



PIKE COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

Handbook and Code of Conduct

2019-2020

Updated January 6, 2020

The purpose of this manual is to provide students in the Pike County School System an effective and safe learning environment. This manual has been prepared in accordance with the guidelines and discipline procedures of the Pike County School System and the requirements of Georgia law and the State Board of Education. It contains information for school personnel, students, and parents. Included in this manual are expected behaviors and consequences relating to various behavior infractions.

Expected behavior promotes learning and encourages maturity during the school day as well as during all school-related activities and at all off-campus events. Students are expected to abide by the following guidelines:

- Participate 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.
- Avoid behavior that impairs educational achievement - Students shall know and avoid behaviors prohibited by this code, take care of books and other instructional materials, and cooperate with others.
- 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.
- Recognize and respect rights of other students and adults - All students should show concern for, and encouragement of, the educational achievements and active participation of others.

The school's primary goal is to educate, not to punish; however, when the behavior of an individual student comes in conflict with the rights of others, corrective actions may be necessary for the benefit of that individual and the school as a whole. Accordingly, students shall be governed by the rules set forth in this Code of Conduct. Disciplinary action for violations of expected behaviors will include appropriate hearings and reviews. In all cases, the rights of individuals will be ensured and protected. The Pike County School System will make every reasonable effort to administer the discipline code consistently in all schools. When applicable, individualized plans (i.e. IEP, 504, and SST/RTI) will be reviewed for appropriate consequences.

Jurisdiction

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

At school or on school property at any time; off school grounds at any school activity, function, or while traveling to and from such events; on vehicles for student transportation operated by the school system; on school buses and at school bus stops. Also, students may be disciplined for conduct off campus which could result in a student being criminally charged, actions which make the student's continued presence at school a potential danger to persons or property at the school, or actions which disrupt the educational process.

Authority of the Principal and Authority of the Teacher

The principal is the designated leader of the school and, in concert with the staff, is responsible for the orderly operation of the school. In cases of disruptive, disorderly, or dangerous conduct not covered in this Code, the principal may undertake corrective measures which he or she believes to be in the best interest of the student and the school, provided any such action does not violate school board policy or procedures. 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 teach or the student's classmates to learn and where such behavior is in violation of the Code of Conduct. Such report shall be filed with the principal or designee on the school day of the most recent occurrence of such behavior, shall not exceed one page, and shall describe the behavior. The principal or designee shall, within one school day after receiving such report from a teacher, send to the student's parents or guardian a copy of the report and information regarding how the student's parents or guardians may contact the principal or designee.

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

Parental Involvement

The General Assembly of Georgia requires this Code of Conduct include language encouraging parents and guardians to inform their children of the consequences of certain behaviors, including potential criminal penalties of 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 children and others in the community.

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

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

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

Parent Right to Know

In compliance with the requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act, Pike County Schools 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:
 - has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
 - is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived;
 - is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher; and
 - 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 Dr. Jenny Allison at 770-567-8489. Additionally, if your child is taught for more than 20 consecutive school days by an individual who does not meet the professional qualifications for their assignment, you will receive a letter via mail.

Clubs/Organizations

School-sponsored clubs/organizations (excluding competitive interscholastic activities or events) are those under the sponsorship, direction, and control of the school that organize and meet for common goals, objectives, and purposes. State law requires that parents have the right to withhold permission for their students to participate in any school-sponsored club or organization designated by them. A list of all clubs and student organizations is available on the website for each school. Parents/guardians have the right to prohibit your student’s participation in any club or organization. For your convenience, an opt-out link is available on the website of each school. If you do not wish for your student to participate in a particular club/organization, that desire should be designated through the use of this link. Parents/guardians may also prohibit their children from participation in a particular organization by providing that information in writing to the principal of the school. If a club is added during the school year, parents/guardians will be provided information on the club, and written permission will be required prior to each student’s participation.

Student Support Processes

The Pike County Board of Education provides a variety of resources that are available at every school within the District to help address student behavior problems. The school discipline process will include appropriate consideration of support processes to help students resolve such problems. These resources include Student Support Teams, school counselors, chronic disciplinary student plans, mentoring programs, peer mentors, and student leadership class support.

Note: Additional information concerning support services can be found in the County Resource Manual located in the counselor’s office.

Progressive Discipline Procedures

When necessary to impose discipline, school administrators and teachers will follow a progressive discipline process. The degree of discipline 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. All due process procedures required by federal and state law will be followed. 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 consistent with sustained academic and personal success.

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

- Warning and/or Counseling with a School Administrator or Counselor
- Loss of Privileges
- Time Out
- Removal from Class or Activity
- Notification of Parents
- Parent Conference
- Detention/Saturday School
- Temporary Placement in Alternative Education Program
- Short-Term Suspension
- Referral to a Hearing Officer or Tribunal for Long-Term Suspension or Expulsion

Referral to Law Enforcement or Juvenile Court Officials: Georgia Law requires that certain acts of misconduct are referred to law enforcement officials. The School shall refer any act of misconduct to law enforcement officials when school officials believe a breach of the law has occurred.

Definitions and Descriptions

Detention

Detention is a requirement that a student report to a specified school location and to a designated teacher or school official to complete work missed, complete assignments, or receive specific instruction in behavior modification. One (1) day notice will be given. Detention may require the student's attendance before school, after school, or on Saturday.

Saturday School

Saturday School is an instructional activity held on Saturday which allows a student to complete work that was assigned when they were absent during the regular school day, complete missing assignments, or as an optional discipline strategy. Saturday School may be assigned by a building-level administrator to address certain school discipline infractions. With parental consent, Saturday School for disciplinary infractions may involve community service activities such as trash pick-up, weeding flower beds, sweeping, etc. Saturday School for incomplete assignments must be attended by a parent, and the parent must remain with the student until the work is complete or the lesson ends.

In-School Suspension

The In-School Suspension program is designed for minor infractions that necessitate the student's removal from the general classroom setting. The student is assigned to a classroom monitored by a teacher or paraprofessional to complete the day's school work in isolation for a specified period of time at the local school. Classwork assignments are sent to the student by the student's teachers. Students are excluded from all school-sponsored activities until completion of the assigned dates.

Short-Term Suspension

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. During the term of the suspension, the student is not allowed on Pike County School property or at any school activity or school-sponsored activity. This provision begins immediately upon notification by the school to the student and the parent.

Long-Term Suspension and Expulsion

The maximum punishment for an offense may include long-term suspension or expulsion, including permanent expulsion; however, long-term suspension and expulsion will be determined only by a hearing officer or a disciplinary tribunal as outlined in the Pike County Board of Education Policies. Long term-suspension occurs when a student is prohibited by the District from attending school for more than ten consecutive days. Expulsion occurs when a student is prohibited from attending school for the remainder of the year, end of the grading period, into the next year, or permanently. Parents or students may elect not to contest the alleged violation of the Code of Conduct or the appropriate discipline. In such cases, an agreement may be negotiated which would include the parents or students waiving their right to a hearing before a disciplinary tribunal or hearing officer. Such an agreement and waiver must also be approved by the disciplinary tribunal or hearing officer in accordance with local board policy. The District reserves the right to withhold a waiver offer.

Searches

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

Disciplinary Definitions

Some of the disciplinary actions that may be used for student violations of the Code of Conduct include the following:

- Warning/Reprimand: Students will be warned that they may be punished if the misbehavior continues.
- Detention: Detention may be used to address tardiness, behavior detrimental to learning, and physical contact between students that is deemed inappropriate. For each day assigned to detention, students will be required to spend a period of time, not to exceed one supervised hour, completing assigned class work. No other activity will be allowed during detention.
- In-School Suspension: This program is designed to isolate students who violate certain school rules from their regularly-assigned classrooms and school activities, while allowing students the opportunity to progress with classroom assignments. While assigned to In-School Suspension, students may not participate in or attend any extracurricular activity, including athletic participation and other school events. If students violate any rule of the In-School Suspension program, students will be suspended from the program and from school for the remaining number of days that students were assigned to In-School Suspension. Students assigned to In-School Suspension (ISS) who choose to serve their suspension at home or are removed from ISS for any violation of the Code of Conduct will not be allowed to make-up school work missed.

A suspension or expulsion is for a specific term and includes suspension or expulsion from all regular school activities, extracurricular school activities, athletic participation, and other school events.

- Short-Term Suspension: Students subject to a short-term suspension will be suspended from school for not more than five (5) consecutive days.
- Long-Term Suspension: Students subject to a long-term suspension will be suspended from school for more than five (5) consecutive days but not beyond the end of the current semester.
- Expulsion: Students subject to an expulsion will be suspended from school beyond the end of the current semester.
- Permanent Expulsion: Students subject to a permanent expulsion from school will be permanently suspended from school at all times after the effective date of the permanent expulsion beyond the current semester and not allowed to attend any Pike County Schools.

Additional Disciplinary Terms

- School Personnel: Persons employed by the Pike County Board of Education, their agents, representatives, adult invitees, adult guests, and School Resource Panels.

Suspension or Expulsion from School

All In-School Suspension, Out-of-School Suspension, or Expulsion shall also include suspension from all regular school activities, extracurricular school activities, athletic participation, and other school events.

While students are suspended pending a disciplinary tribunal hearing, they will be allowed to make-up school work during the suspension time.

**THE FOLLOWING SECTIONS ARE THE FOUR CATEGORIES OF OFFENSES WHICH ARE
PROHIBITED BEHAVIORS IN THE CODE OF CONDUCT**

- ***Consequences listed are to be used as general guide. School administrators have the discretion to modify consequences based on circumstances and disciplinary History of student(s) involved.***
- ***Examples listed are not exhaustive list of possible behaviors.***

SECTION 1 OFFENSES

1. **Academic Dishonesty**: Receiving or providing unauthorized assistance on classroom projects, assignments or exams. **Level 1**: Intentional receiving or providing of unauthorized assistance on classroom projects, assessments, and assignments. Examples may include but are not limited to Failure to cite sources.
2. **Behavior Detrimental to Learning**: Such behavior includes, but is not limited to, unexcused tardies to school or class and conduct that disrupts the learning environment.
3. **Bullying**: The 1st offense of participation in written, verbal, or physical act(s) that meet(s) the definition of bullying as defined by O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.4.
4. **Bus Conduct**: Violation of the bus conduct policy.
5. **Disrespectful Behavior**: Being disrespectful to students, school personnel, or other persons.
6. **Dress Code**: Violation of the dress code policy.
7. **Electronic Resources**: Violating the policies for using electronic resources (*see Electronic Resources - Acceptable Use*).
8. **Encouraging Prohibited Behavior**: Inciting, encouraging, counseling, or advising others to engage in prohibited behavior that violates the Pike County Code of Conduct Parent Manual or any policy of the District. A student violates this rule when he/she verbally or physically encourages others to engage in prohibited behavior, which may include oral instruction or physically showing a student how to engage in prohibited behavior.
9. **False Information**: Deliberately giving false or misleading information, including, but not limited to, forgery and altering records.
10. **Gambling**: Includes, but is not limited to, betting money or other items on card games, dice games, or the outcome of athletic contests or other activities, and/or possession of gambling materials or paraphernalia. Activities requiring such items under the supervision of school personnel for instructional purposes are allowed.
11. **Hazardous Objects**: Possession of any hazardous objects on school grounds, school busses, school bus stops, or school events *without intent to use*; OR if the student displays, uses, or otherwise exhibits intent to use said object in a non-dangerous manner.
12. **Inappropriate Items and Activities**: Possessing, using, the act of or intent of selling, buying, giving away, bartering, or exchanging any material, substance, food item, or personal belonging that is inappropriate for school.
13. **Inappropriate Physical Contact between Students**: Includes, but is not limited to, pushing, shoving, inappropriate display of affection, or inappropriate touching.
14. **Incivility**: Insubordination or disrespect to staff members or other students; includes but is not limited to refusal to follow school staff member instructions, use of vulgar or inappropriate language or gestures, and misrepresentation of the truth. **Level 1**: Failure to comply with instructions or the inadvertent use of inappropriate language or gestures.
15. **Miscellaneous Violations**: Violating any other Board of Education or school rule, including, but not limited to, failing to report to detention and/or violating rules of the In-School Suspension program.
16. **Misuse of Electronic Communication Devices**: Displaying or using a cell phone, pager, or other electronic communication device during the school day without the consent of the principal or his/her designee.
17. **Over-the-Counter Medication**: Using or possessing over-the-counter medication at school without the written consent of the principal or his/her designee.

18. **Possession of Unapproved Items:** The use or possession of any unauthorized item disruptive to the school day. (Note: The use of fireworks or incendiary devices must be coded as Arson.) **Level 1:** The possession of any unauthorized item. Does not include the possession of fireworks, matches, toy weapons, or other items that can be construed as dangerous. Examples include but are not limited to possession of toys, mobile devices, gadgets, personal items; includes possession of pepper spray.
19. **Possessing Obscene Materials:** Possessing obscene or vulgar materials when such conduct does not
20. **Profanity:** Using profane, vulgar, obscene, insulting, or threatening language, gestures, graphics, or materials, whether spoken, written, gestured, or communicated in person or via any electronic device, directed towards any person other than school personnel.
21. **Skipping School:** Leaving school, skipping school, or skipping class without permission.
22. **Tobacco/Vaping/E-Cigarettes Products and Paraphernalia:** Possessing, using, selling, buying, giving away, bartering, or exchanging any tobacco product or smoking paraphernalia which includes electronic cigarettes, vaping, and smoking devices.
23. **Unauthorized Areas:** Being in an unauthorized area without permission.
24. **Weapons – Knife:** The possession, use, or intention to use any type of knife, Reference Board Policy JCDAE – Weapons. **Level 1:** Unintentional possession of a knife or knife-like item without intent to harm or intimidate.

Disciplinary Actions for Section 1 Violations

Engaging in or attempting to commit any Section 1 offense can result in disciplinary action as outlined below.

- Consequences for Section 1 violations may range from Warning – 5 days Out of School Suspension (OSS) based on administrator discretion, circumstances surrounding the incident, and student’s discipline history.
- The fourth violation of the code of conduct (including four section 1 violations) result in the initiation of a Functional Behavioral Assessment (BFA) which will include the development of a Chronic Discipline Plan.

Administrative Directives and Additional Disciplinary Actions for Section 1 Violations

Administrative Directives are phone calls made to the student’s parent or guardian, an individualized behavioral contract, behavioral checklist, and/or counseling.

Depending on the circumstances surrounding the Section 1 violation, school administrators shall have the discretion to deviate from the progressive discipline policy. If the Section 1 violation warrants deviation from the progressive discipline policy, a student may be given a Verbal Warning, Administrative Directive, assigned to In-School Suspension for up to five (5) consecutive days, be given a Short Term Suspension, or be sent to a Disciplinary Tribunal hearing for the Section 1 Offense, regardless of the number of previous violations.

SECTION 2 OFFENSES

1. **Academic Dishonesty:** Receiving or providing unauthorized assistance on classroom projects, assignments or exams. **Level 2:** intentional plagiarism or cheating on a minor classroom assignment or project. Examples may include but are not limited to intentional dishonesty on minor classroom projects, assignments, homework, etc.
2. **Arson:** Unlawful and intentional damage or attempted damage to any real or personal property by fire or incendiary devices (Note: Possession of fireworks or incendiary devices must be reported as “Possession of unapproved items.” Use of such items should be reported as Arson.) **Level 2:** Attempt to commit arson or use of matches, lighters, or incendiary devices at school; includes but not limited to the use of fireworks. Some examples include, but are not limited to, trashcan fires without damage to school property.
3. **Battery:** Intentional touching or striking of another person to intentionally cause bodily harm. (Note: The key difference between battery and fighting is that fighting involves mutual participation.) **Level 2:** Intentional attack. Examples include but are not limited to pushing, hitting, kicking, shoving, pinching, slapping, and other physical acts. (*Incidents of Battery, Fighting, and Disorderly Conduct related to physical altercations will be compiled together when considering disciplinary consequences.)

4. **Bullying:** The 2nd offense of participation in written, verbal, or physical act(s) that meet(s) the definition of bullying as defined by O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.4.
5. **Disruption of School:** Causing or contributing to the disruption and interference of school operations. An example of prohibited conduct includes, but is not limited to, causing, participating in, or encouraging a food fight.
3. **Failure to Report:** Failure to report to a teacher or administrator the knowledge of an event, device, object, or substance that could cause harm to self or others.
4. **Fighting:** For the purpose of this offense, fighting shall include, but not be limited to, hitting, kicking, punching, slapping, or other physical contact with another student or person that is not school personnel and does not rise to the level of Excessive Physical Contact as defined in Section 3. (*Incidents of Battery, Fighting, and Disorderly Conduct related to physical altercations will be compiled together when considering disciplinary consequences.)
5. **Gang Affiliation:** Exhibiting gang affiliation, as evidenced by a common identifying sign, symbol, tattoo, graffiti, attire, or other distinguishing characteristic.
6. **Giving False Information:** Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting information regarding instances of alleged inappropriate behavior by a teacher, administrator, or other school employee toward a student.
7. **Inappropriate Activity:** Illicit activity on school grounds which does not rise to the severity of Section 3 Sexual Misconduct.
8. **Incivility:** Insubordination or disrespect to staff members or other students; includes but is not limited to refusal to follow school staff member instructions, use of vulgar or inappropriate language or gestures, and misrepresentation of the truth. **Level 2:** Insubordination, racially offensive language, or the use of inappropriate language or gestures directed toward staff or peers; intentional misrepresentation of the truth.
9. **Medical Substance Containing Alcohol:** Possessing any substance containing alcohol which is normally used for medical purposes that has not been reported to the appropriate school official in accordance with the Medicine Policy.
10. **Non-Dangerous Use of Hazardous Objects:** Displaying, using, or otherwise exhibiting intent to use a hazardous object in such a manner that is neither dangerous nor threatening to the student, other students, personnel, or any other person. If the hazardous object is displayed or used, or the student exhibits an intent to use the object in such a way that the object could be considered a dangerous weapon, refer to Section 4, Rule 1.
11. **Possession/Use of Unapproved Items:** The use or possession of any unauthorized item disruptive to the school day. (Note: The use of fireworks or incendiary devices must be coded as Arson.) **Level 2:** The use of any unauthorized item. Does not include the possession of fireworks, matches, toy weapons, or other items that can be construed as dangerous. Examples include but are not limited to possession of toys, mobile devices, gadgets, personal items, bb guns, pellet guns; includes possession of pepper spray.
12. **Possessing Obscene Materials:** Possessing obscene or vulgar materials when such conduct does not involve another student.
13. **Possession of Prescription Drugs:** Possession of prescription medication which was prescribed to you by a doctor but has not been reported to appropriate school officials in accordance with Medicine Policy.
14. **Restricted Areas:** Entering, directing, or soliciting another student to enter into an area designated for the opposite sex only.
15. **Theft:** Theft including, but not limited to, attempted theft, extortion, bribery, theft by deception, and/or possession of stolen property.
16. **Unintentional Physical Contact with School Personnel:** Unintentional but inappropriate physical contact or action with school personnel.
17. **Vandalism:** Vandalizing school or personal property, regardless of whether there is a monetary loss of value.
18. **Verbal Abuse:** Verbally abusing others, including, but not limited to, threats, intimidation, harassing, or taunting in person, on the internet, or by other modes of electronic communications.

19. **Viewing Obscene Materials:** Accessing or viewing obscene or vulgar materials when such conduct does not involve another person.
20. **Violation of Electronics and Technology Policy:** Misuse of electronic or technological resources or devices, including, but not limited to, unauthorized access to the system network; creating or using false user names, passwords, or proxies; transmitting unauthorized or malicious programs or viruses; or using the email or messaging account of another without permission to send communications.
21. **Weapons – Knife:** The possession, use, or intention to use any type of knife, Reference Board Policy JCDAE – Weapons. Level 2: Intentional possession of a knife or knife-like item without intent to harm or intimidate.
22. **Weapons – Other:** The possession, use, or intention to use any instrument or object that is used or intended to be used in a manner that may inflict bodily harm (does not include knives or firearms). **Level 2:** Unintentional possession of a weapon, other than a knife or firearm, or semblance of a weapon that could produce bodily harm or fear of harm. Examples include but are not limited to razor blades, straight-edge razors, brass knuckles, blackjacks, bats, clubs, nun chucks, throwing stars, stun guns, tasers, etc.

Disciplinary Actions for Section 2 Offenses

1st Offense During School Year: Engaging in or attempting to commit any Section 2 offense during a school year can result in the student being assigned 10 consecutive school days of In-School Suspension OR Short-Term Suspension, not a combination thereof. If the student commits any Section 1 violation while serving In-School Suspension, then the student will serve the remainder of the suspension out of school.

2nd and Any Subsequent Offense During School Year: Any student engaged in or attempting to commit a second or subsequent Section 2 offense during a school year may result in the student being assigned to In-School Suspension or Out-of-School Suspension with the matter being submitted to a Disciplinary Tribunal Hearing Panel. If the Disciplinary Tribunal Hearing Panel finds the student has engaged in or attempted to commit a second or subsequent Section 2 offense, the Disciplinary Tribunal Hearing Panel will issue either a long-term suspension or expulsion from school. The student will be allowed to enroll at PCAP provided the student complies with the enrollment rules of the program.

Depending on the circumstances surrounding the Section 2 violation, school administrators shall have the discretion to deviate from the progressive discipline policy. If the Section 2 violation warrants deviation from the progressive discipline policy, a student may be given 10 consecutive days of In-School Suspension, assigned a Short Term Suspension, or be sent to a Disciplinary Tribunal Hearing for the Section 2 offense regardless of the number of previous violations. **Pike County Schools maintains the option to offer a waiver of the tribunal process to the accused.**

If the Disciplinary Tribunal Hearing Panel finds that the student has engaged in or attempted to commit a third or subsequent Section 2 offense for the school year, the Disciplinary Tribunal Hearing Panel will issue either a long term suspension or expulsion from school.

SECTION 3 OFFENSES

1. **Academic Dishonesty:** Receiving or providing unauthorized assistance on classroom projects, assignments or exams. **Level 3:** Intentional plagiarism or cheating on a major exam, statewide assessment, or project, or the falsification of school records (including forgery). Examples include but are not limited to cheating on major exams, statewide assessments, or other state mandated academic work, including falsification of school records and forgery. **Level 3 may also be used for students that violate the school policy on academic dishonesty three or more times during the same school year.**
2. **Alcoholic Beverages:** Possessing, using, selling, buying, giving away, bartering, exchanging, receiving, or being under the influence of any alcoholic beverage, whether at school or any school-related activity prior to attending school or a school-related activity.
3. **Attempting to make inappropriate physical contact or action with school personnel.**
4. **Arson:** Unlawful and intentional damage or attempted damage to any real or personal property by fire or incendiary devices (Note: Possession of fireworks or incendiary devices must be reported as “Possession of unapproved items.” Use of such items should be reported as Arson.)

- Level 3:** Intentional damage as a result of arson-related activity or the use of an incendiary device. Examples include, but are not limited to, setting fires to school property.
5. **Battery:** Intentional touching or striking of another person to intentionally cause bodily harm. **Level 3:** Intentional physical attack which results in the need for medical treatment by a physician or physician assistant, or any physical attack on school personnel; Examples include but are not limited to pushing, hitting, kicking, shoving, pinching, slapping, and other physical acts requiring medical treatment as defined above. **Level 3 may be used for students that violate the school policy on battery three of more times during the same school year.** (*Incidents of Battery, Fighting, and Disorderly Conduct related to physical altercations will be compiled together when considering disciplinary consequences.)
 6. **Breaking and Entering - Burglary:** Unlawful or unauthorized forceful entry into a school building or vehicle (with or without intent to commit theft). Note: the key difference between trespassing and Breaking and Entering – Burglary is that Trespassing does not include forceful entry into the school building.
 7. **Counterfeit Money:** The intentional act of possessing, using, selling, buying, giving away, bartering, receiving, or exchanging any counterfeit money.
 8. **Bullying, Third Offense:** The 3rd participation in written, verbal, or physical act(s) that meet(s) the definition of bullying as defined by O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.4.
 9. **Damaging or Setting Off a Fire Alarm:** To willfully damage or destroy a school fire alarm so as to endanger human life, or to set off a school fire alarm with no reasonable belief that a fire exists on the school premises. This offense shall also include refusing to evacuate the building when a fire alarm sounds or an evacuation of a school is ordered.
 10. **Drugs:** Possessing, using, the attempt to or act of: selling, buying, giving away, bartering, exchanging, receiving, or being under the influence of any Schedule I, II, III, or IV drug as defined by the Official Code of the State of Georgia, or any substance or chemical that is mood altering when taken that has not been prescribed to the student taking the substance or the chemical.
 11. **Excessive Physical Contact:** The use of *excessive* force resulting in harmful contact with a student or person other than school personnel referenced in Section 4. This includes, but is not limited to, fights that are beyond a Section 2 fight that are violent or planned or cause a disruption of the school environment or educational process, group fights of 3 or more individuals, and/or fights that cause an injury.
 12. **False Representation of Substances:** False representation of a substance to be a drug for which the student has no valid prescription, or false representation of a substance to be an illegal drug as defined under the laws of the State of Georgia.
 13. **Failure to provide notification of charge, adjudication, or conviction of a felony:** Upon any enrolled student being charged, adjudicated, or convicted of a felony offense as defined in Section 4, Rule 3, or Rule 4, the student shall immediately notify the Principal and the Superintendent of said charges, adjudication, or conviction and shall provide to the Principal and Superintendent a copy of all documents received by the student concerning said charges, adjudication, or conviction, including any probation terms. This includes any offense held in abeyance or given first offender status. Failure to provide the required documents shall be grounds for disciplinary action consistent with Section 3 offenses below.
 10. **Gang-Related Activity:** Engaging in gang-related activity that encourages, solicits, promotes, condones, causes, assists, or abets any illegal or disruptive act.
 11. **Incivility:** Insubordination or disrespect to staff members or other students; includes but is not limited to refusal to follow school staff member instructions, use of vulgar or inappropriate language or gestures, and misrepresentation of the truth. **Level 3:** Blatant and repeated insubordination or intentional misrepresentation of the truth; Level 3 is to be used for students who display a pattern of violating the school policy related in student incivility.
 12. **Possession/Use of Unapproved Items:** The use or possession of any unauthorized item disruptive to the school day. (Note: The use of fireworks or incendiary devices must be coded as Arson.) **Level 3:** The use or possession of unauthorized items that can be construed as dangerous or harmful to the learning environment. Examples include but are not limited to matches, lighters, fireworks, bullets, cap guns, bb guns, pellet guns, bullets, stink bombs, CO2 cartridges; includes the use of pepper spray with injury. **Level 3 may be used for students who display a pattern of violating the school policy related to unapproved items.**

13. **Prescription Medication:** Possessing, the attempt or act of: selling, buying, giving away, bartering, exchanging, distributing, or receiving any prescription drug not prescribed to the student in possession thereof or wrongfully possessing, selling, buying, giving away, bartering, exchanging, distributing, or receiving any prescription drug that is prescribed to the student, or the use of any substance represented to be a prescription drug prior to or after attending school or school-related activity that was not prescribed for the student.
14. **Sexual Misconduct:** Illicit behavior on school grounds that includes, but is not limited to, indecent exposure; displaying or disseminating obscene or indecent images or videos; using any electronic or other devices to take or forward inappropriate, indecent, vulgar, sexual, or obscene pictures of students, minors, or school employees; and unwanted or unwelcomed touching of intimate body parts of oneself or another person that rises above inappropriate activities in Section 2.
15. **Terroristic Threats:** A terroristic threat is any communication that could be perceived as a threat by a school administrator to commit any act of violence or to burn or damage property. Terroristic threats shall also include, but are not limited to, making false calls to 911 which have the effect of causing a lock-down of a school building, the evacuation of a school building, or the search of a school building or any bus, property, or building belonging to the school district by the school resource panel or any other public safety panel or agency; or the use of electronic communication to convey text, video, or images which have the effect of causing a disruption of the school environment.
16. **Theft, greater than \$500:** Theft, including, but not limited to, attempted theft, extortion, bribery, theft by deception, and or/possession of stolen property when the value of the property is greater than \$500.00 as estimated by school officials.
17. **Vandalism, damage greater than \$500:** Vandalizing school or personal property, with the cost of damages being greater than \$500.00 as estimated by school officials.
18. **Weapons – Handgun:** Possession of a firearm that has a short stock and is designed to be held and fired by the use of a single hand; and any combination of parts from which a firearm described above can be assembled; NOTE: This does not apply to items such as toy guns, cap guns, bb guns, and pellet guns. (Pursuant to Gun-Free Schools Act – Public Law 107-110, Section 4141). Level 3: Intentional or unintentional possession or use of a handgun in a manner that could produce bodily harm or fear of harm. Examples include Pistols or Revolvers.
19. **Weapons – Knife:** The possession, use, or intention to use any type of knife, Reference Board Policy JCDAE – Weapons. Level 3: Intentional possession, use, or intention to use a knife or knife-like item with the intent to harm or intimidate.
20. **Weapons – Other:** The possession, use, or intention to use any instrument or object that is used or intended to be used in a manner that may inflict bodily harm (does not include knives or firearms). Level 3: Intentional possession/use of any weapon, other than a knife or firearm, in a manner that could produce bodily harm or fear of harm. Examples include but are not limited to razor blades, straight-edge razors, brass knuckles, blackjacks, bats, clubs, nun chucks, throwing stars, stun guns, tasers, etc.
21. **Weapons – Other Firearms:** Level 3: Intentional or unintentional possession or use of any firearms other than rifle, shotgun, or handguns (including starter pistols) and any other destructive device which includes explosives. **Definition:** Firearms other than handguns, rifles, or shotguns in 18 USC 921; Includes any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of any explosive; the frame or receiver of any weapon described above; any firearm muffler or grenade, rocket having a propellant charge more than 4 ounces, missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than ¼ ounce, mine, or similar device); any weapon which will, or may be readily converted to, expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant, and which has any barrel with a bore of more than ½ inch in diameter; any combination or parts either designed or intended use in converting any device into any destructive device described above, and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled. (Note: This does not include toy guns, cap guns, bb guns, pellet guns, or Class-C common fireworks.) [Pursuant to Gun-Free School Act – Public Law 107-110, Section 4141]
22. **Weapons- Rifle/Shotgun:** Level 3: Intentional or unintentional possession or use of a rifle or shotgun in a manner that could produce bodily harm or fear of harm. Examples include Rifles and Shotguns.

- The term “rifle” means a weapon designed or redesigned, made or remade, and intended to be fired from the shoulder and designed or redesigned and made or remade to use the energy of an explosive to fire only a single projectile through a rifled bore for each single pull o the trigger.
- The term “shotgun” means a weapon designed or redesigned, made or remade, and intended to be fired from the shoulder and designed or redesigned and made or remade to use the energy of an explosive to fire through a small bore either a number of ball shots or a single projectile through a rifled bore for each single pull o the trigger.
- (Pursuant to Gun-Free Schools Act – Public Law 107-110, Section 4141)

Disciplinary Actions for Section 3 Offenses

Engaging in or attempting to commit any Section 3 offense during a school year will result in the student being assigned Out-of-School Suspension with the matter being submitted to a Disciplinary Tribunal Hearing Panel. If the Disciplinary Tribunal Hearing Panel finds the student has engaged in or attempted to commit a Section 3 offense, the Disciplinary Tribunal Hearing Panel will issue either a long-term suspension or expulsion from school. The student will be allowed to enroll at PCAP provided the student complies with the enrollment rules of the program. **Pike County Schools maintains the option to offer a waiver of the tribunal process to the accused.**

If the Disciplinary Tribunal Hearing Panel finds that the student has engaged in or attempted to commit a second or subsequent Section 3 offense during a school year, the Disciplinary Tribunal Hearing Panel will issue either a long-term suspension or expulsion from school.

SECTION 4 OFFENSES

1. **Possession of a Firearm, Dangerous Weapon, or Explosive Compound:** Possessing, using, selling, buying, giving away, bartering, or exchanging any firearm, dangerous weapon, explosive compound, or an object that can reasonably be considered and/or used as a weapon. Note that pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.1, a violation of this rule has a mandatory minimum one-year of expulsion but may result in permanent expulsion, at the discretion of the disciplinary tribunal hearing panel.
2. **Intentional physical contact or action of an insulting or provoking nature by a student toward a school employee.**
3. **Adjudication or Conviction of a Felony:** The adjudication or conviction of an enrolled student or a student seeking enrollment that involves one or more of the following violent criminal offenses and which makes his/her continued presence at school a potential danger to persons or property at the school or which disrupts the educational process:
 - a. Murder (O.C.G.A. § 16-5-1);
 - b. Voluntary Manslaughter (O.C.G.A. § 16-5-2);
 - c. Rape ((O.C.G.A. § 16-6-1);
 - d. Aggravated Sodomy (O.C.G.A. § 16-6-2);
 - e. Aggravated Child Molestation (O.C.G.A. § 16-6-4);
 - f. Aggravated Battery (O.C.G.A. § 16-5-24); and
 - g. Aggravated Armed Robbery (O.C.G.A. § 16-8-41)
4. **Adjudication or Conviction of Felony (All others):** The adjudication or conviction of a student of an offense that is designated as a felony under the laws of the State of Georgia or a felony under the laws of the United States of America and which makes his/her continued presence at school a potential danger to persons or property at the school or which disrupts the educational process.

Disciplinary Actions for Section 4 Offenses

Engaging in or attempting to commit any Section 4 offense will result in the student being assigned Out-of-School Suspension with the matter being assigned to a Disciplinary Tribunal Hearing Panel. A student charged with violating a Section 4 offense may not execute a waiver of the Disciplinary Tribunal Hearing.

If the Disciplinary Tribunal Hearing Panel finds that the student has committed any Section 4 offense, the student will receive a minimum one-year of expulsion but may receive the punishment of permanent expulsion.

Only the Pike County Board of Education has the authority to allow a student who is under a permanent expulsion from any school system to enroll in Pike County Schools.

A student who receives a punishment of permanent expulsion from the Disciplinary Tribunal Hearing Panel for violating a Section 4 Offense during a school year may not enroll into PCAP unless the student, pursuant to an appeal to the Pike County Board of Education, receives permission from the Board to re-enroll into the Pike County School District. The Board may grant the re-enrolled student the opportunity to enroll into PCAP.

Common Definitions Regarding Discipline Infractions:

Bullying: Applies to acts which occur 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. Bullying also applies to acts of cyberbullying which occur through the use of electronic communications, whether or not the electronic act originated on school property or with school equipment, if the electronic communication (1) is directed specifically at students or school personnel, (2) is maliciously intended for the purpose of threatening the safety of those specified or substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school, and (3) creates a reasonable fear of harm to the students or school. Electronic communication includes, but is not limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic, or photo optical system.

*Incidents of Battery, Fighting, and Disorderly Conduct related to physical altercations will be compiled together when considering disciplinary consequences.

Reporting and Complaint Procedures

P3 Campus is a platform for students and parents to anonymously express their concerns about their students, friends, or classmates with people who can help. Reports can be made at P3campus.com or through the P3 mobile app, both of which are completely anonymous. Further information regarding P3 Campus is available in the High School, NGA, and Middle School Handbooks as well as on the website for each school and that of the District.

Title IX

In accordance with the provisions of Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, the Pike County School System does not discriminate against students on the basis of sex in the educational programs and activities that it operates. No student shall, on the basis of gender, be excluded from participation in, or be denied the benefits of, any educational program or activity operated by this School System.

The Board of Education believes that all students should be able to enjoy an educational environment free from all forms of gender discrimination, including sexual harassment. Sexual harassment undermines the integrity of the educational environment. Therefore, Board Policy prohibits even acts of sexual harassment that may not rise to the level of a violation of federal law.

The Director of Pupil Services shall serve as the Compliance Coordinator for ensuring compliance with this policy and federal laws prohibiting gender discrimination and sexual harassment. The Compliance Coordinator may be contacted through the Central Office at 16 Jackson Street, Zebulon, Ga. 30295, Telephone (770) 567-8489.

Gender Equity in Sports

In compliance with the Equity in Sports Act, O.C.G.A. 20-2-315, no student in the Pike County School System shall, on the basis of gender, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, be treated differently from another student, or otherwise be discriminated against in any interscholastic or intramural athletics offered by the school system, nor shall the school system provide any such athletics separately on such basis, except as specifically authorized by the Act itself. The Equity in Sports Coordinator and Athletic Director may be reached at (770) 567-8770.

A grievance procedure will be developed by the Superintendent, consistent with the requirements of state law and designed to implement the purposes of this policy. The grievance procedure will provide for prompt and equitable resolution of written student complaints, including those brought by a parent or guardian on behalf of his or her minor child who is a student, alleging any action which would be a violation of the Act.

The school system shall comply with all the requirements of state board rules concerning gender equity in sports, including records retention and the filing of any and all reports. All donations of services or items, including booster club support to any athletic program, shall be accepted or rejected in accordance with the Board of Education's policy concerning donations to the school system.

Discrimination Complaint Procedure

Complaints made to the School System regarding alleged discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, or national origin in violation of Title VI, on the basis of sex in violation of Title IX, or on the basis of disability in violation of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or the Americans With Disabilities Act will be processed in accordance with the following procedure:

1. Any student, employee, applicant for employment, parent, or other person with a complaint alleging a violation as described above shall promptly notify, in writing or orally, either the principal for his/her school or the appropriate coordinator designated by the Board of Education. If the complaint is oral, either the coordinator or school principal to whom the complaint is made shall promptly prepare a memorandum or written statement of the complaint as made to him/her by the complainant and shall have the complainant read and sign the memorandum or statement if it accurately reflects the complaint made. If the complaint is made to a school principal, he/she shall be responsible for notifying the appropriate coordinator of the complaint.
2. If the alleged offending individual is the coordinator designated by the Board of Education, the complaint shall either be made by the complainant to the Superintendent or, if the complaint is initially made to the school principal, reported by the principal to the Superintendent.
3. The coordinator or his/her designee shall have fifteen work days to gather all information relevant to the complaint made, review the information, determine the facts relating to the complaint, review the action requested by the complainant, and attempt to resolve the complaint with the complainant and any other persons involved. The coordinator or designee shall prepare a written response to the complaint detailing any action to be taken in response to the complaint and the time frame in which such action will be taken, and copies of this response shall be furnished to the complainant, the appropriate coordinator, and the Superintendent or his/her designee.
4. If the complaint is not resolved at the conclusion of this fifteen-day period, or if the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution of the complaint, the complainant shall have the right, within five work days of receiving a copy of the written response, to have the complaint referred to the Superintendent of Schools. If the alleged offending individual is the Superintendent, the complainant may have the complaint referred to the Board of Education rather than the Superintendent.
5. The Superintendent shall have fifteen work days to review the complaint and the response of the coordinator or designee and attempt to resolve the complaint. The Superintendent shall furnish to the complainant a written response setting forth either his/her approval of the action recommended by the coordinator or designee or the action to be taken by the system in response to the complaint in lieu of that recommended by the coordinator or designee and the time frame in which such action shall be taken.

6. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the response of the Superintendent, then the complainant shall have the right, within fifteen work days of the receipt of the written response of the Superintendent, to have the complaint referred to the Board of Education. In order to have the Board review the Superintendent's decision, the complainant must file with the Superintendent a written statement setting forth the reasons he/she disagrees with the response of the Superintendent and the action the complainant is requesting the system to take. The complainant shall also include in the written response a request that his/her complaint be referred to the Board of Education.
7. Within thirty work days of receipt of the written request of the complainant, the Superintendent shall present the matter to the Board of Education at its regular meeting or at a special meeting called for that purpose. The Board shall review the original complaint, the response of the coordinator or designee, the response of the Superintendent, and the response of the complainant. In addition, the Board may, but is not required to, hear directly from any individuals with knowledge of any relevant facts relating to the complaint.
8. The Board of Education will either uphold the recommendation of the Superintendent or require the system to take some other action in response to the complaint. A copy of the action of the Board will be furnished to the complainant, either as a part of the minutes of the Board of Education or as a separate written statement. The Board shall be the final reviewing authority within the system.
9. This policy is not intended to deprive any employee of any right they may have to file a grievance pursuant to any other policy of the local Board of Education, specifically the policy designed to implement Official Code of Georgia Annotated § 20-2-989.5, where appropriate. This policy is not intended to provide an alternative process for resolving evaluation and employment disputes where there already exists a due process procedure mandated by state law or State Department of Education regulations, specifically including, but not limited to, hearings to be conducted pursuant to the Fair Dismissal Act of Georgia. The complainant retains at all times the right to contact the Office of Civil Rights or the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission with regard to any allegations that the system has violated the statutes described above.
10. The school system shall be responsible for distributing and disseminating information relevant to this policy and procedure to students, applicants for employment, and employees through appropriate procedures.
11. No reprisal shall occur as a result of reporting unlawful harassment under this policy, and any attempt to retaliate against a complainant shall be disciplined as is appropriate.
12. The confidentiality of any individual making a complaint or report in accordance with this policy, to the extent it is reasonably possible, shall be protected, although the discovery of the truth and the elimination of unlawful harassment shall be the overriding consideration.

Student Reporting of Acts of Sexual Abuse or Sexual Misconduct

1. Any student (or parent or friend 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.
2. Any teacher, counselor, or administrator receiving a report of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct of a student by a teacher, administrator, or other employee shall make an oral report of the incident immediately by telephone or otherwise to the school principal or principal's designee and shall submit a written report of the incident to the school principal or principal's designee within 24 hours. If the principal is the person accused of the sexual abuse or sexual misconduct, the oral and written reports should be made to the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee.

3. Any school principal or principal's designee receiving a report of sexual abuse as defined in O.C.G.A. 19-7-5 shall make an oral report as soon as possible, but in no case later than 24 hours from the time there is reasonable cause to believe a child has been abused. The report should be made by telephone and followed by a written report, if requested, to a child welfare agency providing protective services as designated by the Department of Human Resources or, in the absence of such agency, to an appropriate police authority or district attorney.

Reports of acts of sexual misconduct against a student by a teacher, administrator, or other employee not covered by O.C.G.A. 19-7-5 or 20-2-1184 shall be investigated immediately by school or system personnel. If the investigation of the allegation of sexual misconduct indicates a reasonable cause to believe that the report of sexual misconduct is valid, the school principal or principal's designee shall make an immediate written report to the Superintendent and the Professional Standards Commission Ethics Division.

School Bus Rules and Procedures

Anything that jeopardizes the safety of the individuals on the bus is viewed as serious. The behavior expected on the school bus revolves around the safety and individual rights of every person on the bus, including the driver.

School Bus and Bus Stop Conduct

Students are prohibited from acts of physical violence as defined by O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.6, bullying as defined by O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.4(a), physical assault or battery of other persons on the school bus, verbal assault of other persons on the school bus, disrespectful conduct toward the school bus driver or other persons on the school bus, and other unruly behavior. Students are prohibited from using any electronic devices during the operation of a school bus, including, but not limited to, cell phones, pagers, audible radios, tape or compact disc players without headphones, or any other electronic device in a manner that might interfere with the school bus communications equipment or the school bus driver's operation of the school bus. Students are prohibited from using mirrors, lasers, flash cameras, or any other lights or reflective devices in a manner that might interfere with the school bus driver's operation of the school bus.

Note: All discipline will reflect each individual school's guidelines as it is stated in their handbook.

Student Responsibility on School Buses:

- Obey the directions/instructions of the school bus driver.
- Once the student has boarded the bus, they shall not get off the bus until it arrives at the school attended or their designated bus stop.
- Wait at least 12 feet away from the edge of the road.
- Wait until the bus driver gives the all-clear signal before boarding the bus.
- Never wear earphones, ear buds, etc. while boarding or getting off the bus.
- Look both ways for all moving traffic to stop before crossing the road and while boarding from the door side of the bus.
- Never leave or board the bus at locations other than your assigned stop. Follow school system procedures to obtain signed permission for a change of stop location.
- Talk in a quiet voice on the bus.
- Do not chew gum, eat, or drink on the bus.
- Never throw anything on the bus.
- Never bring tobacco, drugs, knives, or weapons on the school bus.
- Never bring animals onto the bus (dead or alive).
- Never bring glass objects or containers onto the bus.
- No bottles/cans/open containers are allowed on the bus. (Plastic water bottles are acceptable.)
- Never bring large or bulky items on the bus; if something is too big to hold in your lap, and you need to take it to school or home in the afternoon, then you should get your parents to drive you to school or come pick you up that day. Anything larger than a book bag is considered too large and poses a safety issue.
- Avoid horseplay, pushing, or shoving.
- Always use the handrail.
- Remain seated until the bus is stopped and the door is opened; look both ways for moving traffic before stepping off the bus.

- Do not push or shove, but wait your turn to get off.
- Make sure you get on the right bus at school. If you get on the wrong bus by mistake, tell the driver.
- Never place your head, arms, or any object out of the window.
- Remain absolutely quiet at railroad gate crossings so the bus driver will be able to hear an approaching train.
- Go directly to an available or assigned seat when entering the bus.
- Remain seated, facing forward with your back against the seat.
- Never move around or stand up while the bus is in motion.
- Do not obscure the front, sides, or rear vision of the driver while the bus is in motion.
- Tell your bus driver if someone is picking on you or making you feel uncomfortable.
- Hold your books and other things in your lap so the bus aisles and exits are clear.
- Respect the rights and safety of others.
- Do not open any emergency doors, windows, or hatches unless instructed to do so by your bus driver.
- Never operate cell phones while on the bus. If you have a cell phone, keep it in your pocket or purse.
- Never use obscene language or gestures.
- Students should not damage bus interior or exterior. Vandalism of the bus will not be tolerated.
- Other school rules and procedures not listed may also apply.
- To find more information about bus rules, policies, and procedures, visit Pike County School System’s website and look under the Transportation tab.

Failure by the student to abide by these guidelines may lead to disciplinary action by the school principal and/or Transportation Director. Punishments may include seat reassignment, detention, in-school suspension, bus suspension, suspension, or action by a disciplinary tribunal or the Board of Education.

School Bus Behavior Contract

A meeting of the parents or guardians of the student and appropriate school district officials must be held to form a School Bus Behavior Contract whenever the student’s behavior threatens the safe operation of the school bus or students. The School Bus Behavior Contract shall provide for age-appropriate discipline, penalties, and restrictions for student misconduct on the bus. Provisions may include, but are not limited to, assigned seating, ongoing parental involvement, and suspension from riding the bus. These provisions regarding use of a Bus Behavior Contract are not to be construed to limit the instances when other Code of Conduct violations may require the use of a Student Bus Behavior Contract.

Additional Bus System Guidelines

Bus Routes: All students, K-12, using the school transportation services shall ride their assigned bus that is provided to such student. Each student must adhere to all times and designated stops for AM and PM routes. Parents are responsible for providing transportation for students suspended from riding the bus. Parents with concerns or complaints that need to be addressed with the bus driver should schedule a conference with the driver through the Transportation Director. By law 20-2-1181, parents should not distract the driver by boarding the bus or complaining at the bus stop.

Afternoon Student Delivery: Age Requirements

In cooperation with the Department of Family and Children Services, it is the practice of the Pike County School System to ensure that parents are at home before dropping off students, specifically Primary and Elementary age; hence, the following criteria has been setup: Pre-K through the 3rd grade (9 yrs. & younger): A Parent/Guardian, or a Parent/Guardian designee, must be present and visible at the bus stop or residence to receive students in grades Pre-K through 3. If an adult is not present and visible, the bus driver will transport the student back to the student’s respective school where the parent or guardian can pick up the student. The parent or guardian must go into the school and sign the child out. The Pike County School System understands that events may occur outside of the parent’s control that result in the student being returned to school. The parents shall make every reasonable attempt to communicate with the school and pick-up their child in a timely manner. Repeated failure to receive your child as outlined above will result in the loss of transportation privileges.

If your child is returned to school a total of 3 times, one month of transportation privileges will be lost. On the 4th offense, a meeting with the parents or guardians of the student and appropriate school district officials must be held. Department of Family and Children Services may also be notified. On the 5th offense, transportation privileges will be lost for the remainder of the school year.

Computers and Network Resources

Acceptable Use Policy

Purpose

Pike County Board of Education provides Network and Internet access for the purpose of promoting the use of telecommunication and networking technology as a tool to enhance classroom teaching and learning. All employees and students have access to all network resources, which includes the Internet. Parents may specifically request that their child(ren) not be provided Internet access by notifying the school and Pike County Board of Education in writing. All use of the network must be consistent with this purpose and be in accordance with this policy in an appropriate and responsible manner. Our goal in providing this service to teachers and students is to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication.

Pike County Board of Education encourages the use of these media and associated services as a tool to enhance classroom teaching and learning. However, all computer users in Pike County School System should remember that electronic media and services provided by Pike County Board of Education are property of the Pike County Board of Education and their purpose is to facilitate and support teaching and learning. All computer users have the responsibility to use these resources in a professional, ethical, and lawful manner.

To ensure that all computer users are responsible, the following guidelines have been established for using E-mail, the internet, personal communication devices, and network resources. No policy can provide rules to cover every possible situation. Instead, it is designed to express Pike County School System's philosophy and set forth general principles when using electronic media and services. All students and employees are required to sign an acknowledgement and acceptance of the Pike County School System acceptable use policy before being allowed access to computers and the network within Pike County School System.

Social Media Communications

We are proud to embrace the power of social media as a tool to communicate and engage with our parents, students, and community. Negative behavior or attacks on any student or employee by a student, employee, parent, or any member of the public is disruptive to our positive learning environment. Use of social media for learning, informing, and engaging students, parents, community members, and employees in the educational process is embraced and encouraged.

For additional information, please see the School Board's Social Media Policy Statement and the Social Media Guidelines for District Employees.

Access to Communications

Generally, electronic information created and/or communicated by a computer user using e-mail, word processing, utility programs, spreadsheets, voicemail, telephones, internet, bulletin board system access, and similar electronic media is not reviewed by the Pike County Board of Education. Pike County Board of Education reserves the right, at its discretion, to review any user's electronic files and messages to the extent necessary to ensure electronic media and services are being used in compliance with the law, this policy, and other board policies. Users should not assume electronic communications are completely private. Accordingly, if they have sensitive information to transmit, they should use other means. Pike County Board of Education reserves the right to block any or all communication that cannot be filtered.

Software

To prevent computer viruses from being transmitted through the district's computer system, unauthorized downloading of any unauthorized software is strictly prohibited. Only software registered through Pike County School System may be downloaded. Software Installation Packages from outside the school must be scanned for viruses by an authorized staff member prior to use on a district computer or the network.

Extracurricular Organizations Web Pages

With the approval of the building principal, extracurricular organizations may establish pages on the Pike County School web site.

All Acceptable Use Policy provisions will govern material placed on the web site.

WEB PAGES SHALL NOT:

- Contain the full name, address, or phone numbers of students (First names may be used where appropriate.)
- Contain copyrighted or trademarked material without written permission

Web pages must contain the following:

- Material must meet academic standards of proper spelling, grammar, and accuracy of information.
- Students and employees may retain the copyright on the material they create.
- All Web pages should carry a stamp indicating when it was last updated and the e-mail address of the person responsible for the page.
- All Web pages should have a link to the home page.

Board of Education Limitation of Liability

The Pike County Board of Education makes no warranties of any kind, either expressed or implied, that the functions or the services provided by or through the Board of Education system will be error-free or without defect. The Board of Education and Pike County School System will not be responsible for any damage users may suffer, including, but not limited to, loss of data or interruptions of service. The Board of Education and Pike County School System are not responsible for financial obligations arising through the unauthorized use of the system. Users will indemnify and hold the Pike County Board of Education and the school system harmless from any losses sustained as the result of intentional misuse of the system by users.

Network Access Statement

USERS WILL BE REQUIRED TO SIGN A STATEMENT THAT THEY HAVE READ, UNDERSTOOD, AND WILL ABIDE BY THE AUP. FAILURE TO SIGN SAID STATEMENT WILL RESULT IN NO ACCESS TO PIKE COUNTY BOE NETWORK RESOURCES. Students are only allowed to utilize the computers and network to retrieve information and run specific software applications as directed by their instructor. Students are not permitted to go into the operating system to look around, run programs, or attempt to do anything they are not specifically authorized to do. It is the user's responsibility to avoid initiating access to such areas and to online material deemed inappropriate.

PROHIBITED CONDUCT INCLUDES, BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO, THE FOLLOWING:

- Accessing, sending, creating, or posting materials or communications that are damaging to another person's reputation, abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, contrary to the school system's policy on harassment, or prohibited by law
- Using the network for personal gain or advertising
- Posting or plagiarizing work created by another person without his/her consent
- Posting anonymous or forging electronic mail messages
- Attempting to read, alter, delete, or copy the electronic mail messages of other users
- Giving out personal information such as phone numbers, addresses, driver's license or social security numbers, bankcard, or checking account information
- Using the school system's computer hardware or network for any illegal activity
- Loading or using games, public domain, shareware, or any other unauthorized program on any school system's computer or computer system
- Purposely infecting any school system computer or network with a virus or program designed to damage, alter, destroy, or provide access to unauthorized data or information
- Gaining access or attempting to access unauthorized or restricted network resources or the data and documents of another person
- Using or attempting to use the password or account of another person or utilizing a computer while logged on under another user's account

- Providing others with personnel user account information or password
- Using the school system's computers or network while access privileges have been suspended
- Using the school system's computer hardware, network, or Internet link in a manner that is inconsistent with a teacher's directions and generally accepted network etiquette
- Altering or attempting to alter the configuration of a computer, the operating system, or any of the software
- Attempting to vandalize, disconnect, or disassemble any network or computer component
- Utilizing the computers and network to retrieve information or run software applications not assigned by teachers
- Connecting to or installing any computer hardware, components, or software which is not school system property or in the district's technology resources without prior approval of the district technology supervisory personnel

Use of Personal Equipment and Material (Bring Your Own Device)

Due to inventory and liability issues, all privately-owned equipment and software must follow the guidelines below. Pike County School System accepts no responsibility for the installation or maintenance of privately-owned personal computer hardware and/or software that is not in its ownership. It is the responsibility of the owner to make sure all software licensing requirements are met.

Device Types

For the purpose of this program, the word "devices" will include laptops, cell phones, smart phones, iPads, iPods, tablets, and other similar items. Please note that Nintendo DS and/or other gaming devices with Internet access are not permissible at this time.

Guidelines

Students participating in the BYOD program must adhere to the Student Code of Conduct, Student Handbook, Acceptable Use Policy, and all Board policies.

- Each teacher has the discretion to allow and regulate the use of personal devices in the classroom and on specific projects.
- Devices may only be used in classrooms when allowed by the teacher.
- Approved devices must be in silent mode while riding school buses and on school campuses unless otherwise allowed by a teacher.
- Devices may not be used to cheat on assignments or tests or for non-instructional purposes (such as making personal phone calls and text/instant messaging).
- Students may not use devices to record, transmit, or post photographic images or video of a person or persons on campus during school activities and/or hours unless otherwise allowed by a teacher.
- Devices may only be used to access files on computer or Internet sites which are relevant to the classroom curriculum. Games are not permitted unless otherwise allowed by a teacher.

Lost, Stolen, or Damaged Devices

Each user is responsible for his/her own digital property and should treat it and use it responsibly and appropriately. Pike County School System takes no responsibility for stolen, lost, or damaged devices, including lost or corrupted data on those devices while on Pike County School System property and will not be liable for the replacement or repair of any personal device. Students are responsible for securing their personal devices. Please check with your homeowner's policy regarding coverage of personal electronic devices, as many insurance policies can cover loss or damage.

Usage Charges

Pike County School System cannot be held responsible for any possible device charges to your account that might be incurred during approved school-related use. Wireless access will be provided through the Pike County Schools-HSS network. Any data and/or SMS/MMS charges will not be reimbursed by Pike County School System.

Network Considerations

Users should strive to maintain appropriate bandwidth for school-related work and communications by using the Internet responsibly. All non-school owned devices will use the "PIKE COUNTY SCHOOLS-HSS" wireless network to access the Internet. Pike County School System does not guarantee connectivity or quality of connection with personal devices.

Students and Parents/Guardians acknowledge the following:

- The school system's network filters will be applied to a device's connection to the Internet, and any attempt to bypass the network filters is prohibited.
- Students are prohibited from bringing a device on premises that infects the network with a Virus, Trojan, or program designed to damage, alter, destroy, or provide access to unauthorized data or information and processing or accessing information on school property related to "hacking," altering, or bypassing network security policies.
- Pike County School System is authorized to collect and examine any device that is suspected of causing technology problems or was the source of an attack or virus infection.
- Printing from personal laptops will not be possible at school.
- Personal devices must be charged prior to school and run on battery power while at school.
- The campus principal and Director of Technology will make the final determination of what is considered to be inappropriate use of the Pike County School System computer network. The campus principal may suspend an account or network access at any time. In addition, the administration, faculty, and staff of Pike County School System may request a user's account be reviewed at any time if inappropriate use is suspected.

Privileges

The use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in cancellation of those privileges. Any user not complying with the Pike County School System Computers and Network Resources Acceptable Use Agreement shall lose privileges. Infractions may result in appropriate disciplinary action in addition to suspension or termination of access privileges. Unauthorized use of the network, intentional deletion or damage to files and data belonging to other users, or copyright violations may be termed as theft. Before using the Internet, each student will participate in an orientation conducted by a faculty member. The orientation will be on the Pike County School System Computers and Network Resources Student Acceptable Use Guidelines. The proper use of the network and network etiquette is based upon the acceptable use guidelines in this document. The Pike County School System administrator for the Internet and the local school administrator will deem what is inappropriate use, and their decisions are final. Also, the system administrators may deny access at any time. The administration, faculty, and staff members of Pike County School System may request that a system administrator deny, revoke, or suspend specific user privileges.

Vandalism

Vandalism will result in cancellation of a user's computer privileges and/or other punishment under school policy.

Pike County School Nutrition Program

Student and Faculty Accounts

Faculty, staff, and students are encouraged to deposit money (checks are best) into their meal accounts at the beginning of the month, whereby a draft of the account may be made on a daily basis as the meal is purchased. End-of-year balances roll up with the account owner. Payments can be made online at www.myschoolaccount.com.

Meal Charge Policy

Customer service is the number one priority of Pike County School Nutrition. We have the option to offer an alternative meal to students who have exhausted the funds in their account. We believe that attempting to offer an alternative meal to a student who has already chosen a meal is disruptive to the student and an undesirable form of service that we want to avoid. We prefer to feed students in good faith that parents and guardians will honor the debts created.

It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to reinforce responsible purchasing restraint with the student and to set expectations of what spending is appropriate to the household.

As a valuable service to our customers, Pike County School Nutrition will make reasonable effort to communicate account balances to parents or guardians. However, it is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to maintain awareness of student account balances and to provide adequate funds to match the spending of the student.

Account balances may be checked at no additional cost at any time by visiting www.myschoolaccount.com and setting up an account.

Pike County School Nutrition will attempt to communicate with the parent or guardian through any means at our disposal. This includes notices sent home with students, letters by postal service, email, phone, text, or private message. It will be the responsibility of the parent or guardian to check for written notices sent home with their children. Please check to see if your child has information from the school for you to review or sign, just as you would check for graded papers, etc. from their teacher(s).

Please note the following points concerning staff and student accounts:

- No adult meal charges are allowed if the account has a zero balance or below.
- Staff, parents, and visitors may not charge purchases to a student's account.
- Extra purchases, such as a la carte items, may not be made on account.
- The school cashier/manager will attempt to provide a courtesy notice to the parent by automated phone service when the student balance falls below **\$0.00**.
- Additional collection efforts will be made weekly if the balance is allowed to remain negative.
- If the past due account is not brought current before reaching **-\$15.00**, school administration will be notified, and a referral may be made to the Pupil Services Director. Collection attempts will be made continuously until the balance is made current.
- Students in grades 6-12 who repeatedly abuse the charge policy may be placed on a "cash only" status.
- Only students in grades 6-12 will be placed on "cash only" status after the parent or guardian has signed a form of consent in recognition that they do not qualify and/or desire free and reduced benefits and understand that the student will not be allowed to charge meals.
- Accounts currently below **-\$15.00** at the publishing of this policy will be allowed to sign a promissory note indicating a plan to make payments on the account in an effort to bring the account to a positive balance. Failure to meet the agreed conditions indicated in the promissory note will place the account on a "cash only" status until the account can be brought to a positive balance.
- As with other outstanding bills, receipt of student report cards or access to tickets for extracurricular activities may be affected by negative account balances.
- Once we have exhausted all of our internal options for collecting delinquent accounts, we may contact a collection agency or the magistrate court for assistance with collection. Collection and court costs will be the responsibility of the parent or guardian.
- You will be notified of returned checks by mail, and the amount of the returned check will be deducted from the student's account.
- Habitual returned checks may result in a "cash only" payment status after required documentation has been signed.
- Current Meal Prices and Menus are located on the district website.
- If you have any questions or need further assistance, call the School Nutrition Department.

Free & Reduced Applications:

A new application must be completed each school year. Federal regulations require every student to receive an application on the first day of school, whether eligible or not. Federal regulations allow ten (10) working days to process the application once it is received by the School Nutrition Program. Applications can be submitted directly to the SNP office or sent to school with your child. Applications cannot be transferred from county to county. A Pike County application is necessary to determine eligibility. Your taxes are not affected by free and reduced applications. Federal funds are set aside and distributed to systems throughout the nation based on eligibility numbers. Even non-qualifying returned applications benefit several departments in the system. Applications are available year round at the school cafeterias or the Director of School Nutrition's office.

At any time during the school year, if a family's income decreases, an application for a Free or Reduced Price Meal may be completed to determine eligibility.

Free and Reduced meal eligibility numbers allow for federal grants to be obtained. Departments like Technology, Title I, and Special Education receive funding based on the eligibility numbers. Our communications bills are reduced (e-rates); parents are assisted by providing free or reduced priced meals for their children; children are provided hot, nutritious meals; and family funds are freed up for other necessary needs.

Student Grievance Procedure

It is the belief of the Pike County Board of Education that students have the right and responsibility to express related concerns and grievances to the faculty and administration. Therefore, students shall be assured the opportunity for an orderly presentation and review of grievances. For the discussion and consideration of a grievance, any student or group of students should request a meeting time and place which will not interfere with regularly-scheduled classes or school-related activities. The faculty and administration shall make an honest effort to resolve student grievances as quickly as possible and at the most immediate level of supervision. With the ultimate concern and consideration for the educational welfare of children and youth, this grievance procedure is designed to accomplish an equitable and expeditious resolution of student grievances.

Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to provide an orderly and systematic method whereby students can resolve differences that might develop between them and professional employees of the Board of Education in an equitable and expeditious manner.

Definitions

- Grievance—Grievance shall mean a claim submitted by a student or group of students of a violation of human or citizenship rights guaranteed by the United States Constitution, federal or state law, or a misinterpretation of the Board of Education policy by professional staff members.
- Student – Student shall mean any person currently enrolled in a school operated under the authority of the Pike County Board of Education.
- Days – Days shall mean school days exclusive of Saturday, Sunday, or an official holiday, as established by the school calendar.
- Parties of Interest – Parties of Interest shall mean any persons involved in the processing of a grievance.

Informal Procedure

The District believes most grievances can be resolved informally and at the most immediate level of supervision. With this objective in mind, simple and honest communication is encouraged between students, teachers, and/or administrators. Parents or guardians should feel free to communicate with teachers and principals at any point in the procedure. A student who feels he/she has a grievance should present the matter to his/her teacher if the teacher is in a position to resolve the grievance. If the teacher is not in a position to resolve the grievance, the matter should be presented to an assistant principal. If not resolved by the assistant principal, the grievance should be presented to the principal. The principal shall attempt to resolve the grievance and to notify the grievant of the decision within two days thereafter. If the grievance is resolved, or if no further action is needed, the matter is closed.

Formal Procedure

Level One – Principal

The grievant must present the grievance but may be accompanied by a parent or guardian, classmate, or faculty member of the student's choice. The aggrieved party shall file the grievance in writing with the principal, and the grievance shall be signed by the aggrieved party. The principal shall set a time to discuss the grievance that is mutually convenient for the parties and shall seek an amicable solution to the problem. Within five days after receipt of the grievance, the principal shall hear the grievance and within two days after hearing the grievance, shall notify the aggrieved party in writing of the final decision. If the grievance is not resolved by the principal to the satisfaction of the aggrieved at Level One, the grievant may appeal within ten days to the Superintendent.

Level Two – Superintendent

The grievant must present the grievance initially but may be represented by anyone of his/her choosing. Within ten days after receipt of the decision at Level One, the aggrieved party and/or his/her parent or guardian may appeal to the Superintendent.

The Superintendent shall, within a ten day period following the appeal, do one or more of the following as he/she may deem appropriate:

- Review written decisions at Level One together with any and all other documentary evidence that may be submitted
- Conduct a hearing with all persons whom he/she may choose to invite, including the principal parties
- Designate such person or persons as he/she deems appropriate to investigate the grievance and to offer recommendations prior to making a final decision

After the Superintendent initiates one or more of the options listed above, he/she shall, within seven days, make a final decision. A copy of such written notification shall be mailed to the principal.

Level Three – Board of Education

The grievant and his/her parent or a representative may, within ten days of the Level Two decisions, appeal to the Board of Education. The Board may choose one or more of the following options:

1. Conduct a review of the records
2. Call for limited testimony
3. Conduct a full hearing
4. Refuse to consider the appeal

The Board shall reach a decision concerning the grievance within ten days after the hearing and shall convey the decision to the grievant and his/her parent or guardian within two days after reaching the decision. The decision of the Board of Education shall be final unless the grievant and his/her parent or guardian decides to utilize any other duly-recognized procedure established by law.

Student Attendance (O.C.G.A. 20-2-690.1)

The Pike County Board of Education recognizes the importance of regular school attendance in making academic progress; therefore, students shall be in attendance as required by Georgia's compulsory school attendance law for the number of full-length days as prescribed by law.

Attendance Requirement

The parent or guardian shall provide a signed and dated explanation of the student's absence immediately upon the student's return to school. The student's record shall reflect an unexcused absence until the written notification is received.

Truancy

Truancy is defined as any child subject to compulsory attendance who, during the school calendar year, has more than five days of unexcused absences. Students identified as truant are subject to progressive discipline procedures as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct. The Pike County Student Attendance Protocol provides a progressive discipline plan which includes a parental involvement process before referring students and/or parents to the appropriate court of jurisdiction.

Absences

The principal reserves the right to request appropriate documentation of each absence. Students who miss school as a result of an unexcused absence will not be allowed to complete work on graded assignments. Final course grades of students shall not be penalized because of absences if the absences are considered excused and make-up work is completed satisfactorily. A student's absence shall be considered excused if the absence meets one of the following requirements:

- The student's attendance or personal illness endangers the student's health or the health of others
- A serious illness or death occurs in the student's immediate family
- A court order or an order by a government agency is issued
- The student is observing an established religious holiday
- A medical, dental, or eye examination of the student is scheduled
- Weather or other conditions exist which make school attendance impossible or hazardous
- The student is serving as a Page with the General Assembly
- The student is categorized as an on-track twelfth grade student and participates in not more than two college visits (An official document from the post- secondary institution verifying participation in a visitation program is required.)
- The student registers to vote and provides evidence of such activity
- The student participates in a trip or event having significant educational value, provided permission is granted by the principal in advance, and the principal determines the trip has significant educational value
- The student's parent/guardian is deployed or returning from a military duty (total number of days that are allowed is five (5) excused days)

Policies and Procedures to Reduce Unexcused Absences

1. The school system requires its schools to provide to the parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of each student enrolled in school a written summary of possible consequences and penalties for failing to comply with compulsory attendance. By September 1 of each school year or within 30 school days of a student's enrollment in the school system, the parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of such student will be asked to sign a statement indicating receipt of such written statement of possible consequences and penalties.
2. In addition, students age ten or older by September 1 must sign a statement indicating receipt of a written statement of possible consequences for non-compliance to the local board policy.
3. The school system will notify the parent, guardian, or other person who has control or charge of the student when such student has five unexcused absences. The notice will outline the penalty and consequences of such absences and that each subsequent absence will constitute a separate offense. After two reasonable attempts to notify the parent, guardian, or other person who has charge of the student, the school system will send written notice.
4. Students shall be notified through the Student Code of Conduct of the definition of truancy and a summary of possible consequences and penalties for truancy, including possible dispositions for unruly children in accordance with O.C.G.A. 15-11-67.

Disciplinary Expulsion/Suspensions

In accordance with Georgia State Board of Education Rule 160-5-1-.10, school days missed as a result of out of school suspension shall not count as unexcused days for the purpose of determining student truancy.

Early Release and Late Arrival Guidelines

1. Students must be present for the majority of the day to be counted present. (See School-Level Attendance Guidelines)
2. Students shall be released from school only to the students' parent(s) or guardian(s), a person properly identified by school authorities with authority or permission to check-out the student, or upon request by letter or telephone call from the parent(s) or guardian(s).
3. Parents and students are encouraged to be punctual to school. Tardiness disrupts the learning environment and subjects the student to progressive discipline as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct.

Guardian Alert Procedure

Checking students out of school shall be done in accordance with checkout procedures established by the school. It shall be the responsibility of the custodial parent(s)/guardian(s) to notify the child's attending school of persons not authorized to check out said child under any circumstances. Schools shall not release students to individuals other than custodial parent(s)/guardian(s) without written permission from the custodial parent(s)/guardian(s). When parents are divorced, legal custody documentation is required for placement on file. It is the responsibility of the custodial parent(s)/guardian(s) to notify the school when their child is being picked up by anyone other than those whose names appear on the list of authorized individuals signed by the custodial parent(s)/guardian(s).

Withdrawal Guidelines

For the purpose of accurately measuring the academic performance of students continuously enrolled in public schools, the Pike County Board of Education adopts the following State Board of Education criteria for withdrawing students:

Appropriate school personnel are authorized to withdraw a student who:

- Has missed more than 10 consecutive days of unexcused absences
- Is not subject to compulsory school attendance
- Is not receiving instructional services through homebound instruction or instructional services required by the federal Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

The Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee shall use his/her best efforts to notify the parent, guardian, or other person who has charge of a student if the school system plans to withdraw such student who is younger than 18 years of age and is not subject to compulsory school attendance. Appropriate school personnel are authorized to withdraw a student subject to compulsory attendance if the Superintendent or Superintendent's designee has determined the student is no longer a resident of the local school system or is enrolled in a private school or home study program. Appropriate school personnel shall withdraw students retroactive to the first day of the consecutive absences.

Parent Permission to Drop Out (Senate Bill 413)

In accordance with state law, an un-emancipated minor who wishes to withdraw must have the written permission of his/her parent or guardian if under the age of eighteen prior to withdrawing. Prior to accepting such permission, a school administrator will have a conference with the student and parent/guardian within two school days of receiving notice of the intent of the student to withdraw. The purpose of the conference is to share with the student and parent/guardian educational options available and the consequences of not earning a high school diploma.

Homeless Students

In accordance with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, the Pike County School District will work with homeless children and youths and their families to provide stability in school attendance and other services. Special attention will be given to ensuring the enrollment and attendance of homeless children and youths not currently attending school in a manner that will not stigmatize or segregate them on the basis of their status as homeless. Homeless students will be provided district services for which they are eligible, including Head Start and comparable pre-school programs, Title I, similar state programs, educational programs for students with disabilities or Limited English Proficiency, vocational and technical education programs, gifted and talented programs, and school nutrition programs.

A "homeless child" is defined as provided in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act as children and youth who:

- Share the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason
- Live in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations
- Live in emergency or transitional shelters
- Abandoned in hospitals

- Await foster care placement
- Live in public or private places not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings
- Live in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, transportation stations, or similar settings
- Migratory children living in conditions described in the previous examples
- Unaccompanied youth who are not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian

Every child of a homeless individual and every homeless child are entitled to equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other students. The District will assign and admit a child who is homeless to a District school regardless of residency or whether the homeless child is able to produce records normally required for enrollment.

The Superintendent will appoint a liaison for homeless children.

Student Services

The Superintendent shall designate an appropriate staff person to be the District's Liaison for homeless students and their parents. School personnel will be trained to inquire about homelessness upon enrollment and withdrawal of students. School personnel will notify the Homeless Liaison regarding possible students in transition.

The Pike County School System liaison for homeless students and their families shall coordinate with:

- Local social services agencies that provide services to homeless children and their families;
- Other school districts on issues of transportation and record transfers; and
- State and local housing agencies.

This coordination shall include providing public notice of educational rights of the homeless in schools, family shelters, and soup kitchens. The Pike County School System liaison for homeless students and their families shall also review and recommend amendments to system policies that may act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless students.

The Superintendent/homeless liaison will review and revise, as necessary, rules or procedures that may be barriers to enrollment of homeless children and youth. In reviewing and revising such procedures, the Superintendent/homeless liaison will consider issues of transportation, immunization, residency, birth certificates, school records, and other documentation.

Transportation

Homeless students are entitled to transportation to their school of origin or the school where they are to be enrolled. Transportation shall be provided for the duration of the transition. If the school of origin is in a different district, or a homeless student is living in another district but will attend his or her school of origin in this district, the districts will coordinate the transportation services necessary for the student or will divide the costs equally. Transportation services may be provided through district transportation, gas vouchers, or public means. If transportation is requested by the parent or guardian, a Transportation Request Form should be filled out by school staff and forwarded to the District Liaison and Transportation Director.

Disputes of Homeless Children and Youth

Anyone having a concern or complaint regarding placement or education of a homeless child will first present it orally and informally to the District Homeless Liaison who shall carry out the dispute resolution process as defined in the state plan for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth.

Hospital Homebound Instruction

Services are provided for students who are expected to be out of school for ten (10) days or longer due to illness or injury. Any Pike County student who has a physical condition that has been medically diagnosed by a Physician (MD) which restricts them to their home or a hospital may be eligible for services.

Criteria for being an eligible student:

- Absent for 10 consecutive days or more
- Confined to hospital or home
- Chronically ill
- Pregnancy that is high risk

Criteria for being a non-eligible student:

- Absent 9 consecutive days or less
- Illness does not confine student to home or hospital
- Infectious diseases
- Normal pregnancy
- Attending school for half day
- Instruction provided by other sources

Referral Process

A Hospital/Homebound referral form must be submitted. Approval of service will be determined, and a conference will be provided to parent(s)/guardian(s) within ten (10) days of the referral being submitted to a school administrator. If services are approved, certified teacher(s) will be assigned to the student. The assigned teacher will make arrangements with the family to begin instruction at a mutually agreed-upon date, time, and location. If a student does not return to school as originally projected, a medical extension is required to continue services.

Responsibilities of the Parent/Guardian

A responsible adult, other than the teacher, must be in the home while the teacher is present. The parent should provide an appropriate area in the home for the student and teacher during instruction. The parent shall see that the student is ready to begin instruction when the teacher arrives. The parent should notify the instructor in advance if the student is unable to receive instruction.

Responsibilities of the Student

The student should plan several times during the day when work can be done without interruptions in order to complete assignments in a timely manner. The student should inform the homebound teacher of any books or supplies needed from the school. The student must complete all given assignments. The student should be attentive and cooperative during the instruction period. The student must not be working, participate in any extracurricular activities, or be present on campus at any time while receiving homebound services.

Student Records

It is the policy of the Board of Education that all employees shall comply with the requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Pupil Protection Rights Amendment (PPRA). The Board has developed and adopted student privacy policies in consultation with parents in accordance with federal law. Additionally, parents will be directly notified of these policies at least annually via the Student/Parent Handbook issued to students at the beginning of the school year or at the student's time of enrollment.

Directory Information

The Pike County School System lists the following as directory information which may be disclosed upon request:

- Student's name, address, and telephone number
- Student's date and place of birth
- Students participating in official school clubs and sports
- Weight and height of student if he/she is a member of an athletic team
- Dates of attendance at schools within the school district
- Honors and awards received during the time enrolled in the district's schools
- Video, audio, or film images; recordings; or photograph(s)
- Grade level

Student records shall be provided to schools within or outside the school district upon request of the school where a student is enrolling in accordance with Georgia Board of Education Rule 160-5-1-.14, Transfer of Student Records.

"Opt Out" - Parent(s)/guardian(s) or students can request to the principal for such information to be confidential, and such information will not be disclosed to outside individuals. All requests must be made in writing and addressed to the principal in a timely manner.

Procedures for Obtaining Access to Student Records

Any parent whose parental rights have not been specifically revoked by court order, any guardian, or any individual acting as a parent in the absence of a parent or guardian may inspect the education records of his/her child. 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.

With the exception of directory information as defined above, 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 where authorized by federal law. These circumstances include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Disclosures will be made to school administrators, teachers, or other professionals employed by or associated with the school system who have some role in evaluating or educating the student.
- Records will be sent to a school where the student has enrolled upon request of the institution.
- Disclosures will be made to federal or state officials in connection with the audit of Educational Programs.
- 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.
- Disclosures will be made to comply with state law, Internal Revenue Service laws and regulations, judicial orders, or lawfully-issued subpoenas. Unless otherwise required by a judicial order or federal grand jury subpoena, a reasonable effort will be made to notify parents or students in advance of such disclosures.
- Disclosures will be made to organizations conducting studies on behalf of or by educational institutions for the purpose of developing, validating, or administering predictive tests, administering student aid programs, and improving instruction.
- Disclosures will be made to accrediting institutions to carry out their accrediting function.
- Disclosures will be made in connection with a health or safety emergency.
- Disclosures will be made to the Attorney General of the United States or to his/her designee in response to an ex parte order in connection with the investigation or prosecution of terrorism crimes specified in 18 U.S.C. 2332(b) (5 (B) and 2331.

Each records custodian in the school district shall maintain a record of each request for access to and each disclosure of personally identifiable information from the educational records of a student in accordance with regulations governing the Act.

A parent or eligible student who believes his/her 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 thus resolved, a parent 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, it shall be corrected, and the parent 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 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 Materials" - Instructional materials that are 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 the following:

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; or
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 by providing the principal a request to "opt out," identifying one of the eight criteria listed above. The requirements of PPRA do not apply to a survey administered to a student in accordance with Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

A parent of a student may, upon request, inspect any instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum for the student. The request shall be made in writing to the school principal. The principal shall schedule a conference with the parent within five business days and make the instructional materials available. 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 that 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 principal shall provide the parents notice within five business days before the request/activity commences with the option to opt out. Additionally, the parents shall be given the opportunity to preview the request or activity prior to the commencement of the request. Posting the request or activity on the school's web page or making the request or activity available at the school's administrative office shall meet the requirement set forth in this procedure. Every effort shall be made to protect student privacy, and parents are encouraged to review the request or activity to ensure that the level of disclosure is acceptable.

Asbestos

The Federal Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) requires that all buildings be inspected for asbestos-containing building materials. This is to notify all parties that a copy of the asbestos plan is on file in the school administrative offices and is available for public inspection upon reasonable notice. A copy is also on file in the Office of the Superintendent of Schools.

Board Members

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Mr. Allen Edwards, Board Vice-Chair, District 2

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Ms. Beth Camp, District 4

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Superintendent

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