



# CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

Hall County Schools 2016 -2017

Revised: May 2016

## INTRODUCTION

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

The school's primary goal is to educate, not to punish; however, when the behavior of an individual student comes in conflict with the rights of others, corrective actions may be necessary for the benefit of that individual and the school as a whole. Accordingly, students shall be governed by policies, regulations and rules set forth in this Code of Conduct and Discipline Procedures. Such governing rules shall be published and provided annually to all school personnel and students. Parents are encouraged to become familiar with the policies, regulations and rules of the school system and to be supportive of these in their daily communication with their children and others in the community.

Major discipline offenses, including, but not limited to, drug and weapon offenses, can lead to a school being named as an Unsafe School according to the provisions of the State Board of Education Rule – Unsafe School Choice Option.

## FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's educational records. They are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the Hall County School System receives a request for access. 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. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The Principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students may ask the Hall County School System to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights.

If the School System decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the System will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record, commenting on the contested information in the record.

3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. Generally, schools must have written

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permission from the parent or eligible student before releasing information from a student's record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose records, without consent, to the following parties:

- School employees who have a need to know;
- Other schools to which a student is transferring;
- Certain government officials in order to carry out lawful functions;
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
- Organizations conducting certain studies for the school;
- Accrediting organizations;
- Individuals who have obtained court orders or subpoenas;
- Persons who need to know in case of health and safety emergencies; and State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to Georgia law.

One exception which permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed of the Hall County School System as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or other support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the System has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, or such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the System discloses, and forwards if necessary, education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

4. The right to object to the release of "directory" type information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, weight and height of student if he/she is a member of an athletic team, photograph, grade level, and dates of attendance. Parents or eligible students may request, in writing, that the Hall County School System not disclose directory information about them. They should make this request annually by September 30<sup>th</sup> or within 10 school days of an enrollment after the start of the student school year.

5. The right to file with the U.S. Department of Education a complaint under 20 C.F.R. 99.64 concerning alleged failures by the Hall County School System to comply with requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act or the regulations promulgated there under.

The Office that administers FERPA is:  
Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-4605

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

(1) Parents and eligible students (18 or older or emancipated minors) shall be notified at the beginning of the school year of the approximate dates during the school year when any of the activities listed below are expected to be scheduled. The Board of Education has developed and adopted policies, in conjunction with parents, regarding the activities described in paragraph 1. In accordance with Board policies, prior written consent must be obtained from parents before students are required to submit to any survey that contains questions about one or more of the areas listed in subparagraph (1)(A) and that is funded in whole or in part by the U.S. Department of Education. Parents have the right to inspect any survey or instrument used in the collection of information under subparagraphs (1)(A) and (1)(B) before the instrument is administered or distributed to a student and to opt out their student from participation in any activities described in paragraph (1) in accordance with regulations developed by the Superintendent.

(A) The administration of any survey containing one or more of the following items:

- (i.) Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent;
- (ii.) Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
- (iii.) Sex behavior or attitudes;
- (iv.) Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
- (v.) Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
- (vi.) Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers;
- (vii.) Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student's parent; or
- (viii.) 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.

(B) 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).

(C) Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening that is required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school and scheduled by the school in advance, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student, or of other students.

(2) Parents may, upon request, inspect any instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum for their student.

(3) The school is required by federal law to give this notice to parents. However, the school does not have scheduled any marketing activities or physical exams such as those described in paragraphs 1(B) and (C). If any such activities are initiated during the school year, parents will be notified accordingly and will be afforded all rights as described herein.

(4) Parents/ eligible students who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave. SW, Washington, D.C. 20202-4605.

## **SECTION 504 HEARING REQUESTS**

Any student or parent or guardian (“grievant”) may request an impartial hearing due to the school system’s actions or inactions regarding your child’s identification, evaluation, or educational placement under Section 504. Requests for an impartial hearing must be in writing to the school system’s Section 504 Coordinator; however, a grievant’s failure to request a hearing in writing does not alleviate the school system’s obligation to provide an impartial hearing if the grievant orally requests an impartial hearing through the school system’s 504 Coordinator. The school system’s Section 504 Coordinator will assist the grievant in completing the written Request for Hearing. The Section 504 Coordinator may be contacted through the school system’s central office. Copies of the 504 Procedural Safeguards and Notice of Rights of Students and Parents under Section 504 may be found at the system’s website or may be picked up at the central office or at any of the school offices.

## **NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND ACT (NCLB)**

In compliance with the requirements of The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, the Hall County School System informs parents that they may request information about the professional qualifications of their student’s teacher(s). The following information may be requested:

- 1) whether the teacher has met the Georgia Professional Standards Commission requirements for certification for the grade level and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
- 2) whether the teacher is teaching under an emergency or other provisional status through which Georgia qualifications or certification criteria have been waived;
- 3) the college major and any graduate certification or degree held by the teacher;
- 4) whether the student is provided services by paraprofessionals, and, if so, their qualifications.

If a parent wishes to request information concerning their child’s teacher’s qualification, please contact the school principal.

## **AUTHORITY OF THE PRINCIPAL**

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

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

The students of the Hall County School System are expected to maintain good order and discipline in the school environment. Good order and discipline may be described as the absence of distractions, frictions and disturbances which interfere with the optimum functioning of the student, the class and the school. It is also the presence of a friendly yet business-like rapport in which students and school personnel work cooperatively toward mutually recognized and mutually accepted goals.

This 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 event and while traveling to and from such events;
- On vehicles provided for student transportation by the school system and at bus stops.

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

## **PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES**

When it is necessary to impose discipline, school administrators and teachers will follow a **progressive discipline process**. A major consideration in the application of the code is that the disciplinary action taken by school officials be **the least extreme measure** that can resolve the discipline problem. Circumstances to be considered include, but are not limited to, the following factors: age, health, maturity, academic placement of the student, prior conduct, attitude, cooperation of the parents, willingness to make restitution, and the seriousness of the offense. Such factors may be taken into account in determining the punishment to be imposed, including any decision to impose a punishment that is more or less severe than suggested in this Code of Conduct.

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 replace inappropriate behaviors with those that are consistent with character traits from Georgia’s Character Education Program.

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

- Warning and/or counseling with a school administrator or counselor
- Loss of privileges
- Isolation or time-out
- Temporary removal from a class or activity
- Notification of parents
- Parent conference
- Corporal punishment
- Detention/Saturday school

- Temporary placement in an alternative education program
- Short-term suspension
- Referral to a tribunal for long-term suspension or expulsion
- Suspension or expulsion from the school bus
- Referral to law enforcement or juvenile court officials: Georgia law requires that certain acts of misconduct be referred to the appropriate law enforcement officials. The school will refer any act of misconduct to law enforcement officials when school officials determine such a referral to be necessary or appropriate.

Students may be suspended due to repeated violations of any rule. The **MAXIMUM** punishment for any offense is expulsion, but suspension for more than 10 days or expulsion will be determined only by a disciplinary tribunal as outlined in the Hall County Board of Education Policy JCEB.

When guilt is established and accepted by the student and parent, a negotiated waiver settlement may be considered based on the consequences the school administration would recommend to a tribunal. If the student, parent/guardian, and a hearing officer appointed by the superintendent accept this agreement, a tribunal will not be held. A waiver agreement does not grant a student permission to enroll in the Alternative Learning Center (ALC) program. However, a student can be suspended with the option to apply for admission to ALC. The minimum stay at ALC is one semester.

A conference with the student must precede any immediate suspension from school. If immediate suspension is the action to be taken by school administrators, it must not exceed 10 school days. **Parents must be notified.** School officials may involve law enforcement officials when evidence surrounding a situation necessitates their involvement or when there is a legal requirement that an incident be reported.

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

## **GEORGIA CODE NOTICE**

Georgia Code Section 20-2-735 requires us to advise parents that they should inform their children on the consequences, including potential criminal penalties, of underage sexual conduct and crimes for which a minor can be tried as an adult.

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

### **1. Possession, sale, use in any amount, distribution, or under the influence of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic**

**drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, unauthorized prescription drug or drug paraphernalia:** Immediate suspension pending a disciplinary tribunal, and immediate referral to law enforcement officials. Distribution, attempted sale or sale of these substances requires suspension for the remainder of the semester in which the incident occurred, plus expulsion for one full semester. Participation in the system's early intervention program for student and parent (SUPER 1) is required for first-time category one offenders to re-enroll in the regular school program; attendance does not reduce the number of days of suspension.

**2. Possession, sale, attempted sale, use in any amount, distribution, or under the influence of an alcoholic beverage or other intoxicant:** First offense: Immediate suspension, system's early intervention program for student and parent (SUPER 1), possible referral to disciplinary tribunal and/or referral to law enforcement officials. The student and parent or guardian will be offered the opportunity to attend SUPER 1 in lieu of up to half the original suspension, not to exceed five (5) days. Second or subsequent offense: Mandatory referral to tribunal and/or referral to law enforcement officials.

**3. Possession, sale, attempted sale, use, or distribution of over-the-counter drugs or of substances represented as drugs or alcohol:** Immediate suspension, system's early intervention program for student and parent (SUPER 1), possible referral to disciplinary tribunal and/or referral to law enforcement officials. First time offenders may be offered the opportunity to attend SUPER 1 in lieu of up to half the original suspension, not to exceed five (5) days.

**4 Possession or use of a weapon or dangerous instrument:** Immediate suspension pending a disciplinary tribunal and immediate referral to law enforcement officials. Firearm infractions require a minimum one calendar year expulsion. (O.C.G.A. 16-11-127.1 - A fine of not more than \$10,000; imprisonment for not less than two or more than ten years, or both.)

**5. Assault (physical or verbal), including threatened violence upon another student, a teacher, or another school official:** Immediate suspension, automatic referral to the disciplinary tribunal if a student is alleged to have committed an assault upon a teacher, other school official or employee; possible referral to law enforcement officials, and possible referral to the disciplinary tribunal if a student is alleged to have committed an assault upon another student.

**6. Battery, including sexual battery, upon another student, a teacher, another school official or persons attending school-related functions:** Immediate suspension, automatic referral to the disciplinary tribunal if a student is alleged to have committed battery upon a teacher, other school official or employee, possible referral to law enforcement officials, and possible referral to the disciplinary tribunal if a student is alleged to have committed a battery upon another student.

**7. Fighting:** Possible out of school suspension, possible referral to a disciplinary tribunal hearing, possible referral to law enforcement officials.

**8. Disrespectful conduct, including the use of vulgar or profane language, toward teachers, administrators, other school personnel, other students, or persons attending school-related functions:** Possible removal from class, activity, or situation, conference with teacher, parents, and counselor, detention, in-school suspension, suspension, and/or referral to disciplinary tribunal.

**9. Any behavior based on a student's race, national origin, religion, sex, or disability including verbal or non-verbal taunting, physical contact, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature, or sexual harassment as defined pursuant to Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972:** Possible removal from class, activity, or situation, conference with teacher, parents, and counselor, detention, in-school suspension, suspension, and/or referral to disciplinary tribunal.

**10. Inciting, advising or counseling of others to engage in prohibited acts:** Possible removal from class, activity, or situation, conference with teacher, parents, and counselor, detention, in-school suspension, suspension, and/or referral to disciplinary tribunal.

**11. Classroom and school disturbances:** Possible removal from class, activity, or situation, conference with teacher, parents, and counselor, detention, in-school suspension, suspension, and/or referral to disciplinary tribunal.

**12. Possession or use of tobacco in any form and tobacco use-related paraphernalia such as lighters, matches, and electronic cigarettes:** Detention, in-school suspension, Saturday School, out-of-school suspension, and/or parent conference.

**13. Willful or malicious damage to real or personal property of the school or to personal property of any person legitimately at the school during school or off school hours:** Possible suspension, referral to disciplinary tribunal, possible referral to law enforcement officials, and/or possible restitution. (O.C.G.A. 20-2-753)

**14. Marking, defacing, or destroying school property during school or off-school hours:** Possible suspension, possible referral to the disciplinary tribunal, and/or possible restitution.

**15. Theft:** In-school or out-of-school suspension, restitution, and possible referral to law enforcement officials.

**16. Extortion or attempted extortion:** Immediate suspension, possible referral to the disciplinary tribunal, and/or possible restitution.

**17. Possession and/or use of fireworks:** Parent conference, possible suspension, and possible referral to the disciplinary tribunal and to law enforcement officials.

**18. Activating a fire alarm under false pretenses or making a bomb threat:** Immediate suspension, possible referral to disciplinary tribunal and referral to law enforcement officials.

**19. Insubordination, disorderly conduct, disobeying school rules, regulations, or directives, disobeying directives given by teachers, administrators, or other school staff:** Possible removal from class, activity, or situation, conference with teacher, parents, and counselor, detention, in-school suspension, Saturday School, suspension, and/or referral to disciplinary tribunal.

**20. Violation of school dress code:** Possible removal from class, activity, or situation, parent conference, detention, Saturday School, and/or in-school suspension.

**21. Use of profane, vulgar, or obscene words, gestures, images, or indecent exposure, including possession or transmission of such words or images (such as 'sexting'):** Parent conference, confiscation, detention, in-school suspension, or suspension, possible referral to disciplinary tribunal, and/or possible referral to law enforcement officials.

**22. Use of cell phones and other mobile electronic devices in violation of the Hall County Schools Student Code of Conduct:** Parent conference, detention, in-school suspension, confiscation, possible referral to law enforcement officials, and/or suspension.

**23. Inappropriate public displays of affection:** Parent conference, detention, in-school suspension, and/or suspension.

**24. Gambling or possession of gambling devices:** Parent conference, detention, in-school suspension, and/or suspension.

**25. Moving and non-moving driving violations:** Short-term or long-term revocation of driving privileges, in-school suspension, and/or detention.

**26. Giving false information to school officials:** Parent conference, detention, in-school suspension, and/or suspension.

**27. Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting or erroneously reporting information regarding instances of alleged inappropriate behavior by a teacher, administrator, or other school employee toward a student:** Parent conference, detention, in-school suspension, and/or possible referral to a disciplinary tribunal. Any student (or parent or friend of the 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.

**28. Cheating on school assignments:** Zero grade for assignment, substitute assignment, detention, parent conference and/or in-school suspension.

**29. Bullying:** Discipline for any act of bullying, including cyber bullying, as defined under the bullying definition in this document, shall be within the discretion of the principal which may range from a reprimand to out-of-school suspension. However, upon a tribunal finding that a student in grades 6-12 has committed the offense of bullying for the third time in

a school year, the student shall at a minimum be assigned to the Alternative Learning Center.

**30. Criminal law violations:** Any on or off campus behavior of a student which could result in the student being criminally charged with a felony and which makes the student's continued presence at the school a potential danger to persons or property at the school or which disrupts the educational process may be subject to disciplinary action, including in-school suspension, short-term suspension and referral to a disciplinary tribunal.

**31. Willful and persistent violation of the Student Code of Conduct:** A student who chronically and/or habitually violates school rules or this Code of Conduct may be referred to the disciplinary tribunal, even if the offenses the student has committed do not include such a referral as a possible consequence.

**32. Failure to comply with compulsory school attendance as required under Code Section 20-2-690.1:** Any student who is in violation of this Code section shall be subject to a referral to the court having jurisdiction. Each day's absence from school in violation of this part after the school system notifies the parent, guardian, or other person who has control or charge of a child of ten (10) unexcused days of absence for a child shall constitute a separate offense.

**33. Violation of the Hall County Schools Student Code of Conduct for personal electronic devices, computer hardware, software, network and internet access, to include any unauthorized entry into a computer network secured site.** Revocation of privilege, parent/ guardian notification, detention, in-school suspension, and/or suspension, possible referral to the disciplinary tribunal and/ or law enforcement. Warning statement: The act of entering or attempting to enter a computer network secured site (hacking) is a very serious offense that may include permanent expulsion from the school system.

### **DEFINITION OF TERMS**

**ASSAULT:** Any threat or attempt to physically harm another person or any act which reasonably places another person in fear of physical harm. (Example: threatening or abusive language)

**BATTERY:** Actual and intentional touching or striking of another person against his or her will or intentionally causing bodily harm to an individual.

**BULLYING:** The bullying of a student by another student is prohibited. Additionally, any act of retaliation for reporting acts of bullying, discrimination or harassment are strictly prohibited. Any such act as listed above should be reported to the principal or his or her designee. The term "bullying" means an act that is:

- 1) Any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person, when accompanied by an apparent present ability to do so; or
- 2) Any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm; or

- 3) Any intentional written, verbal, or physical act which a reasonable person would perceive as being intended to threaten, harass, or intimidate, that;
  - a) Causes another person substantial physical harm within the meaning of Georgia Code Section 16-5-23.1 or visible bodily harm as such term is defined in Code Section 16-5-23.1;
  - b) Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education;
  - c) Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment ; or
  - d) Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

The term 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 of a local school system. The term also applies to acts of cyberbullying which occur through the use of electronic communication, whether or not 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 personnel's person or property or has a high likelihood of succeeding in that purpose. For purposes of this Code Section, electronic communication includes but is not limited to any transfer of signs, signals, writings, 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.

**CORPORAL PUNISHMENT:** Physical punishment of a student by a school official in the presence of another school official.

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

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

**DISORDERLY CONDUCT:** Any act that substantially disrupts the orderly conduct of a school function, the learning environment, or poses a threat to the health, safety, and/or welfare of students, staff or others.

**DRESS CODE:** The current dress code is maintained in the principal's office and appears in student handbooks.

**EXPULSION:** Removal of a student from school beyond the end of the semester.

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

**FIGHTING:** Mutual participation in a fight involving physical violence where there is no one main offender and no major injury – does not include verbal confrontations, tussles, or other minor confrontations.

**FIREWORKS:** The term "fireworks" means any combustible or explosive composition or any substance or combination of substances or article prepared for the purpose of producing a visible or audible (large or small) effect by combustion, explosion, deflagration, or detonation, as well as articles containing any explosive or flammable compound and tablets and other devices containing an explosive substance. (Also includes stink bombs/smoke bombs.)

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

**HARASSMENT:** Behavior based on a student's race, national origin, sex, religion or disability that is unwelcome, unwanted, and/or uninvited by the recipient. It can be verbal, non-verbal, and/or physical and includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature.

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

**PHYSICAL VIOLENCE:** Intentionally making physical contact of an insulting or provoking nature with the person of a school official; or intentionally making physical contact which causes physical harm to another unless such physical contacts or physical harms were in defense of himself or herself, as provided in GA Code Section 16-3-21.

**SATURDAY SCHOOL:** Principals may assign students in grades 7-12 to Saturday School for violations of the rules governing attire, tardiness, class cuts, leaving school without permission, cutting detention hall, tobacco and unexcused absences.

**SUSPENSION:** Removal of a student from the regular school program for a period not to exceed the end of the semester. During the period of suspension, the student is excluded from all school-sponsored activities including practices, as well as competitive events, and/or activities sponsored by the school or its employees.

**SYSTEM'S EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAM FOR STUDENT AND PARENT:** This early intervention program is for youth ages 12-18 and their parents/guardians. For a category one offense the Substance Use Prevention Education Resource (SUPER I) Program is a prerequisite for re-entry to the regular school program. For other indicated offenses, the SUPER I Program is voluntary, and the student and parent(s) or legal guardian(s) will be offered the opportunity to attend in lieu of up to half of the original suspension, not to exceed five (5) days. See your school counselor for more information about this program.

**THEFT:** The offense of taking or, if in lawful possession thereof, appropriating any property, of another with the intention of depriving that person of the property, regardless of the manner in which the property is taken or appropriated.

**WAIVER:** A waiver is a signed admission of guilt and acceptance of consequences in lieu of a formal disciplinary tribunal.

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

## Use of Technology

HCSD students have access to and utilize a wide variety of technological devices. All users of HCSD hardware, software, networks, services, and applications must maintain strict compliance with all applicable ethical and legal rules and regulations regarding access. All login information, usernames, and passwords are confidential. The student is responsible for keeping login information secure. At no time should anyone log in with another individual's username or password.

All Hall County Schools are Bring Your Own Technology (BYOT) environments. Students are encouraged to bring personal devices to use for instructional purposes. Parents who allow their children to bring privately owned devices are personally responsible for the equipment. HCSD does not provide maintenance or repair to personally owned devices and does not assume any responsibility for damage or theft of privately owned devices.

All HCSD facilities have campus wide wireless connectivity (Wi-Fi). The Wi-Fi network is filtered and monitored in accordance with all local, state, and federal policies and laws including the Children's Internet Protection Act.

In some instances students will be provided the opportunity to check out and take home a mobile device such as a laptop or Chromebook. Checkout of mobile devices is outlined in the Mobile Computing Device Checkout Agreement.



## **Consequences and Penalties for Non-Compliance with Compulsory School Attendance Law**

Assuring that children attend school regularly is an important part of a parent's responsibility. Parents are responsible for providing school officials with verification of reasons (written absence notes) for each absence. When your child must be absent, it is important that you state the reason(s) for your child's absence(s) in writing and share these with the school as soon as possible. Any absence not certified by a parent/guardian, physician or court/other agency (meeting the definition of an unexcused absence) is considered unexcused.

***Failure to comply with compulsory school attendance as required under Code Section 20-2-690.1.*** Any parent, guardian, or other person residing in this state who has control or charge of a child or children shall enroll and send such child or children to a public school, a private school, or a home study program that meets state requirements. Any parent, guardian, or other person who has control of a child or children who is in violation of this Code section shall be subject to a fine not less than \$25.00 and not greater than \$100.00, or imprisonment not to exceed 30 days, community service, or any combination of such penalties, at the discretion of the court having jurisdiction. Each day's absence from school in violation of this part after the child's school system notifies the parent, guardian, or other person who has control or charge of a child of ten (10) unexcused days of absence for a child shall constitute a separate offense.

## **TEACHER AUTHORITY ACT**

It is the policy of the Board of Education that the Superintendent shall fully support the authority of principals and teachers to remove a student from the classroom pursuant to Georgia law as cited in O.C.G.A. 20-2-738 and 20-2-751.5(d).

A teacher shall have the authority, consistent with board policy, to manage his or her classroom, discipline students, and refer a student to the principal or designee to maintain discipline in the classroom. Any teacher who has knowledge that a student has exhibited behavior which substantially interferes with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with his/her class or with the ability of each student's classmates to learn, shall file a report of such behavior with the principal or designee. The principal and teacher shall thereafter follow the procedures set forth in Georgia law, specifically O.C.G.A. 20-2-737 and 738.

- (A) Place the student into another appropriate classroom, in-school suspension, or an alternative education program.
- (B) Impose out-of-school suspension for not more than ten school days, including any time during which the student was subject to out-of-school suspension after his or her removal from class pursuant to subsection (b) of this Code section:

- (C) Make another placement or disciplinary decision or recommendation consistent with local board policy; or
- (D) Implement or recommend any appropriate combination of the above and return the student to the class from which he or she was removed upon the completion of any disciplinary or placement action taken pursuant to this paragraph.

## **STUDENT SUPPORT PROCESSES**

The Hall County Board of Education provides a variety of resources which are available at every school within the district to help address student behavioral problems. The school discipline process will include appropriate consideration of support processes to help students resolve such problems. These resources include, but are not limited to, Student Support Teams, school counselors, and chronic disciplinary problem student plans.

## **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

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

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

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

The law allows a local board of education to petition the juvenile court to require a parent to attend a school conference. If the court finds that the parent or guardian has willfully and unreasonably failed to attend a conference



requested by the principal pursuant to the laws cited above, the court may order the parent or guardian to attend such a conference, order the parent or guardian to participate in such programs or such treatment as the court deems appropriate to improve the student's behavior, or both. After notice and opportunity for 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.

Major discipline offenses including, but not limited to, drug and weapon offenses can lead to any state school being named as an Unsafe School according to the provisions of the State Board of Education Rule 160—4-16 Unsafe School Option.

### **Assessment Security: HCSD Testing Plan**

The Hall County School System Conducts the assessment program as required by federal and state law. It is in compliance with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and Georgia law relative to student assessment and data reporting. The Hall County School System interacts with state and federal agencies relative to the

assessment program and accountability mandates. The testing department handles assessment documents and reports including secure test materials, individual student score reports and school/district data reports in both paper and electronic formats. The Hall County School System delivers training/guidance related to the assessment program, assessment data and accountability mandates to all stakeholders.

Administrators have provided school personnel with the Code of Ethics for Educators. The Code of Ethics defines the professional behavior of educators in Georgia and serves as the guide to ethical conduct. Within this Code of Ethics is Standard 11 which specifically addresses ethics in testing. Teachers in each building are required to sign off that they have read and understand the Code of Ethics. Copies of the complete testing plan are available in the front office of each school.

NOTE: While every effort to ensure that all information is updated prior to printing, please visit our website at [www.hallco.org](http://www.hallco.org) for the most current version available.

# THE SCHOOL BUS GUIDE & School Bus Code of Conduct



## HALL COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

Mike Garner, Transportation Supervisor

### **Information for Parents and Students about School Transportation**

A public school transportation program has but one purpose - to safely transport the students. Therefore, it is extremely important that each student be aware of his/her role and responsibility in seeing that the entire operation works smoothly and efficiently.

Several of the important areas in which students are asked to cooperate are as follows:

#### **SAFE RIDING - 10 SAFETY RULES**

1. Arrive at your bus stop 5 minutes before your scheduled pick-up time.
  2. Dress for the weather - umbrella and raincoat for rain; coat and gloves when cold.
  3. Never stand or play in the road. Wait for the bus a safe distance from the road.
  4. Always use the handrail when boarding or leaving the bus. Do not wear clothing or carry bags that have strings or straps that could get caught in the handrail.
  5. Remain seated when the bus is moving. Your seat is designed to protect you in the event of an accident.
  6. Never try to reach anything under or beside the bus. If you drop something while crossing in front of the bus, do not return to pick it up. The bus driver cannot see you. After crossing safely, ask the driver for help.
  7. Observe silence when approaching and while stopped for railroad crossings so the driver can hear if a train is coming.
  8. Look carefully before crossing the road. Do not assume that a car will stop for you - wait to be sure it is stopped before crossing. Watch for your driver's signal before crossing the road.
  9. Always cross in front of the bus - never behind it!
  10. Talk quietly. Do not "horseplay". Your driver must give full attention to driving to ensure your safety.
- A. If you must cross a street or road to get to the bus stop on the opposite side, wait until the bus arrives and cross in front of the bus only after the stop sign on the bus is activated and only when signaled by the bus driver.
  - B. Be at the bus stop on time, but not too early. The bus driver is responsible for the maintenance of his schedule and cannot wait for tardy pupils. Each student should have books in hand and be ready to board the bus by the time the driver opens the door.
  - C. Any student who leaves the school grounds while waiting for a bus to arrive will not be allowed to ride a bus home after returning to the school grounds. Individuals who leave the school grounds will be reported to the principal for disciplinary action.

#### **ENTERING AND LEAVING THE BUS**

- A. Wait until the bus has come to a complete stop before attempting to board or leave the bus.
- B. Load starting at the rear of the bus, sitting three to a seat, unless otherwise directed by the driver.
- C. Enter and leave the bus in an orderly and quiet manner.
- D. Enter and leave the bus only at the front door, except in case of an emergency.
- E. After leaving the bus, if you must cross the highway, walk at least ten feet in front of the bus, then:
  1. Make certain the bus is stationary, the door is still open and the stop signal is extended.
  2. Upon signal from the driver, proceed across the roadway in the following manner: Walk (don't run) in front of the bus within sight and hearing of the driver, look both ways and stay out of the line of

#### **BUS STOP CONDUCT**

Students who misbehave at the bus stop may be subject to disciplinary action.

traffic until the path across the roadway is free of any danger.

3. The danger signal is a blast of the horn. Stop immediately and look at the bus driver.
- F. A student will not be put off a bus for misconduct at any place other than his home or school.

### **CONDUCT ON THE BUS**

- A. Obey the bus driver.
- B. Do not disturb the bus driver while he/she is driving.
- C. Boys and girls will be seated separately.
- D. Stay in your seat and do not change seats unless so directed by the driver - and then only if the bus is stopped.
- E. Sit down while the bus is in motion.
- F. Keep voices low. Avoid shouting or whistling.
- G. No bullying, "rough housing", pushing, fighting, throwing things, or profane or abusive language.
- H. Do not open or close windows of the bus without the driver's permission.
- I. Keep all body parts inside the bus.
- J. Help keep the bus clean, sanitary, and orderly. Never tamper with the bus or any of its equipment. Willful damage or destruction of any part of the bus is prohibited and any such damage must be paid for by the student or parent.
- K. A student shall not operate the door nor stand in the driver's compartment.

### **PHYSICAL VIOLENCE GUIDELINES**

Students are being prohibited from acts of physical violence, bullying, physical assault or battery, verbal assault, and disrespectful conduct toward the driver or other persons on the school bus. Georgia law defines physical violence as (1) intentionally making physical contact with another that is of an insulting or provoking nature, (2) intentionally making physical contact which causes physical harm to another. Georgia law also mandates that students found by a tribunal to have committed an act of physical violence against a teacher, bus driver, school official, or school employee involving intentional physical contact of an insulting or provoking nature shall be disciplined by expulsion, long-term suspension, or short-term suspension. If intentional physical violence against one of the above employees causes physical harm (unless in self-defense), the student shall be expelled from the public school system for the remainder of the student's eligibility to attend public school and referred to juvenile court. Students in kindergarten through grade eight who commit the above acts may, on the recommendation of the tribunal and at the discretion of the school system, be permitted to re-enroll in the regular public school program for grades nine through twelve.

### **THE FOLLOWING ARE RESTRICTED ON THE BUS:**

- A. Eating is not permitted on the bus during the school day.
- B. No glass container of any kind will be transported.***
- C. Beverages will not be permitted regardless of the type of container used. Exceptions may be made during exceptionally hot weather.
  - D. The use of tobacco is forbidden.
  - E. Gum is also forbidden.
  - F. Students will be permitted to carry only books and other items related to school work which can be held in the student's lap. Large musical instruments, sports equipment, snakes, and live animals will not be transported. Band instruments may be transported if they can be held in the student's lap and if they do not take up seat space.
  - G. Electronic devices, including but not limited to cell phones, pagers, audible radios, tape or compact disc players without headphones, or any other electronic device that might interfere with the school bus communications equipment or the school bus driver's safe operation of the bus are prohibited.
  - H. Students are prohibited from using mirrors, lasers, cameras, or any other lights or reflective devices in a manner that might interfere with the school bus driver's safe operation of the school bus.

School bus transportation is a privilege afforded pupils by the Board of Education; it is not a right. The purpose of the policies herein is to help create a safe and wholesome atmosphere for the students who ride the bus.

### **SCHOOL BUS ELIGIBILITY POLICY (EDDB)**

(April, 2002)

Students are eligible for transportation by school bus provided they live within the attendance area of the school they attend. Bus routes are established under the direction of the Superintendent and in accord with recommendations of the Division of Pupil Transportation, Georgia Department of Education.

Additions to existing routes are based upon the following guidelines:

- (1) The student must live at least 3/10 miles from the present bus route and,
- (2) The student must live on a state or county maintained road with adequate space for the bus to turn around and,
- (3) The road must be wide enough for the bus and another vehicle to pass.

Students are assigned to a particular bus route and can only change buses with the approval of the Principal and the Transportation Department. Students must get on and get off from their assigned bus at selected bus stops unless written permission is granted to let off at a stop other than the designated stop. This request from the parent must be made

in writing to the principal. Parents will assume the responsibility of the child when such a request is granted.

## **BOARD BUS DISCIPLINE POLICY (JCDAD)**

(February, 2003)

The transportation of students is an important function in our school system. Every precaution must be taken to see that students are transported safely. The same behavior is expected on the school bus as is expected in the classroom. The Code of Conduct and Discipline Procedures that apply for the school, also apply while students are being transported by any vehicle provided for the transportation of students. In addition, it is important that students abide by the bus discipline policies as outlined herein.

Fighting on the bus and abusive language or profanity toward the bus driver will result in a minimum of five days suspension from the bus. A student whose behavior warrants that the bus return to the school will be suspended from riding the bus for a minimum of twenty (20) school days.

Bus Drivers will report specific disciplinary problems to the principal or assistant principal in writing on the Bus Conduct Report Form. If the driver is uncertain about who was unruly or who caused the disturbance, the driver will report the incident to the principal for investigation. After the principal administers the proper disciplinary action, a copy of the Bus Conduct Report Form will be forwarded to the parent, the bus driver, and the Transportation Supervisor that day or the following school day. This form will indicate the action taken by the principal. The principal will maintain a file of the Bus Conduct Report Form.

As required by Georgia law, a student found to have engaged in physical acts of violence\* shall be subject to the penalties determined by a tribunal. If a student is found to have engaged in bullying or in physical assault or battery of another person on the school bus, a meeting involving the parent/guardian and appropriate school district officials shall be held to develop a school bus behavior contract. This contract shall provide for progressive age-appropriate discipline, penalties, and restrictions for student misconduct on the bus. Contract provisions may include but shall not be limited to assigned seating, ongoing parental involvement, and suspension from riding the bus.

It shall be the responsibility of all principals to abide by the following procedure for enforcing the bus conduct policy:

- **FIRST OFFENSE**: The principal shall take proper disciplinary action, which may include suspension from riding the bus, based on the nature or severity of the offense.
- **SECOND OFFENSE**: The principal shall suspend the student from riding the bus for at least five (5) school days.
- **THIRD OFFENSE**: The principal shall suspend the student from riding the bus for at least ten (10) school days.
- **FOURTH OFFENSE**: The principal shall suspend the student from riding the bus for at least twenty (20) school days.
- **FIFTH OFFENSE**: The principal shall suspend the student from riding the bus for at least sixty (60) school days.
- **SIXTH OFFENSE**: The principal shall suspend the student from riding the bus for at least one hundred eighty (180) school days.

\* **See Physical Violence Guidelines above.**

**STUDENTS WHO ARE SUSPENDED FROM THE BUS  
ARE SUSPENDED FROM ALL BUSES.**

**UNSERVED SUSPENSION WILL CARRY OVER TO THE  
NEXT SCHOOL YEAR.**

### **SEVERE WEATHER**

Should severe weather necessitate closing or early dismissal of school, this information will be broadcast over WDUN Radio (550 AM) and other area radio stations. School closing announcements will be released to the media by approximately 6:00 a.m.

School buses will not leave school during a tornado or severe weather WARNING. Buses will run regular routes when the warning is canceled.

### **BUS LOADING ZONES**

Parents are asked to please avoid bus loading zones at the schools during the times when buses are loading or unloading students. If you need to pickup students in the afternoons, please wait until the buses have left the campus.

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### **COMPLAINTS OF DISCRIMINATION / HARRASSMENT**

The Hall County School System does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, or national origin, sex or disability in any student program. It is the policy of the Board of Education to comply fully with the requirements of Title VI, Title IX, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act and all accompanying regulations. Any student, parent or other person who believes he or she or any student has been discriminated against or harassed based on any of the factors listed above should promptly report the same to the principal of the school or the appropriate coordinator listed below, who will implement the board's discriminatory complaints or harassment procedures. Students may also report harassment or discrimination or retaliation for making a report to their school counselor.

**The Title VI Coordinator is Dr. Karla Swafford, the Special Education Director, Hall County School System, 711 Green Street, Gainesville, GA 30501, (770) 534-1080.**

**The Title IX Coordinator is Mr. Gordon Higgins, Hall County School System, 711 Green Street, Gainesville, GA 30501, (770) 534-1080.**

**The Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator is Dr. Karla Swafford, the Special Education Director, Hall County School System, 711 Green Street, Gainesville, GA 30501, (770) 534-1080.**

**The System 504 Coordinator may be contacted at our central office at 711 Green Street, Gainesville, GA 30501, (770) 534-1080.**

**The McKinney-Vento Act system liaison for Homeless or Unaccompanied Minors is Ms. Dania Peguero, School Social Worker, Hall County School System, Student Services, 4851 Union Church Road, Flowery Branch, GA 30501, (770) 967-5846.**

Will Schofield, Superintendent  
711 Green Street  
Gainesville, Georgia 30501  
Phone: 770-534-1080 FAX: 770-535-7404  
Website: <http://www.hallco.org>

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