



2024-2025 Elementary School Handbook

Dr. Mark Scott
Superintendent

Houston County School District
1100 Main Street
Perry, Georgia 31069
(478) 988-6200
www.hcbe.net

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HOUSTON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT STUDENT CALENDAR 2024-2025

July 31	Wednesday	First Day of School
September 2	Monday	HOLIDAY - Labor Day
September 3	Tuesday	Distance Learning Day/Site Collaboration
October 7-11	Monday-Friday	HOLIDAY - Fall Break
October 14	Monday	Student Holiday/Site Collaboration
November 11	Monday	HOLIDAY – Veterans Day
November 25-29	Monday-Friday	HOLIDAY – Thanksgiving Holiday
December 20	Friday	Last day before Holidays – ½ day for students
December 23 - January 2		HOLIDAY – Christmas & New Year Holiday
January 3	Friday	Student Holiday/Site Collaboration
January 6	Monday	First Day of Second Semester
January 20	Monday	HOLIDAY – Martin Luther King, Jr
February 17	Monday	HOLIDAY – Presidents' Day
February 18	Tuesday	Distance Learning Day/Site Collaboration
March 28	Friday	Student Holiday/Site Collaboration
March 31 – April 4	Monday-Friday	SPRING BREAK
May 21	Wednesday	Last Day of School – ½ day for students

ELEMENTARY REPORT CARD DATES 2024-2025

Nine Weeks Period	End Date	Date Report Issued
Progress Report, Day 23	August 30	September 4
Report Card (9 weeks), Day 46	October 3	October 16
Progress Report, Day 65	November 7	November 13
Report Card (9 weeks), Day 90	December 20	January 8
Progress Report, Day 111	February 4	February 12
Report Card (9 weeks), Day 137	March 13	March 19
Progress Report, Day 157	April 18	April 23
Report Card (9 weeks), Day 180	May 21	May 21

1. All medication must be presented to the school office by a parent in a prescription labeled bottle, which will include the student's name, date, instructions for administering, name of the drug, and name of the issuing physician.
2. A Medication Administration form HRS 29, is required to be filled out by the physician and parent in cases of long-term medication (more than two weeks/10 doses).

Non-prescription medicine or over the counter medicine, such as Tylenol, should be turned into the main office staff to be administrated. Over the counter medicines will be given only for a short-term duration (i.e. two consecutive weeks or for a total of 10 times a year) without a physician's order. Medication must be in the original unopened new container, age appropriate, and accompanied by written parental request with directions for administering. A Short-Term Medication form HRS 29C may be requested by the Health Technician.

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

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

Students requiring a rescue inhaler, injectable epinephrine, or Glucagon are allowed to have them at all times. A student Self-Assessment Form may be required prior to your student carrying the emergency medication on their person during the school day. It is critical that you discuss your child's medical condition(s) with the principal, teacher, and school nurse. Students must not share these medications with other students. Disciplinary consequences will apply for students misusing these medications. **Parents must pick up all medication at the end of the school year.**

Head Lice

Head lice can infect anyone, not just children. Head lice are spread through head-to-head contact and sharing of brushes, combs, headbands, hats, jackets, etc. It is not our practice to check the entire class for head lice or send letters home to an entire class.

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

If a student is found to have active head lice, the parent will be called to pick him/her up. The school Health Technician will provide educational material to assist the parent in eliminating lice from the student and environment. The student will not be allowed back into school with live lice. The school Health Technician will inspect the student's scalp for active lice upon initial re-entry after first treatment and every 7 days up to 21 days or until clear of lice and nits.

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

Hospital-Homebound Services

Hospital/Homebound refers to those students who are medically prevented from normal school attendance based upon certification of need by the licensed physician or mental health provider who is treating the student for the diagnosis. For more detailed information, please see your child's principal and counselor.

Health Program Plan (GADOE Board Rule 160-4-2-.12)

Pre-K – Grade 5 teachers implement the *Second Step* social-emotional learning curriculum to help children better understand, manage, and express emotions and empathy, develop positive relationships, and make responsible decisions. Students are taught techniques that help them gain confidence, set and achieve positive goals, collaborate well, and navigate the world more effectively. These lessons are provided to all students and do not require specific parent permission since they are skills-based and do not include sensitive topics.

The Houston County School District has adopted the Committee for *Children's Second Step Child Protection Unit* to fulfill compliance with GADOE Board Rules and GA Code on implementation of annual age-appropriate sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention education. It includes training, guidance, and resources for administrators, teachers, counselors, and families. Student lessons are age-appropriate and designed for Early Learning (Pre-K) through Grade 5 classrooms and are delivered by school counselors.

The *Child Protection Unit* features research-based prevention and intervention components, including training and resources for school staff, classroom lessons and activities, and materials for families. Its goal is to develop staff, adult

ASP, please refer to the Houston County After-School Program parent handout for more specific details regarding procedures.

Please note that some schools do not have an After-School Program due to a lack of participation to support the associated costs.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

The instructional day is from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Upon arrival at school, all students should immediately report to their assigned places and remain there unless permission is received from a school staff member to leave the room. If your child will be eating breakfast at school, ensure that he or she is dropped off early enough to eat breakfast before the 8:30 a.m. start time. Parents picking up a child should wait in the designated areas for their child to be dismissed.

Students will not be admitted to school prior to 7:45 a.m. It is essential that students be picked up from school by 3:50 p.m. each afternoon. A parent who continues to drop students off before 7:45 a.m. or fails to pick them up by 3:50 p.m. will be reported to the appropriate authorities such as the local police and DFACS.

ATTENDANCE

The Houston County School District emphasizes values of regular attendance in enabling pupils to profit from the school program.

Compulsory Attendance

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

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

Level I

- Three (3) unexcused absences.
- School staff will contact parents and document the contact. Contacts may consist of e-mail, phone call, letter, note in the agenda, or other forms of communication.

Level II

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

Level III

- Eight (8) unexcused absences.
- School staff notifies Social Services Department; Social Services provides data to court for judicial proceedings to begin.

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

Excused and Unexcused Absences

Absence from school is classified as either excused or unexcused. Reasons established by the Georgia Board of Education as excused absences are set forth in this policy. Students may be temporarily excused from school for the following reasons:

Many people do not realize that missed instructional minutes add up quickly. For example, if your child arrives a mere 10 minutes late each day, they miss 50 minutes of instructional time every week. During a 36-week school year, they could miss nearly 30 HOURS OF INSTRUCTION! If they're 20 minutes late, it would be 60 hours, and so on. These instructional minutes are especially important to the achievement of our students and the success of our schools. An excessive number of lost instructional minutes could prevent your child from being promoted to the next grade level. For the benefit of ALL students, we may implement the following procedures with relation to unexcused tardies and unexcused early dismissals:

- 5 Unexcused Tardies/Early Dismissals – Parent Contact
- 10 Unexcused Tardies/Early Dismissals – Excessive Tardy/Early Dismissal Notification Letter
- 15 Unexcused Tardies/Early Dismissals – Attendance Contract Meeting Scheduled with parents and administration
- 20 Unexcused Tardies/Early Dismissals – Referral to the HCSD Social Service Department and assignment to Mandatory Make up Time
- 25 Unexcused Tardies/Early Dismissals – Parent Meeting scheduled with the Attendance Panel at the Central Office in Perry, GA

Release of Students

The school may not release a student to any person other than the person who enrolled the student in school. If an individual other than the person who enrolled the student in school is authorized to take the student from school on a regular basis (e.g., a grandparent or other relative, childcare provider, etc.), the person who enrolled the student in school must notify the school of such in writing and this notification should be kept on file at the school. If someone other than the person who enrolled the student in school (or an individual authorized in writing by this person) attempts to take custody of the child or to remove the child from the school, the school will immediately contact the person who enrolled the student in school. If a person who attempts to take custody of the child without consent of the person who enrolled the student in school refuses to leave the campus or causes a problem, the school will contact the appropriate law enforcement agency. Exceptions to these student release procedures may occur in cases involving state or local law enforcement and child protection agencies.

Any change in a child's transportation **must** be communicated using the procedures established by the school. Parents should not send the teacher an email. This is to ensure the message gets to the child's teacher before dismissal.

School Day

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

ATTENDANCE ZONE REGULATIONS

The Houston County School District has approved student attendance zones. If the natural parent lives in Houston County, the student must attend the school in which the residence of the natural parent is located regardless of whether the student lives with the parent. If the parents are divorced/separated, the child shall be required to attend the school in the attendance zone in which the **primary custodial parent resides. A complete list of enrollment restrictions and enrollment determinations is included in policies JBC and JBCCA.**

If the school personnel determine that a parent or guardian has changed addresses without informing the school or used false information to enroll a child in a school other than the school zone in which the parent/guardian resides, the child shall be withdrawn no later than the last grading period. School administrators may request proof of residence at any time that it may be necessary to verify that a parent resides in the school zone. If it is determined that a student must enroll in another Houston County school, the parent will be directed to report to Central Registration to complete a change of address packet to transfer to the new school. Students must reside within the county in order to be enrolled in a Houston County school. Students are not allowed to attend Houston County schools if they reside in another county. If school personnel determine that a parent or guardian has used false information or violated an enrollment restriction to enroll a child in a school other than the school in the zone in which the parent or guardian resides, the child shall be withdrawn to attend the school in the attendance zone or other county in which the parent resides. If the child(ren) are residing in another county, the Superintendent or designee may bill the parents the prorated amount of out of county tuition approved by the Board for system employees.

All students, grades K-12, shall be instructed annually in emergency evacuation and safe riding practices on school buses. The Director of Transportation shall work with school principals and bus drivers to ensure that this is accomplished.

Minor Offenses

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

Major Offenses

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

1. Disrespect of driver/monitor/administrator
2. Fighting
3. Severe vandalism - restitution required
4. Possession of drugs, alcohol, weapons, etc.
5. Inappropriate physical contact (major)
6. Throwing objects off the bus

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

Consequences for Infractions of Bus Conduct

Transportation by bus to and from school each day that is provided by the Houston County School District is a privilege. Students who choose to behave in an unruly manner and refuse to follow the rules sacrifice the safety of other students and the driver. Discipline for student misbehavior while riding the bus is progressive and ranges from parent/driver conferences to having the privilege of transportation provided by the school district taken away completely. Ultimately, all discipline procedures are at the discretion of the principal and depend on the severity of the offense.

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

First Bus Report: A conference may be held with the school official, parent, and driver.
A contract will be executed between student, parents, and school.

Second Bus Report: One (1) day off bus.

Third Bus Report: Three (3) days off bus.

Fourth Bus Report: Five (5) days off bus.

Fifth Bus Report: Seven (7) days off bus.

Sixth Bus Report: Ten (10) days off bus.

Seventh Bus Report: Off bus the remainder of the year.

*This is a suggested progressive discipline system that comes with principal discretion.

A student may be suspended from the bus for 1-10 days at any time if the principal determines the incident warrants suspension.

Elementary school counselors are professional educators with a mental health perspective who understand and respond to the challenges presented by today's diverse student population. Elementary school counselors do not work in isolation; rather they are integral to the total educational program. They provide proactive leadership that engages all stakeholders in the delivery of programs and services to help students achieve school success. Professional school counselors align with the school's mission to support the academic achievement of all students as they prepare for the ever-changing world of the 21st century. This mission is accomplished through the design, development, implementation and evaluation of a comprehensive, developmental and systematic school counseling program. American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Standards in the academic, career, and personal/social domains are the foundation for this work. The ASCA National Model: A Framework for School Counseling Programs (ASCA, 2002), with its data-driven and results-based focus, serves as a guide for today's school counselor who is uniquely trained to implement this program.

Elementary school years set the tone for developing the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary for children to become healthy, competent and confident learners. Through a comprehensive developmental school counseling program, school counselors work as a team with the school staff, parents and the community to create a caring climate and atmosphere. By providing education, prevention, early identification and intervention, school counselors can help all children achieve academic success. The professional elementary school counselor holds a master's degree and required state certification in school counseling. Maintaining certification includes on-going professional development to stay current with education reform and challenges facing today's students. Professional association membership enhances the school counselor's knowledge and effectiveness.

SOURCE: American School Counselor Association

DAMAGE TO PROPERTY

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

DISCIPLINE

The complete Houston County School District student Code of Conduct is printed in the back of this handbook. Please take time to read the Code of Conduct and discuss it with your child.

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

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

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

Possession/Use of Drugs/Alcohol/Weapons

Any elementary student who brings a weapon to school or who is in possession of a weapon at school, or any other school function will be disciplined. The extent of the disciplinary action is dependent on the student's grade level, actions, intent to harm, threats made, and prior discipline history. Law enforcement will be notified, and the parent or guardian will be contacted. Students found in possession of a weapon may be immediately suspended and referred to an alternative program.

Elementary students who commit offenses involving drugs or alcohol may also be immediately suspended and referred to an alternative program.

Bullying

Bullying, as the term is defined in Georgia law, of a student by another student is strictly prohibited. Acts of bullying shall be punished by a range of consequences through the progressive discipline process. Such consequences shall include, at a minimum, counseling and disciplinary action as appropriate under the circumstances. Upon a finding by the school's administrators that a student in grades 3-5 has committed the offense of bullying for the third time in a school year, the student may be assigned to an alternative school program.

Procedures

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

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

General Rules

- Outer clothing which resembles loungewear, pajamas, or underwear is prohibited
- Fads and styles in dress, which differ extremely from conventionally accepted standards are prohibited.
- Any clothing that is viewed as distracting because of extremes in style, fit, color, pattern, fabric, etc., shall not be permitted. Undergarments may not be exposed at any time.

Specific Rules

- Blouses/shirts should be constructed so that the top of the shoulder is covered and is fitted under the arms (no halter tops, tank tops, strapless tops, spaghetti straps, or bare-shouldered tops of any type will be allowed). Blouses/shirts which expose any portion of the waist, hips, or midriff are not allowed. Blouses/shirts which are not appropriate for school include those which are low-cut, see-through, backless, or tube tops. Students in Primary-3rd grade may wear tank tops.
- Holes in clothing that are excessive in size or amount, are a distraction to the learning environment, or allow skin to show mid-thigh or higher are prohibited.
- In accordance with board policy governing student conduct with regard to bullying, weapons, gangs, and drugs, clothing shall be free of inflammatory, suggestive, racial, or other inappropriate writing, advertisement, or artwork. This includes offensive words and designs, violence (blood, death, weapons), sex, playboy symbols, hate groups, tobacco products, drugs, and alcohol.
- No clothing or other article, which may indicate membership in a gang may be worn or displayed at school or any school function.
- Pants, skirts, shorts, and dresses must be mid-thigh length or longer. Sagging pants are not allowed and pants must be worn at the waist. Shorts appropriate for young children are permitted.
- Excessively long shirts must be tucked in.
- When leggings are worn, a dress, shirt, or skirt must be worn over the leggings. The dress, shirt, or skirt must be mid-thigh length or longer.

Accessories

- Shoes/sandals must be worn at all times. Cleated shoes are prohibited inside the building. House/bedroom slippers are not acceptable.
- Students may not wear ornaments, jewelry, and piercings, which are extreme and may interfere with the learning process or cause a disruption of the educational environment.
- Students may not wear hats, caps, bandanas, sunglasses, combs, picks, etc. inside the building.

Hair & Grooming

- Hair must be well groomed. Extreme hairstyles, color, and fads that would interfere with the learning process or cause a disruption of the educational environment are prohibited.
- Facial hair should be neat, clean, closely trimmed, and not be a distraction to the learning environment.

Coats

- Due to variances in physical design of schools, principal's discretion will apply to wearing of outer garments, coats, and jackets. Students may wear coats/winter garments to school, but may be asked to store them in their lockers during the school day. Students are encouraged to bring lightweight jackets to wear in the building as changes in weather dictate.

Transfer Students K ~ 5

Students transferring into the Houston County Schools who have become residents of Houston County must furnish evidence of their attendance and a transcript of their school records from the school from which they are transferring. Grade or class placement shall be the responsibility of the principal and shall be based on general achievement demonstrated by previous school transcripts. In general, students transferring into the school district will be placed in the same grade level as in the school from which they transferred. Testing will be required to determine placement of students from home schools and from schools not accredited by a regional accrediting agency or the *Georgia Accrediting Commission*. Contact the principal for additional placement testing information.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

It is the policy of the Houston County School District that the school district shall comply with requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Student Data Privacy, Accessibility, and Transparency Act of Georgia. For the purposes of this policy, a "parent" is defined as a natural parent, a guardian, or an individual acting as a parent in the absence of a parent or guardian. An "eligible student" is defined as a student who has reached 18 years of age or is attending an institution of postsecondary education.

The Superintendent shall implement procedures whereby every principal is directed to develop a means to notify on an annual basis, parents and eligible students, including parents or eligible students who are disabled or who have a primary or home language other than English of their rights under the FERPA and the Act, either through a student handbook distributed to each student in the school or by any means that are reasonably likely to inform them of their rights. Generally, a parent or eligible student will be permitted to obtain a copy of the student's education records upon reasonable notice and payment of reasonable copying costs.

Confidentiality of student records shall be preserved while access is provided to parents, eligible students and school officials with legitimate educational interests, as described in the annual parent notice.

With the exception of directory information as defined below, personally identifiable information will not be released by the school district from an educational record without prior written consent of the parent or eligible student, except to the extent authorized by the FERPA and its implementing regulations at 34 C.F.R. 99.31.

The Houston County School District designates certain information from student education records as "Directory Information." The primary purpose of "Directory Information" is to allow Houston County School District to include student information in certain school publications or school-related activities (yearbooks, graduation programs, senior portraits, etc.) You have the right to limit or refuse the disclosure of "Directory Information". If you do not want the Houston County School District to disclose any or all of the below information as "Directory Information", you must notify the principal of the school the student attends in writing within 10 days of receipt of this notice/handbook to opt out of having your child's information included as "Directory Information". You may also refuse the disclosure of "Directory Information" using the electronic handbook available through Infinite Campus.

Directory Information is as follows:

1. Student's name
2. Address
3. Phone number
4. Email address
5. Grade
6. Student's month and day of birth
7. School at which a student is enrolled
8. Dates of attendance at schools within the Houston County School District
9. Student's participation in official school activities and sports
10. Awards or honors received during the time the student is enrolled in the Houston County School District
11. Photographs used to publicize awards, honors, extracurricular activities, sports or school promotions
12. Weight and height of athletic team members used in information for the public

Student records will be forwarded without further notice to parents/guardians or eligible students to any school within or outside the Houston County School District upon request of the school where a student is enrolling.

Local units of administration shall not withhold any student record because of nonpayment of fees. However, schools may withhold report cards, diplomas, or certificates of progress until fees are paid.

- Effective communication
- Social and emotional understanding of “self” relative to community, culture, and physical environment
- **Environment-** physical setting and work conditions modified to:
 - Change the actual work space for students
 - Allow flexible time
 - Provide opportunities for independent study and in-depth research
 - Provide opportunities for mentorship
- **Assessment**– formative and summative on and off-grade-level monitoring to document student mastery of curriculum standards and learning levels such as:
 - Pre/post assessments
 - Self-assessment through use of rubrics
 - Creation of goal-based checklist
 - Conferencing, commentary, and qualitative feedback (Cobb, 2012)
- **Readiness-** a student’s entry point relative to a particular understanding or skill
- **Learning Profile-** how an individual student learns

Referral

Students currently enrolled in the Houston County School District may be referred for testing at any time during the school year. All referrals will be reviewed by the schools’ eligibility team for consideration for formal evaluation. Parent permission will be obtained before any formal evaluation begins, and parents will be notified in writing regarding their child’s eligibility for the gifted program. Teachers and parents may make referrals by completing a basic Traits, Aptitudes, and Behaviors (TABS) form for review by the school eligibility team.

Eligibility

1. To be eligible for gifted education services, a student must either:
 - a. score at the 99th percentile (for grades K-2) or the 96th percentile (for grades 3-12) on the composite or full scale score of a norm-referenced test of mental ability and meet one of the achievement criteria approved by the state of Georgia in Achievement, or
 - b. qualify through a multiple-criteria assessment process by meeting the criteria in any three of the following four areas: mental ability, achievement, creativity, and motivation.
2. To be eligible for gifted education services, a student must meet the criterion score on a norm-related test. Information is collected in each of the four areas: mental ability, achievement, creativity, and motivation.
3. Any test score used to establish eligibility must be current within two-calendar years.
4. Any data used in one area to establish a student’s eligibility may not be used in any other data category.

Multiple-Criteria Assessment Process

A student must meet the criteria in any three of the following four areas: mental ability, achievement, creativity, and motivation.

Mental Ability- Students score at or above the 96th percentile on a composite or full-scale score or appropriate component score on an approved nationally age-normed mental ability test.

Achievement- Students score at or above the 90th percentile on the total battery, total math or total reading section(s) of a norm-referenced achievement test.

Creativity- Students score at or above the 90th percentile on the total battery score of a norm-referenced test of creative thinking.

Motivation- Students shall receive a score at or above the 90th percentile on a standardized motivational characteristics rating scale.

Pre-Kindergarten

Houston County School District's Pre-K classrooms use a formative assessment called Work Sampling System Online to measure children's progress across 69 indicators in seven domains of learning. Teachers assess children throughout the year and use the data to individualize instruction and to share Narrative Summary Reports with parents during conferences in December and May.

Kindergarten, First, and Second Grades

The kindergarten Record of Progress is based on the Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developmental Skills (GKIDS) and the state mandated curriculum. The first and second grade Record of Progress is based on student progress toward meeting select state standards. Reports are sent out at nine-week intervals, and parents are asked to come to a conference after the first report card grading period. Conferences may be scheduled with the child's teacher at any time throughout the year.

For grades K-2, the following ratings are used to show the student's level of progress toward meeting the grade level standards and expectations.

ELA and Math Academic Performance Levels

NA – Not Assessed At This Time

1 – Grade Level Standard Not Yet Demonstrated

2 – Progressing Toward Grade Level Standard

3 – Consistently Meets Grade Level Standard

Learning and Social Skills/Art, Music, and P.E./Science and Social Studies

1 – Area of Concern

2 – Developing

3 – Consistently Demonstrated

Third, Fourth, and Fifth Grades

Grades are reflective of student progress toward meeting the requirements of the Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE) in third, fourth, and fifth grades. Reports are sent out at nine-week intervals. Conferences may be scheduled with the child's teacher at any time throughout the year. Below is a list of subjects that should be graded on the report card:

- Reading
- Language Arts
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies
- Art
- Music
- Physical Education
- Factors Affecting Achievement

Grading System for Third, Fourth, and Fifth Grades

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

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

Additional Reporting Information for Grades K-5

Writing progress is reported on specific types of writing taught during the assessment period. This assessment is rated based on writing the student can produce independently. These ratings are determined by grade-level rubrics that describe specific writing expectations.

accidents occurring at school. The Houston County School District's insurance does not cover your child if they have an accident at school.

INTERNET AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES

The Houston County School District recognizes the importance of making advanced technology and increased access to learning opportunities available to students and staff. The Houston County School District believes that a "technology rich" classroom significantly enhances both the teaching and learning process. As resources permit, informational technology services shall be made available in schools.

Houston County School District personnel shall take all available precautions to restrict access to controversial materials, while recognizing that it is impossible to control all material which might inadvertently be discovered by users on a global network.

Internet

Only the HCBE Network provided by the district should be used to access the internet while on campus. Personal internet connective devices such as but not limited to cell phones / cell network adapters should not be used to access outside internet sources at any time. Personal tablets and/or laptops are not permitted on campus because all students will be assigned district issued electronic devices.

Use of Electronic Devices

Students are permitted to possess cell phones and other electronic devices while on school property and during school functions. These devices may be utilized as part of the instructional process as directed staff members. Recreational use of these devices will be in accordance with procedures established by the building principal. Students who violate this policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Houston County School District will not be responsible for lost or stolen personal communication or personal electronic devices.

Students may not use tape recorders, video cameras, cell phones, or other electronic devices to record classroom instruction/activities. Exceptions to this rule may be granted, for valid reason(s), at the discretion of the teacher with written approval by the building principal. Care must be taken to protect the privacy rights of students.

Purpose

The purpose of informational technology is to facilitate communications in support of research and education by providing access to multiple resources. Use by any student or staff member must be in support of and consistent with the educational objectives of the Houston County School District. The State of Georgia has passed laws which govern the use of computers and related technology. The Georgia Computer Systems Protection Act specifically forbids computer misuse and abuse. The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) enacted by Congress in 2000 also provides guidance and regulations concerning students' computer use and access to content over the Internet.

Authorized User

An authorized user for the purpose of this policy will be defined as any employee, student, or guest of the Houston County School District who has been issued and assigned a log-in account. By using the computing resources of the Houston County School District, the user agrees to abide by the guidelines and rules governing this.

Terms and Conditions

An individual's use of the computing resources of the Houston County School District is not an absolute personal right; rather, it is a privilege, conditional on the individual's compliance with state and federal laws, the Houston County School District's policies and regulations, school regulations, and satisfactory behavior involving technology. Inappropriate use, including any violation of these conditions and policies, may result in cancellation of the privilege. The Houston County School District has the authority to determine appropriate use and may discipline, deny, revoke, or suspend any user's access at any time based upon the determination of inappropriate use.

Social networking shall only be permitted to be accessed from within the Houston County Educational Network with the supervision/monitoring by a teacher or school administrator.

Authorized users may access the network via their personal user ID and not that of someone else. Users should not share their personal user IDs with any other person.

School Responsibilities

Schools shall ensure that all faculty, staff and students are aware of the rights and responsibilities of acceptable informational technology use contained in the Houston County School District policies.

Student Responsibilities

1. Students will observe the standard of courtesy and behavior consistent with the practices and policies of the Houston County School District when sending or publishing messages or transmitting data or other information on the Internet.
2. Students will access the network using their personal ID and not that of someone else. Students will not share their user IDs, passwords, user log-on accounts with others and must make all efforts to safeguard any information from unauthorized users.
3. Students may not attempt to access information for which they are not authorized.
4. Students will use informational technology for instructional purposes only as it relates to classroom and co-curricular assignments and activities. Students will not use the system for any purpose if it is in violation of the law.
5. Students must receive permission from a teacher or designated personnel prior to accessing the Internet or any other specific file or application.
6. Any student who identifies a security problem must notify an adult teacher, supervisor or administrator immediately.
7. Students may not have access to an employee's workstation under an employee ID and may be subject to disciplinary action if such attempt is made.
8. Students are violating network security if they enter the system under a user ID other than one that is assigned to them and may be subject to disciplinary action.
9. Students disconnecting network components are guilty of harming network integrity and/or security, and will be subject to disciplinary action.
10. Students are violating network security if they alter programs or data on any network file server or any system's hard disk, and will be subject to disciplinary action.
11. Students are violating network security and software copyright laws if they knowingly use illegal copies of software on any school computer, and will be subject to disciplinary action.
12. Students purposely infecting any HCSD computer with a malicious code will be subject to disciplinary action.

Penalties for Improper Internet Use

Any violations of the Internet procedures should be immediately reported to a supervising staff member. Any user violating these rules or any other state or federal laws or classroom or school district policies is subject to lose network and/or computer use privileges. Furthermore, school disciplinary action, including in-school suspension and/or suspension or expulsion may be imposed.

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

Any unauthorized access or breach of state or federal law is subject to criminal prosecution. Parent and Student Internet Agreements are sent home to all parents. They must be signed and returned to school.

LIBRARY BOOKS

Students are responsible for library books checked out just as they are responsible for textbooks issued; therefore, they should be careful not to damage or misplace library books. Parents will be contacted for lost or damaged books for payment. Failure to pay for lost or damaged books could result in the withholding of report cards at the end of the school year until fees are paid. Schools may also opt to or restrict students from purchasing items from the school store, field day, etc. until fees are paid.

Responsibility to keep devices secure rests with the individual owner. **The Houston County School District, its staff, and its employees are not liable for any device stolen or damaged on campus.** If a device is stolen or damaged, it will be handled through the administrative office similar to other personal artifacts that are impacted in similar situations. It is recommended that covers (decals) and other custom touches are used to physically identify your device from others. Additionally, protective cases for technology are encouraged.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION / HEALTH

In compliance with GA DOE Rule 160-4-2-.12, all Houston County elementary schools provide at least 90 clock hours of instruction in health and physical education at each grade level (K-5). Classes are taught by certified teachers who implement a comprehensive program. If a student is unable to participate in physical education, a signed note from the parent must be provided that indicates the reason and date(s) for the excuse. A physician's note is required for conditions requiring the student's non-participation for more than one week. Teachers will work to make accommodations and modifications as necessary to include all children. Although no elementary child may be permanently exempt from physical education, alternative or adaptive activities may be provided when appropriate.

As a part of the Georgia Student Health and Physical Education (GA SHAPE) initiative, all Houston County Public Schools (Grades 1-12) will participate in a required annual fitness assessment. The assessment is a comprehensive fitness assessment for youth designed to assess cardiovascular fitness, muscular strength and endurance, flexibility, and body composition. All students in grades 1-12 that are enrolled in a P.E. class, regardless of age, gender, or ability, will participate in the assessment.

PROGRAMS FOR EXCEPTIONAL STUDENTS

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

PROMOTION AND RETENTION

Promotions are made on the basis of the ability of the pupil to do the work at the next level of instruction. Promotion and retention decisions will be made by school principals and teachers. Parents, teachers, the student involved, and other concerned persons must be included in the discussions leading to a decision. If any decision to retain or to plan for a longer-than-average time in a particular series of grades occurs, the school will notify the parents prior to the school year's final report card. Any desire to change grade placement for the betterment of the child must be discussed with parents.

In order to help assure appropriate achievement of students as they progress through their school experience, the Houston County School District establishes the following basic promotion and retention criteria for use in the school district.

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

1. Every effort shall be made to identify potential students for retention as early as possible during the school year and to work with the student's parents to improve academic performance.
2. The results of state mandated assessments may be considered in addition to grades, and other local requirements for promotion. Assessment results shall also be used to determine a student's need for accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction. The school principal or designee may retain a student who performs satisfactorily on the state mandated assessments, but who does not meet promotion standards and criteria established by the local school district.
3. When a child is retained, appropriate interventions will be utilized to accommodate his/her individual needs within resources available.
4. *Individualized Educational Plans (IEP) shall establish promotion standards for students with disabilities.
5. Local Pre-K providers are not authorized to allow students to repeat Pre-K without the approval of Bright from the Start: Georgia DECAL.

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

Grade 3 – No third grade student shall be promoted to the fourth grade if the student does not achieve the minimum performance level for promotion on the reading state mandated assessment and meet promotion standards and criteria established by the local board of education for the school that the student attends.

- **Tornado/Severe Weather** – Tornado/severe weather drills are held two times each year. Schools practice the procedures in order to ensure students know where to go and what to do.

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

A tornado warning: tornado has been sighted.

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

- **Bomb Threat** – Procedures are based on recommendations from the Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA).
- **Lockdowns** – Code Yellow/Code Red drills– These drills will take place three (3) times each year. When schools have been placed on an actual lockdown, you will be notified through our School Messenger phone system after all information is available or the school is no longer in lockdown.
- **Bus Evacuation** - Safe bus evacuation is practiced two times a year during physical education classes with all students.

SCHOOL PICTURES

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

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The Houston County School District will not tolerate sexual harassment in any form by any person.

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

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

Any person who has knowledge of or suspects that sexual harassment is occurring within the district shall immediately make a report to a school administrator or the District Title IX Coordinator.

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

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

For additional information, also see "Title IX Non-Discrimination" in the student handbook.

STUDENT CLUBS

Many schools have created opportunities for students to join clubs. Their purpose is to focus on areas of common interests for enhancement and enrichment. Students that belong to clubs will many times feel a sense of school spirit and ownership. Membership is voluntary. The clubs meet before or after school, and no instructional time is lost. All club

For more information regarding Section 504, or if you have questions or need additional assistance, please contact your local district's Section 504 Coordinator at the following address:

Dr. Dana Wiggins, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services
1100 Main Street
Perry, Georgia 31069
(478) 988-6200 ext. 3376
Fax: (478) 988-6399 dana.wiggins@hcbe.net

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

1. Your child has the right to an appropriate education designed to meet his or her individual educational needs as adequately as the needs of non-disabled students. 34 CFR 104.33.
2. Your child has the right to free educational services except for those fees that are imposed on non-disabled students or their parents. Insurers and similar third parties who provide services not operated by or provided by the recipient are not relieved from an otherwise valid obligation to provide or pay for services provided to a disabled student. 34 CFR 104.33.
3. Your child has a right to participate in an educational setting (academic and nonacademic) with non-disabled students to the maximum extent appropriate to his or her needs. 34 CFR 104.34.
4. Your child has a right to facilities, services, and activities that are comparable to those provided for non-disabled students. 34 CFR 104.34.
5. Your child has a right to an evaluation prior to a Section 504 determination of eligibility. 34 CFR 104.35.
6. You have the right to not consent to the school district's request to evaluate your child. 34 CFR 104.35.
7. You have the right to ensure that evaluation procedures, which may include testing, conform to the requirements of 34 CFR 104.35.
8. You have the right to ensure that the school district will consider information from a variety of sources as appropriate, which may include aptitude and achievement tests, grades, teacher recommendations and observations, physical conditions, social or cultural background, medical records, and parental recommendations. 34 CFR 104.35.
9. You have the right to ensure that placement decisions are made by a group of persons, including persons knowledgeable about your child, the meaning of the evaluation data, the placement options, and the legal requirements for least restrictive environment and comparable facilities. 34 CFR 104.35.
10. If your child is eligible under Section 504, your child has a right to periodic reevaluations, including prior to any subsequent significant change of placement. 34 CFR 104.35.
11. You have the right to notice prior to any actions by the school district regarding the identification, evaluation, or placement of your child. 34 CFR 104.36.
12. You have the right to examine your child's educational records. 34 CFR 104.36.
13. You have the right to an impartial hearing with respect to the school district's actions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, or educational placement, with opportunity for parental participation in the hearing and representation by an attorney. 34 CFR 104.36.
14. You have the right to receive a copy of this notice and a copy of the school district's impartial hearing procedure upon request. 34 CFR 104.36.
15. If you disagree with the decision of the impartial hearing officer (school board members and other district employees are not considered impartial hearing officers), you have a right to a review of that decision according to the school district's impartial hearing procedure. 34 CFR 104.36.
16. You have the right to, at any time, file a complaint with the United States Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights.

STUDENT SERVICES/ SECTION 504 PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS

1. Overview: Any student or parent or guardian ("grievant") may request an impartial hearing due to the school district'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 district's Section 504 Coordinator; however, a grievant's failure to request a hearing in writing does not alleviate the school district's obligation to provide an impartial hearing if the grievant orally requests an impartial hearing through the school district's Section 504 Coordinator. The school district's Section 504 Coordinator will assist the grievant in completing the written Request for Hearing.
2. Hearing Request: The Request for the Hearing must include the following:
 - a. The name of the student.
 - b. The address of the residence of the student.

STUDENT SERVICES/ SECTION 504 PARENT/STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Although the below steps are recommended for the most efficient resolution at the lowest level, the parent/student has the right to by-pass these steps at any time and request an impartial due process hearing related to decisions or actions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, educational program, or placement. You and the student may take part in the hearing and have an attorney represent you at your own expense. The impartial Hearing Officer will be selected by the district. Hearing requests must be made to the District 504 Coordinator identified in Step II below.

Step I

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

Step II

A complainant dissatisfied with the decision of the school principal may appeal to the District Section 504 Coordinator by submitting a written statement of complaint to the District Section 504 Coordinator. This statement must be filed within ten (10) calendar days after the complainant receives the decision from the school principal. The complaint should be mailed to:

Dr. Dana Wiggins, Assistant Superintendent of Student Services
Houston County Board of Education
1100 Main Street
Perry, GA 31069
Phone: (478) 988-6200
Fax: (478) 988-6399 dana.wiggins@hcbe.net

Upon receipt of the written statement, the Section 504 Coordinator will schedule a meeting to attempt resolution of the concerns. The District Section 504 Coordinator will render a written decision within ten (10) calendar days after the meeting.

Step III

A complainant dissatisfied with the decision of the District Section 504 Coordinator may appeal to the Houston County Board of Education by filing a written request to the Office of the Superintendent. The complaint should be mailed to:

Dr. Mark Scott, Office of the Superintendent
Houston County Board of Education
1100 Main Street
Perry, GA 31069
(478) 988-6200

The appeal must be filed within ten (10) calendar days after the complainant receives the decision from the District Section 504 Coordinator. The Board of Education will act on the complaint at the next regularly scheduled BOE meeting, not less than seven (7) days thereafter.

STUDENT SERVICES/ SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Houston County School District operates in strict adherence to policies and procedures set forth in IDEA and the State Rules and Regulations Pertaining to Special Education. The state rules, as well as parental rights may be referred to online at the following address:

<http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Special-Education-Services/Pages/Special-Education-Rules.aspx>

What is Child Find?

The purpose of Child Find is to identify, locate, and evaluate children and youth, birth to age 21, who are suspected of, or have a disability or developmental delay. The Houston County School District serves children ages 3 through 21 with identified special education needs.

www.gadoe.org. Regional assistance can be found by contacting the Georgia Learning Resource System (GLRS) by phone (1-800-282-7552), or through their website at www.glr.org.

STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM (SST)

Student Support Teams are problem solving teams and are required to be in every public school in Georgia. Student Support Teams function within Tier 3 of Georgia's Pyramid of Interventions, which is the framework for Response to Intervention. Georgia currently utilizes a three tier model. Students in grades K through 12 who have learning, speech, and/or behavioral problems may receive support at Tier 3 with research-based interventions to address skill deficits. Monitoring student progress enables the team to determine if the interventions are increasing the expected skills. Parents should be invited to participate in SST/Tier 3 meetings. Student Support Teams are a function of general education.

THE STUDENT RISK SCREENING SCALE

The Student Risk Screening Scale-Internalizing and Externalizing (SRSS-IE) is a brief universal behavioral screening tool completed by teachers for students in grades Pk-5.

This is a proactive way for teachers to identify behaviors in the classroom that may be obstacles to learning. The SRSS-IE is not a diagnostic tool. When completing the SRSS-IE, teachers are asked to rate the students on observable behaviors that are seen in the classroom setting. It is a brief 1-page screening tool, which teachers use to rate students on a 0-3 Likert Scale based on how often they display specific behaviors. This process takes less than 30 minutes to complete per class. The data that is discovered from the use of this tool will not be used to label students, but to drive District and school decisions around student supports and services.

The SRSS-IE is a tool that enables teachers to record classroom observations in a uniform and evidenced-based manner. The results will help our schools plan positive instructional experiences that will have lifelong benefits for our students.

Additional information regarding the SRSS-IE can be found by visiting our website at www.hcbe.net/screening.

TESTING PROGRAM

A statewide testing program is established in Georgia to facilitate instructional planning, to provide feedback to students and parents, and to evaluate the effectiveness of educational programs. The Houston County School District's Department of District and School Effectiveness provides support to schools for the implementation of state mandated assessments. The department works with schools and district departments to provide training, data analysis, and appropriate use of assessment and assessment strategies.

Information about assessments and the calendar for 2024-25 school year can be found on the Houston County website at: <https://www.hcbe.net/assessmentaccountability>.

TEXTBOOKS/LEARNING DEVICES

Houston County School District provides all textbooks and learning devices to students. Students will be responsible for the textbooks and learning devices assigned to them. The following guidelines and expectations apply to students' use of textbooks and learning devices:

1. Students must pay for textbooks and learning devices that are lost or damaged beyond normal wear or repair.
2. All books and learning devices will be barcoded. Barcodes should not be removed from books and learning devices. Books will not be accepted with the barcode removed or damaged.
3. Students will be charged the purchase price for books if the barcode is missing or damaged.
4. Students will pay the replacement cost for any lost/damaged books, learning devices, chargers, and protective cases.
5. Charges for damaged books are assessed by the principal according to the book's condition when issued and the extent of the damages.
6. A student's failure to pay for lost or damaged books, media materials, and learning devices will result in the withholding of report cards.
7. Students should not place stickers, drawings, or other markings on books, learning devices, and protective coverings. Students will be assessed fees for altering books, learning devices, and protective coverings in this manner.

The complaint policy as outlined in Board Policy JCE shall be followed. The Houston County School District personnel shall conduct a prompt investigation and those persons who are found to have engaged in acts of harassment that create a hostile environment based on race, color or national origin may be disciplined to include as warranted suspension, expulsion or termination of employment. The Houston County School District will not tolerate acts of retaliation against individuals who report harassment, or the creation of a hostile environment based on race, color or national origin. It is the hope of the Houston County Board of Education that students, parents/guardians and Houston County School District staff will work together to prevent acts of harassment based on race, color or national origin and any retaliation which is found to exist.

TITLE IX - NON-DISCRIMINATION

Federal law prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964); sex (Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972); or disability in educational programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance. Students and parents are hereby notified that the Houston County Board of Education does not discriminate in any educational programs or activities. For questions or concerns about Title IX, a student or parent should contact the school's Title IX Coordinator or contact the district's Title IX Coordinator at: Dr. Walter Stephens, Executive Director of School Operations, 1110 Main Street, Perry Georgia, 31069 or by phone at 478-988-6200, or email address, TitleIX@hcbe.net. Complaint forms are available in the principal's office at each school.

TITLE IX - SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The Houston County School District desires that all students receive the benefit of an adequate education. With this view in mind, the District prohibits unlawful discrimination against students on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, or disability in its programs and activities. Any student, parent, or other person, who believes sexual harassment has occurred, should complete the "Title IX Sexual Harassment Formal Complaint Form" and submit it to the Title IX Coordinator. The Title IX Coordinator is the Executive Director of School Operations in the district office. The Coordinator may be contacted at 1100 Main Street, Perry, Georgia, 31069 or by phone at 478-988-6200, or email address, TitleIX@hcbe.net. Complaint forms are available in the principal's office at each school. In all Title IX investigations, the District will use a preponderance of the evidence standard.

Sexual Harassment is defined pursuant to Federal Law, 34 C.F.R. § 106.30(a) as follows:

- a) An employee of the District conditioning and provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the District on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct (i.e., quid pro quo sexual harassment);
- b) Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the District's education program or activity;
- c) "Sexual assault" as defined in Federal Law 20 U.S.C. 1092(f)(6)(A)(v) and parallel provisions of the Georgia Official Code Annotated, "dating violence" as defined in Federal Law, 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(10), and parallel provisions of the Georgia Official Code Annotated, "domestic violence" as defined in Federal Law 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(8), or "stalking" as defined in Federal Law 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(30) and parallel provision of the Georgia Official Code Annotated.

VISITORS

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

All visitors are required to report to the school office upon entering and leaving the school building to obtain a pass. Visitors are limited to the office area of the school only, unless otherwise directed by the school principal or designee.

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

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

environment for themselves and other students. These standards for behavior require students to respect each other and school district employees, to obey student behavior policies adopted by the Board and to obey student behavior rules established at each school within the District.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

AUTHORITY OF THE PRINCIPAL

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

AUTHORITY OF THE TEACHER

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

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

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

PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

When it is necessary to impose discipline, school administrators and teachers will follow a progressive discipline process as appropriate considering the student's discipline history and conduct.

superintendent, or local board of education shall have the authority to modify such expulsion requirement on a case by case basis. **For definitions, refer to Policy JCDAE.**

- **Verbal assault, written assault, including threats of violence or bodily harm and/or sexual assault or harassment, of teachers, administrators, other school personnel, other students, or persons attending school-related functions:** Immediate suspension and automatic referral to a disciplinary tribunal if a student is alleged to have committed a verbal or physical assault upon a teacher or other school personnel; possible referral to a disciplinary tribunal if a student is alleged to have committed an assault upon another student or a person attending a school-related function.
- **Physical assault or battery, including sexual battery, of other students, or persons attending school-related functions:** possible referral to a disciplinary tribunal if a student is alleged to have committed battery upon another student or a person attending a school-related function.
- **Fighting:** any student engaged in fighting (mutual combat or assault/battery) may be subject to discipline up to and including long-term suspension at the discretion of the student's building administrator. Penalties recommended for fighting shall not be reduced or limited by, but shall be in addition to, any penalties imposed by any court of competent jurisdiction.
- **Terroristic Threats and Acts:** any student who commits a terroristic threat or act shall be subject to discipline, including expulsion.
- **Physical violence against a teacher, school bus driver, or other school personnel:** Immediate suspension and automatic referral to the disciplinary tribunal if a student is alleged to have committed an act of physical violence against a teacher or other school personnel. Possible punishments include short term suspension, long term suspension, or expulsion. Appropriate law enforcement personnel will be notified as necessary.
- **Physical violence against a teacher, school bus driver, or other school personnel, which caused physical harm:** A student found by a disciplinary hearing officer, panel, or tribunal to have committed an act of physical violence, which caused harm against a teacher, school bus driver, school official, or school employee shall be expelled from the public school district. The expulsion shall be for the remainder of the student's eligibility to attend public school pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-150. Appropriate law enforcement personnel will be notified as necessary.
- **Disrespectful conduct, including use of vulgar or profane language, toward teachers, administrators, other school personnel, other students, or persons attending school-related functions.**
- **Any behavior based on a student's race, national origin, sex, or disability that is unwelcome, unwanted, and/or uninvited by the recipient is prohibited, including verbal or non-verbal taunting, physical contact, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature, up to and including sexual harassment as used in connection with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.**
- **Possession or use of tobacco in any form or any product, paraphernalia, or substance that is represented as tobacco or any smoking/vaping oil to include all forms of electronic cigarettes, vapor pens and any instrument used to inhale vapor.**
- **Unauthorized use of school computers or computer network for anything other than instructional purposes.** This includes, but is not limited to computer misuse, using computers to view or send inappropriate material, hacking, and violation of school computer use policy.
- **Damaging or defacing personal property, including the property of another student or any person legitimately at the school, or school property (vandalism or graffiti) during school hours or off-school hours.**
- **Theft:** taking of personal property of another person or the school.
- **Burglary of school property.**
- **Extortion or attempted extortion.**
- **Possession and/or use of fireworks or any explosive.**
- **Activating a fire alarm under false pretenses or making a bomb threat shall at a minimum result in suspension for one full semester.**
- **Disruption of school.**
- **Insubordination, disorderly conduct, disobeying school rules, regulations, or directives.**
- **Disobeying directives given by teachers, administrators, or other school staff or refusal to talk with an administrator.**
- **Classroom and school disturbances.**
- **Violation of school dress code.**
- **Use of profane, vulgar, or obscene words or indecent exposure.**
- **Use of cell phone or electronic communication device during the school day except as approved by a staff member.**
- **Inappropriate public displays of affection.**
- **Gambling or possession of gambling devices.**

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."

Burglary of school property: breaking and entering into school district property.

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

Conspiracy: A student commits a violation of the student Code of Conduct when together with one or more other persons conspires to commit an act that would be a crime or violation of the student Code of Conduct and such other person does any overt act to effect the object of the conspiracy.

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

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

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

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

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

Extortion: Obtaining another person's consent to any act, money, personal property, or goods from another student by violence, threats, or misuse of authority.

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

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

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

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

Party to a crime or violation of the student Code of Conduct: Every student concerned in the commission of a crime or violation of the student Code of Conduct may be charged with or found in violation of the student Code of Conduct may be charged with and found guilty of the prohibited acts. A student concerned in the commission of a violation of the student Code of Conduct if:

- (1) Directly commits the prohibited act(s).
- (2) Intentionally causes some other person to commit the prohibited act under such circumstances that the other person is not guilty of any prohibited act in fact or because of legal incapacity.
- (3) Intentionally aids or abets in the commission of the prohibited acts; or
- (4) Intentionally advises, encourages, hires, counsels, or procures another to commit the prohibited acts.

STUDENT SUPPORT PROCESSES

The Board of Education provides a variety of resources that are available at every school within the district to help address student behavioral problems. The school discipline process will include appropriate consideration of support processes to help students resolve such problems.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

STUDENT EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES NOTIFICATION

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

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

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

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

SCHOOL CLUBS

Name of Club: Quiz Bowl Club

Faculty Sponsor(s): Mori Harris, Stephanie Wilson

Membership Requirement: 4th and 5th Grade GTE Students

Financial Obligation: Approximately \$25 for t-shirt and snacks

Purpose: To train for and participate in the school district's quiz bowl competition

Planned Activities: Teach students how to think outside of the box to answer unknown questions on various topics; District competition

Name of Club: Chorus

Faculty Sponsor(s): Mrs. Sanders

Membership Requirement: 3rd-5th Grade students must audition and make chorus if selected

Financial Obligation: Approximately \$20 for t-shirt

Purpose: Students will learn the fundamentals of singing and being members of an ensemble

Planned Activities: Various performances and rehearsals throughout the school year

Name of Club: Kickball Club

Faculty Sponsor(s): Katie Frankhouser, Alicia Graham

Membership Requirement: 4th-5th Grade must try out and be recommended by a teacher

Financial Obligation: \$20

Purpose: To encourage teamwork, perseverance, and good sportsmanship, and fun through the game of kickball

Planned Activities: Games run from September-December with an end-of-season team party in December

Name of Club: Student Council

Faculty Sponsor(s): Kathy Bunton, Sara Dean, Rachael Ervin

Membership Requirement: 3rd-5th Grade elected students

Financial Obligation: Approximately \$15 for T-shirt

Purpose: To organize events and advise the staff on student wants, needs and concerns

Planned Activities: Various meetings and service projects throughout the school year

Name of Club: Partner's Club

Faculty Sponsor(s): Jessica Lightsey, Rachel Floyd, Abby Hammonds

Membership Requirement: Grades 3-5

Financial Obligation: Approximately \$15 for t-shirt

Purpose: To promote social relationships between students with and without disabilities by providing a natural setting for discussion and activities

Name of Club: Drama Club

Faculty Sponsor(s): Mrs. Lightsey, Mr. Henderson, Mrs. Bell

Membership Requirement: Grades 4-5

Financial Obligation: TBD (based on t shirt and costume)

Purpose: The purpose of Drama Club is to make live theater accessible to students, to enable young people to gain an appreciation for the arts, and to increase self-confidence, self-esteem, and a sense of responsibility by providing an opportunity for children to participate in dramatic activities

Planned Activities: Various meetings/auditions/rehearsals throughout the year as well as a performance

Name of Club: Gardening Club

Faculty Sponsor(s): Mrs. Lewis

Membership Requirement: Grades 3-5

Financial Obligation: TBD

Purpose: Promote a love of gardening to the students and knowledge of the world we live in

Planned Activities: Various meetings throughout the year

Name of Club: Yearbook Club

Faculty Sponsor(s): TBD

Membership Requirement: Grades 3-5

Financial Obligation: \$20 for T shirt

Purpose: Students to work as a team as well as foster individual talents to showcase our school through a yearbook. Students will use photography skills and design skills to create a publication that will be made available to our school towards the end of the year.

Planned Activities: taking pictures, planning and designing the LRES yearbook

Name of Club: Art Club

Faculty Sponsor(s): Ms. Smith

Membership Requirement: Grades 3-5

Financial Obligation: TBD

Purpose: To promote creativity, critical thinking and learn various art techniques.

Planned Activities: Various art projects

Name of Club: Media Club

Faculty Sponsor(s): Mrs. Lane

Membership Requirement: Grade 5

Financial Obligation: TBD

Purpose: To promote leadership, encourage effective communication and presentation through media.

Planned Activities: Students will present LRES morning announcements each day via live broadcast for all students to watch.

Prices and Sponsors are subject to change. More information about clubs will be provided during Open House.