Instruction/Core Curriculum, Tier II: Secondary Level – Intervention and Tier III: Tertiary Level - Intensive Intervention.

For more information, visit <a href="www.gadoe.org/TieredSystemofSupports">www.gadoe.org/PBIS</a> or contact Mrs. Tamiko Watts, one of our school administrators that coordinates this process. She may be reached at 478-552-2007, Ext. 3206.

#### **ABS Center**

Washington County Public School System believes that a systemic, data-driven, and prescriptive intervention and/or enrichment plan is needed to help the struggling students or advance students' cognitive development. One such strategy is using a proactive

response to intervention approach via the use of Academic-Behavior Student Center (ABS Center) to provide such needed interventions. This intervention option will be used to help students that are experiencing academic, behavioral, and social emotional concerns by providing specific interventions via Tier 2 or Tier 3 evidence-based and "best practice" options while attending the ABS Center. The following operational plan of the ABS Center is based upon evidence-based interventions and strategies to help students improve or enrich their academic and/or behavioral efficiency.

# **Free and Appropriate Public Education**

All students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) are entitled to a free appropriate public education (FAPE). This includes children who are eligible for special education from the ages of three (3) through twenty-one (21).

Definition of FAPE: The special education and related services that make up the FAPE are provided to children identified with disabilities who have an IEP at no cost to the parent.

Special education and related services, including special education at the preschool, elementary, and secondary levels, are services that are provided so eligible students can make progress toward and/or meet the educational standards of Georgia. All students will be provided an education that includes access to the Georgia curriculum and addresses the unique needs of the individual student and his or her disability. While the education provided to the student with an IEP must be appropriate and must address what the individual student needs in order to make educational progress, this is neither a guarantee of achievement of each goal on the IEP nor a guarantee of promotion, passing grades, or graduation.

Likewise, passing from grade-to-grade or receiving all passing grades does not mean that a student is receiving FAPE. Each student is an individual and his or her appropriate education is determined on a case-by-case basis. In addition, the term "appropriate" is not the same as "best"; "appropriate" is a minimal standard that assures the student has the opportunity to make educational progress.

#### Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a directive to any person, business or government agency that receives federal funds to eliminate discrimination against persons with disabilities.

Under Section 504 a person with a disability is anyone who has a mental or physical impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities, such as caring for oneself; performing manual tasks; walking; seeing; hearing; speaking; breathing; standing; learning and working; eating; sleeping; lifting; bending; reading; concentrating; thinking; and communicating. Also limitations regarding major bodily functions (i.e.

immune systems, cell growth, digestive, bowel, or bladder functions) are recognized as disabilities under Section 504. The term "substantially limits" means the person is unable to perform a major life activity or major bodily function that a non-disabled person can do, or the person is significantly restricted in the performance of a major life activity in comparison to a non-disabled person.

It is the policy of Washington County Board of Education to comply with the provisions of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 in providing a free appropriate public education for students with disabilities who qualify under the definition of the law.

No student or other qualified individual shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination in any program or activity, on the basis of disability. Any student or other disabled individual who is qualified for services under Section 504 will receive appropriate accommodations providing equal access to educational programs, services, and facilities.

If a parent, guardian, or adult student has a question about parental or student rights under Section 504, contact the district Section 504 Coordinator, Emily Johnson at 478-552-3981.

# Notice of Rights of Students and Parents Under Section 504

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, commonly referred to as "Section 504," is a nondiscrimination statute enacted by the United States Congress. The purpose of Section 504 is to prohibit discrimination and to assure that disabled students have educational opportunities and benefits equal to those provided to non-disabled students. For more information regarding Section 504, or if you have questions or need additional assistance, please contact your local system's Section 504 Coordinator at the following address:

Washington County Board of Education Attn: Emily Johnson, Director of Special Programs P. O. Box 716 Sandersville, GA 31082 478-552-3981 Ext. 1225 ejohnson@washington.k12.ga.us

The implementing regulations for Section 504 as set out in 34 CFR Part 104 provide parents and/or students with the following rights:

- 1. Your child has the right to an appropriate education designed to meet his or her individual educational needs as adequately as the needs of non-disabled students. 34 CFR104.33.
- 2. Your child has the right to free educational services except for those fees that are imposed on non-disabled students or their parents. Insurers and similar third parties who provide services not operated by or provided by the recipient are not relieved

- from an otherwise valid obligation to provide or pay for services provided to a disabled student. 34 CFR104.33.
- 3. Your child has a right to participate in an educational setting (academic and nonacademic) with non-disabled students to the maximum extent appropriate to his or her needs. 34 CFR 104.34.
- 4. Your child has a right to facilities, services, and activities that are comparable to those provided for non-disabled students. 34 CFR 104.34.
- 5. Your child has a right to an evaluation prior to a Section 504 determination of eligibility. 34 CFR 104.35.
- 6. You have the right to not consent to the school system's request to evaluate your child. 34 CFR 104.35.
- 7. You have the right to ensure that evaluation procedures, which may include testing, conform to the requirements of 34 CFR 104.35.
- 8. You have the right to ensure that the school system will consider information from a variety of sources as appropriate, which may include aptitude and achievement tests, grades, teacher recommendations and observations, physical conditions, social or cultural background, medical records, and parental recommendations. 34 CFR 104.35.
- 9. You have the right to ensure that placement decisions are made by a group of persons, including persons knowledgeable about your child, the meaning of the evaluation data, the placement options, and the legal requirements for least restrictive environment and comparable facilities. 34 CFR 104.35.
- 10. If your child is eligible under Section 504, your child has a right to periodic reevaluations, including prior to any subsequent significant change of placement. 34 CFR104.35.
- 11. You have the right to notice prior to any actions by the school system regarding the identification, evaluation, or placement of your child. 34 CFR 104.36.
- 12. You have the right to examine your child's educational records. 34 CFR 104.36.
- 13. You have the right to an impartial hearing with respect to the school system's actions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, or educational placement, with opportunity for parental participation in the hearing and representation by an attorney. 34 CFR 104.36.
- 14. You have the right to receive a copy of this notice and a copy of the school system's impartial hearing procedure upon request. 34 CFR 104.36.
- 15. If you disagree with the decision of the impartial hearing officer (school board members and other district employees are not considered impartial hearing officers), you have a right to a review of that decision according to the school system's impartial hearing procedure. 34 CFR 104.36.
- 16. You have the right to, at any time, file a complaint with the United States Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights.

#### 160-4-7-.07 LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT (LRE).

(1) LRE REQUIREMENTS. (a) Each LEA shall have policies and procedures to ensure that to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities in Georgia shall be educated with children who are not disabled. [34 C.F.R. § 300.114(a)(2)(i)] (b) Special classes, separate

schooling or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular class environment shall occur only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. [34 C.F.R. § 300.114(a)(2)(ii)]

#### **New Parent Centered Policies**

The Washington County School District is committed to fostering a strong positive working relationship with our parents and community stakeholders. Keeping our parents informed is critical. We take pride in maintaining transparency and an open-door policy to nurture a positive and professional relationship. This upcoming school year there will be several new policy updates. These updates will ensure that the Washington County School District adheres with state law and federal guidelines. During the summer months of June and July 2022 the Washington County Board of Education approved the following revised and new board policies.

#### Policy IEDA (Revised): Unstructured break time

This policy addresses scheduled recess for all students K-8, at the discretion of the school principal.

#### Policy IKBB (New): Divisive concepts complaint resolution process

This new policy allows parents (or guardians) a more formal complaint resolution process regarding topics that the parents (or guardians) have concerns about their children being potentially exposed to in the learning and teaching environment.

#### Policy IKBC (New): Material harmful to minors complaint resolution process

This new policy helps to address complaints, submitted by parents or guardians, alleging that material that is harmful to minors has been provided or is currently available to his or her child enrolled in the Washington County School District.

#### Policy JRB (New): Parents Bill of Rights

The Washington County Board of Education promotes parental involvement in the school district. This new policy and procedure ensures that each school within the district has in place and makes available a procedure to review records relating to his or her minor child. This includes learning about courses of study, instructional materials intended for use in the classroom, the opt-out option to instructional materials, withdrawing their child from a prescribed course of study in sex education, and providing written notice that photographs or video or voice recordings of his or her minor child are not permitted, subject to applicable public safety and security exceptions.

All above listed policies may be read in their entirety by visiting the Washington County School District website, calling the principal, or scheduling a meeting with the Superintendent of Schools.

#### TITLE IX

Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in the education programs and activities. Washington County High School does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its education programs and activities. Any inquiries concerning Title IX may be referred to our school's Title IX Coordinator, Mrs. Amy Vickers at 478-552-3981 Ext. 1218

#### **Academic Classes**

The Middle School curriculum consists of English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

#### Accreditation

Thomas Jefferson Elder Middle School meets the standards for public schools as set forth by the State Department of Education. We are accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and by the Georgia Accreditation Commission.

#### **Advanced Content Classes**

When space is available, some students may be offered placement in advanced content classes. These placements are considered on an annual basis and are not guaranteed year-to-year. High school credit may also be earned by selected 8<sup>th</sup> grade students in Algebra and Physical Science who meet the required criteria. These students will be able to earn high school credit and will be required to take the Georgia Milestones End-of-Course Test.

#### Placement in 7th grade Accelerated Math Class

Students who met the criteria for the 6th grade Accelerated Math Class for the 2021-2022 school year and maintained an 85 or higher for each grading period will be placed in the 7th Grade Accelerated Math Class.

# <u>Placement in 8<sup>th</sup> grade Algebra 1 and Physical Science Class</u> (high school credit)

The cohort of students who met the criteria for the 6th grade Accelerated Math Class and continued to meet all accelerated math requirements for their 6th and 7th grade year will be placed in the 8th grade Algebra 1 class, Physical Science class, and 9th grade Literature class.

\*Students who take the Algebra 1, Physical Science and 9th grade Literature classes will take the Georgia Milestones End of Course Test in May. The test counts 20% of the student's final average. Upon satisfactory completion of the course (average of 70 or above), the student will receive high school credit for the course.

# 8th Grade Foreign Language (high school credit)

Students were selected for the Foreign Language course based on interest and lexile scores from the last administration of the Reading Inventory during the 2021-2022 school year. The students were selected based on lexile scores, grades in academic classes, as well as behavior records.

#### **SOAR: Scholars On the Academic Rise**

EMS implemented an extension to its instructional process within the gifted and accelerated classes as we included more in-depth project based learning opportunities. The lessons will require students to be able to complete their current units of studies as well as engage in additional project-based learning tasks.

#### **Connections Classes**

Students will take two connections classes per semester for a total of four connections classes per year. Connections classes consist of physical education/weight training, health, art, band, chorus, computer technology, agriculture, dance, drama, theatre, and video production. Our year long 8th grade connections courses for high school credit are: Basic Agriculture, Visual Art, Introduction to Digital Technology, Foreign Language.

This year EMS will be offering several year long classes at each grade level. In 6th, 7th, and 8th grade, students enrolled in band or chorus will be scheduled for a yearlong class. Students will rotate the second connections period through the other connections classes offered and will remain in the class for an 18-week period.

There are no secured lockers in PE. Valuables are NOT secure in PE. Please manage these items prior to attending PE. The school will not be responsible for any items or money lost or stolen.

#### **Athletics**

Any student interested in playing a sport must meet eligibility requirements and must have a current physical and some form of insurance on file. To be current, the physical must have been within the current calendar year. School – offered insurance or personal insurance is acceptable. To be eligible to play, a student may not have failed more than one class the previous semester and may not be retained for the current school year. EMS follows GHSA rules and regulations for play.

Although coaches for individual sports set attendance policies, a student must be present 50% of a school day to be eligible to play or practice that afternoon. Students assigned to ISS are not eligible to play unless they have completed serving their ISS time but may attend practice any day that they are serving their time. Students assigned to OSS are not eligible to play or practice any day during their assigned OSS days.

Students will need to secure valuables in their school lockers. Locker rooms are not secure. Valuables can be given to the coaches to be secured in the coaches' offices if needed.

Coaches or the Athletic Director have the right to remove a student from play or from the team altogether due to poor sportsmanship or failure to maintain appropriate behavior or academic standing in the classroom setting. Their decision will be final.

Athletes must be picked up within 30 minutes of the end of practice or the return from a game. Students will not be able to participate in extracurricular activities if they are listed on the current school debt list.

#### ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR EXTRACURRICULAR PARTICIPATION

- Golf (Co-ed)
- Baseball
- Softball
- Soccer (Boys & Girls)
- Track (Boys & Girls)
- Cross Country (Boys & Girls)

**Football** 

Cheerleading

Basketball (Boys & Girls)

State Board Policy (IDE) outlines eligibility requirements for all students participating in extracurricular activities in grades 6 - 8. Extra – curricular is defined as any school sponsored program for which some or all the activities are outside the regular classroom or class day. Students who participate in activities must meet the requirements of the GHSA. All extracurricular activities participants must satisfy all eligibility requirements for participation. Students must meet the following criteria in order to participate in competitive interscholastic activities: 1a

# **Eligibility Regulations for High School Athletic Participation**

- 1. Middle School students who are in the 8th Grade may apply to participate in high school sports competitions if they are also participating in the same sport(s) at the middle school level.
- 2. Middle School 8th Grade students may participate in sports at Washington County High School at the conclusion of each Middle School sports season.
- 3. Middle school students must be approved by the Director of Athletics prior to any participation on the high school level.

#### **Extra-Curricular Activities**

Clubs will be categorized into two basic groups for the purpose of meeting. Those groups are Honor Clubs and Activity Clubs. Clubs will meet after school - students will need to provide their own transportation.

Honor Clubs		
Jr. Beta Club	Debate Team	Math Team
Members of Jr. Beta are selected based on academic performance.	In a standard debate, teams are presented with a resolution or	Students are recommended by their math teachers based on their

Students must have an overall average of 85 for the school year in order to receive an invitation to join. Members of Jr. Beta complete community based projects throughout the school year.

#### **Sponsors**

Befaney Roberson Tabatha Frost Angelina Rogers topic and each team has a set period of time to prepare an argument. This provides the opportunities for students to learn the fundamentals of structuring, sourcing, and debating a wide variety of topics and arguments. Students must be in good academic standing to join. academic performance in math. Students compete in various math competitions throughout the year. Students must be in good academic standing to join.

#### **Sponsor**

Befaney Roberson

# **Activity Clubs**

#### **FFA Club**

FFA is an intracurricular student organization for those interested in agriculture and leadership. FFA stands for "Future Farmers of America." Students must be in good academic standing to join.

# Sponsor

Matthew Shelton

#### Art

The art club is a place for practicing artists to hone in on their skills, develop their techniques and portfolios, collaborate with other artists like themselves, create bonds with the community through the arts, and learn how to work together through group projects that will beautify the schools and community.

Students must be in good academic standing to join.

# Sponsor

Bethany Severance

#### 4 H Club

The goal of 4-H is to develop leadership, responsibility, and life skills of youth through experiential learning programs and a positive youth development approach. Students must be in good academic standing to join.

#### **Sponsor**

Cindy Sheram

#### **Technology**

This club fosters learning and awareness of technology and its applications in today's world and to aid in all aspects of technology in the school environment. Participants may gain experience using computer aided drafting, using high tech equipment, and playing computer games. Students must be in good academic standing to join.

#### **Sponsors**

Needed

#### **Principal's Cabinet**

The purpose of the Principal's Cabinet is to give students an opportunity to share information with the principal about their learning, social experiences, and other concerns at school. Students are selected by their homeroom teacher. Students must be in good academic standing to join.

#### **Sponsor**

Mrs. Vickie Harden

#### **FCA**

The Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) is an international non-profit Christian sports ministry. FCA helps to unite two passions, faith and athletics, to impact the world for Jesus Christ. The four core values of this ministry include integrity, serving, teamwork, and excellence.

#### **Sponsor**

Bethany Severance

#### **Counseling Program**

The counseling program provides guidance, advice, and consultation to students, their parents, and their teachers.

Counseling sessions are designed to build student skills in areas such as studying, making and keeping friends, and college and career guidance. Smaller group sessions are held to explore topics like managing anger, avoiding trouble and respecting authority. Most common, however, are the individualized sessions where a student sorts out personal problems, makes decisions, and follows through with changing themselves. The counselor also works with students, parents, and teachers on other issues including poor student attendance and misconduct.

When additional student support resources are needed, the EMS counseling program collaborates with the school system's social worker and/or system psychologist. Other support personnel may include Department of Family and Children Services, Public Health Department, nurses, and law enforcement agencies.

Your counselor for the 2022-2023 school year at EMS is Ms. Rita Hunt. You may reach her at 478–552-2007, ext. 3210.

#### **Grading Procedure**

The school term is divided into four 9 weeks and two semesters. Students will be given a semester exam at the end of each semester. Report cards will be issued to all students each nine weeks. The semester grade will include the average of the two 9 weeks. The Semester Exam will count 10% of the Semester grade.

Semester exams will not be given to students who are absent on the scheduled day of the exam, except in cases of emergencies. In such cases, exams will be made up within three school days. Students who fail to take the exams will receive a grade of zero for the exam.

Grades six, seven, and eight in the Washington County Public School System will use the number grading system. A number grade will be recorded on the student's report card. A number grade will be used to mark students' achievement in all courses.

Course Grades: 90-100 A 80-89 B 70-79 C Below 70 F

#### **Grading Policy:**

60% - Daily (Homework, daily practices, projects/tasks, focus, AR, Classwork, Notebook Check, Problem of the Day, Sentence of the Day, Vocabulary Terms, Grade Sheet, Workbook Page)

40% - Assessment of Learning (tests, quizzes, major projects/performance tasks, major writing assignments)

10% - Semester Exams

#### Make-Up Work Policy

#### Make-up Work Procedures

(Not applicable for school approved absences) Students should see their teachers for make-up work status.

- 1. When a student is absent one (1) day, the student must make up work and/or tests missed the day he/she returns to school or as arranged with the teacher.
- 2. When a student is absent two (2) to five (5) days consecutively, the student must make up work missed and/or tests missed within three (3) days of returning to school or as arranged with the teacher.
- 3. When a student is absent more than five (5) days consecutively, the student must make up work missed and/or tests missed within five (5) days of returning to school or as arranged with the teacher.
  - 1. Students will do make-up tests/quizzes before school, after school, or in the classroom as arranged with the teacher.
  - 2. Students who miss Connections' class or a participation class shall be assigned alternative work which will be due according to the make-up work directive.

# Failure to do make-up work according to these procedures may result in a zero for the missed work, quiz, or test.

- 1. Tests and quizzes are the only make-up work to be completed at school.
- 2. Other assignments (such as homework or class work, etc.) are to be completed at home and returned to the teacher within the same time frame as indicated in the make-up directive.
- 3. Classroom explanations missed because of an absence become the responsibility of the student, even when the explanations missed are related to a test or quiz.

# **Late Work Policy**

Students who are present at school when daily grades or assessments are assigned but do not complete and/or turn in the assignments will adhere to the following:

- 1. Students will have 10 school days after the due date to turn it in. Two points will be deducted from the final grade on the assignment each day the assignment is late.
- 2. After 10 days, the student will receive a grade of **ZERO** for the assignment.

#### **Academic Probation**

a

# **Academic Recognition Program**

- 1. The All "A" Honor Roll will be composed of students who maintain a grade of 90 or above in each subject taken (All "A's").
- 2. The Merit List will be composed of students who have an overall average of 90 or above.
- 3. The A/B Honor Roll will be composed of students who make all "A's" and "B's" with an overall average of 85.
- 4. Academic Honors will be based on the first three 9 Weeks grading periods by averaging the 1st semester grade and the third nine weeks grade.

# **Promotion- Retention Policy**

A student will be promoted if he/she:

- 1. Achieves an average of 70 or above in 5 out of 7 remaining classes
- 2. In compliance with the board's attendance policy

A student who does not meet the criteria, may be promoted with exception based on the recommendation of the promotion-retention committee. Factors to be considered include (but are not limited to) the following:

- 1. Teacher recommendation
- 2. Classroom performance and academic averages
- 3. Age
- 4. Maturity level
- 5. Work habits
- 6. Attendance
- 7. Students IEP's

#### **Exemption Policy**

# ALL DEBTS MUST BE PAID IN FULL BY STUDENTS IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE IN THE EXEMPTION POLICY

Students will have the opportunity to exempt their 2nd Semester Exam based on attendance and grades. In order to exempt an exam for a class period, students must:

- 1. Have **no more than 6** excused or unexcused absences for the class they wish to exempt.
- 2. Have an average of 70 or above for the year.
- 3. Students who **receive 10 or more tardies to school** for the school year **will not** be eligible to exempt final for the second semester.
- 4. All school debts must be paid in full.

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

Students assigned to ISS will be responsible for completing and making up all academic assignments that were missed during their time of absence from their regular class. Students are expected to behave in an orderly fashion during this time period as well. Any further misbehavior during this time period may extend your time in ISS or result in Out-of-School Suspension. Final decisions are authorized by the principal or assistant principal.

#### **Media Center**

The Media center operates on an open schedule which makes it accessible to classes, groups, and individuals at all times. Individuals and small groups, unaccompanied by the teacher, are required to have a pass to visit the Media Center.

This pass must be signed and the time of departure noted by a member of the Media

Center staff before the student or group returns to the classroom.

All print, non-print materials and hardware are housed in the Media Center for circulation. Students are allowed to check out up to two books for a period of ten (10) school days depending on grade level. Exceptions to this two – book limit will be made for students involved in special projects and with special needs. Audio Visual materials are also available for check-out by students with special needs, but a request must be made by the teacher to reserve these materials.

The Media Center has a large selection of periodicals for interest reading as well as research resources. To preserve this collection for project needs, it may not be checked out. The media staff or the classroom teacher at no cost to the student needed for research will copy articles.

A large number of authorized reference resources are also available to students. These include magazine indexes, electronic encyclopedias, atlases, and almanacs. Copies of articles and other reference resources are available to students but will be limited to five pages unless the media staff gives special permission. Only copies of assignment related articles would be allowed. Students may check out reference books, including encyclopedias, overnight.

An overdue notice is provided to the homeroom teacher at 9 – week intervals to inform students and teachers of non-returned items.

Internet Research in the Media Center or Computer Labs will be allowed unless an opt-out Acceptable Use Policy form has been signed by the parent.

#### **Metal Detectors**

T. J. Elder Middle School utilizes metal detectors as an additional resource to ensure the safety of all students, faculty and staff. Students and visitors will be required to enter through the metal detector each day during entrance into the school building or school functions. All personal items, school supplies, book bags and backpacks must be able to clear the metal detector. Such items that include various metals that do not clear the metal detector are prohibited.

#### **Control Access System**

T.J. Elder Middle School is excited about our control access system. This is another layer of safety that we have implemented in an effort to keep our students, faculty and staff safe. As you enter our school at the main entrance there is a doorbell, camera and intercom system. Please press the button for the doorbell and the receptionist will dialogue with you from that point about entrance to our school. We ask that you still clear the metal detector that will be placed immediately in front of the door and follow further instructions from the receptionist to enter the main office. Thank you for following this procedure in an effort to maximize safety at our school.

#### Cafeteria

The Cafeteria is operated for the convenience of the students at Elder Middle School. A student may bring his/her lunch from home. All cafeteria-prepared lunches must be eaten

in the cafeteria. Students will not be allowed to leave campus for lunch. Parents are asked not to bring meals from fast food restaurants to their children. The lunchroom staff will provide a variety of foods and meal choices for students to eat.

#### **Students Must Keep In Mind the Following Rules:**

- 1. Students must wait in line; do not crowd the lunchroom checkers.
- 2. Loud talking should be avoided in the cafeteria at all times.
- 3. Good table manners are expected of all students.
- 4. At dismissal, students should return plates and milk cartons to the proper place.
- 5. Absolutely No Food Fighting (Punishment can be suspension or expulsion from school)
- 6. Tables, chairs, and the floor should be clean and free of waste.
- 7. All food must be eaten in the cafeteria.
- 8. After lunch, all students are expected to return to class with their teachers, unless otherwise stated.

**Special Note:** Any student who cannot drink milk at lunch needs to bring a doctor's note to Ms. Danielle Swint, Manager, in the cafeteria at the beginning of each school year. The student will have to pick up a milk until

#### First Aid

We are very fortunate to have a nurse on the campus of Elder Middle School. The school nurse will coordinate all medical services. Students who are experiencing physical problems will be referred to the school nurse. All medications should be taken to the nurse upon the student's arrival to school. All medications should also be consumed and administered by the school's nurse with the exception of epi pens and inhalers as approved by the nurse or principal.

#### **Fundraising**

All fundraisers must be approved by the Washington County Board of Education. These requests must be submitted to your principal by May 31<sup>st</sup>. Upon approval, the committee chair or staff responsible will carry out the fundraising project adhering to the guidelines posted with the financial section of the handbook regarding the handling of funds.

#### **Student ID Cards**

Students will be issued an ID card at the beginning of the school year. Students must have their card to check out a book in the media center. Students without a card in the media center will be sent back to the classroom. The cost of replacement of ID cards will be \$5.00.

#### Tardy to School or Class

Students tardy to school should immediately report to Mrs. Orr's office for a late/admission slip to class. Students who report to school after 8:15 a.m. must have a parent or guardian present to sign them in. Excessive tardiness to class or school may result in disciplinary action. Students who receive 10 or more tardies to school for the school year will not be eligible to exempt final for the second semester.

# Videography and Photography of Students

Included in the student's back-to-school packets is a form for parents to "opt out" of

having their child's photograph or a video including their child posted on the school website or included in the paper. Parents should check "yes or no" indicating the photography or video posting of their child.

#### **Visitor Policy**

The following procedures are policy guidelines for visitors of Elder Middle School.

All visitors are to report directly to the main office to state the nature of the visit, sign – in and secure a visitor's pass from the principal/assistant principal or their designated representative. All visitors should sign out in the office at the end of their visit.

In order to visit with a student in the building, the visitor must be on the approved contact list for that student. This is the contact form that the enrolling parent fills out at the beginning of the year. Visitors are not allowed to visit classes without permission. Upon prior approval, parents/guardians may be allowed to visit their child's class as an observer.

Any visitor, who disrupts, interferes or does not abide by the guidelines as set forth by the WC Board of Education or Elder Middle School will be asked to leave.

#### **Volunteers**

EMS welcomes parents and family members as volunteers. Call the school to find out more about ways you can volunteer with us! Mrs. Darrisaw has volunteer packets in the front office that need to be picked up at the school if you are interested.

#### Safety Protocols and Response to a Pandemic Situation Statement

The Washington County School District has student and staff safety at the forefront and is fully committed to providing and maintaining safe and orderly operating schools in the district. We have a strong partnership with local agencies, state agencies, and maintain our own certified law enforcement department (SRO). We maintain a full camera monitoring system, Control Access System for visitors, daily patrolling of our campuses, additional support and walk-throughs by our local law and state law enforcement agencies as needed, conduct periodic dog searches each year, use of metal detectors for students and school sponsored events, cameras on our buses, and required background checks for all staff, substitutes, and volunteers before working with our students.

In the matter of a pandemic situation, the Washington County School District and superintendent will work in collaboration with the Department of Public Health, our Local Health Department, Community Task Force Team, our Emergency Management Agency, CDC, Georgia Department of Education, and Governor's Office for State of Georgia on responding and coordinating with Districtwide Leadership SMART Team to activate the County-wide Pandemic Plan. This plan will include the options of periodic short- and long-term closures, activating remote blending learning for students as needed, modified lunch program, summer feeding program, providing remote and school-based social emotional & mental health support for students, consideration for modified transportation options, and implementing intensive safety protocols for the safety of all students and staff members

# 2022-2023 Elder Middle School Parent and Family Engagement Activities

# Date to be determined

<sup>\*</sup>Invitations to events will be delivered through email, ParentSquare, social media, news outlets, school newsletters, and the monthly school postcard. Announcements of events will also be displayed on the school marquee.

# PROGRESS REPORTS, PARENT VISITS, & PATSS MEETINGS FOR 2022-2023

First Progress Report	Tuesday, September 6, 2022
	37 1
Parent Conference Afternoon	Thursday, September 8, 2022 3:45- 5:00
First Nine Weeks Report Card	Wednesday, October 12, 2022
Second Progress Report	Thursday, November 10, 2022
Parent Conference Afternoon	Tuesday November 15, 2022 3:45 - 5:00
Second Nine Weeks Report Cards	Wednesday, January 4, 2023
Third Progress Report	Tuesday, February 7, 2023
Parent Conference Afternoon	Thursday, February 9, 2023 3:45 - 5:00
Third Nine Weeks Report Card	Tuesday, March 14, 2023
Fourth Progress Report	Tuesday, April 25, 2023
Parent Conference Afternoon	Thursday, April 27, 2023 3:45 - 5:00

# **Helpful Information**

If you need help with:	You will need to see:
Official School Records	Rita Hunt, Counselor Pam Strowbridge, Secretary
Audio/Visual Materials Equipment	Stephanie Sellars, Media Specialist
Discipline	Vickie Harden, Principal Assistant Principals, Teacher Administrator
Withdrawal from School	Rita Hunt, Counselor Pam Strowbridge, Secretary Vickie Harden, Principal
Morning Attendance Report	Alexandria Orr
Athletic Information	Tamiko Watts
Attendance/Tardies/Doctor Excuses/Discipline Office	Alexandria Orr
School Insurance	Homeroom Teacher
School Insurance Claims	Kim Rhodes
Illness	Jaquasha Hackley, School Nurse
Schedule Adjustment	Rita Hunt, Counselor
Lost and Found	Alexandria Orr
College Career Info	Rita Hunt, Counselor
Testing Information	Tamiko Watts, Assistant Principal
Food Preparation	Danielle Swint, Dietician
Curriculum Information	Audra Gilbert & Teresa McPherson
Any Additional Information	Vickie Harden, Principal

# **Thomas Jefferson Elder Middle School**

Mrs. Tamiko Watts Assistant Principal

Dr. Mia Wuchte Assistant Principal

Mrs. Leigh Anne Brooker Teacher Administrator



Mrs. Vickie Harden, Principal

Post Office Box 816 - 902 Linton Road Sandersville, GA 31082

Phone: 478-552-2007 Fax: 478-552-7388

Ms. Kimberly Toliver
Teacher Administrator Trainee

Ms. Teresa McPherson Instructional Facilitator

> Ms. Rita Hunt Counselor

# **Right to Know Professional Qualifications of Teachers and Paraprofessionals**

Date: August 5, 2022

Dear Parents,

In compliance with the requirements of the Every Students Succeeds Act, the Thomas Jefferson Elder Middle School would like to inform you that you may request information about the professional qualifications of your student's teacher(s) and/ or paraprofessional(s). The following information may be requested:

- Whether the student's teacher
  - o has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject
  - o is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived; and
  - o is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher.
- Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

If you wish to request information concerning your child's teacher's and/or paraprofessional's qualifications, please contact the Thomas Jefferson Elder Middle School at 478-552-2007.

Sincerely,

Vickie Harden Principal

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# Thomas Jefferson Elder Middle School

Mrs. Tamiko Watts Assistant Principal

Dr. Mia Wuchte Assistant Principal

Mrs. Leigh Anne Brooker Teacher Administrator



Ms. Kimberly Toliver Teacher Administrator Trainee

> Ms. Teresa McPherson Instructional Facilitator

> > Ms. Rita Hunt Counselor

# Mrs. Vickie Harden, Principal

Post Office Box 816 - 902 Linton Road Sandersville, GA 31082 Phone: 478-552-2007 Fax: 478-552-7388

#### Derecho a conocer las calificaciones profesionales de los maestros y paraprofesionales

Fecha: 8/05/22

#### Estimados padres:

Conforme a los requisitos de la Ley para que todos los alumnos tengan éxito, a la Thomas Jefferson Elder Middle School le gustaría comunicarle que puede solicitar información sobre las calificaciones profesionales del (de los) maestro(s) y/o paraprofesional(es) de su hijo/a. Puede solicitarse la siguiente información:

- Si el maestro del alumno:
  - o ha cumplido con la calificación y los requisitos para la licencia del Estado para los niveles del grado y las asignaturas en las que el maestro enseña;
  - está enseñando en carácter provisional o de emergencia a través del cual no se exigen los requisitos para la licencia ni la calificación del Estado y
  - o está enseñando en el campo de la disciplina de la certificación del maestro.
- Si son paraprofesionales los que le brindan servicios al alumno y, de ser así, sus calificaciones.

Si desea solicitar información acerca de las calificaciones del maestro y/o paraprofesional de su hijo/a, comuníquese con Thomas Jefferson Elder Middle School al 478-552-2007.

Saludos cordiales,

ickie Harden

la LEA

# **Student Handbook Acknowledgement Form**

This form should be signed by both the student and parents acknowledging that you have read all of the information regarding rules, procedures and policies of T.J. Elder Middle School that are covered within this handbook.

By signing my name below, I am verifying that I have read the T.J. Elder Middle School Student Handbook provided to me for the 2022-2023 school year. I understand what is expected of me and that I am to comply with all rules & procedures included in the handbook.

# Videography and Photography of Students

My child CAN BE photographed and videoed for school purposes and the pictures			
may be published in newspapers, Facebook, school websites, and other social media.			
My child <b>CAN NOT</b> be photographed and videoed and used for school purposes.			
Student's Name	Date		
Student's Signature	Date		
Parent's Signature	Date		
Homeroom Teacher	Grade		